

Diction and Expression in Error Analysis Can Enhance Academic Writing of L2 University Students

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Abstract

Without proper linguistic competence in English language, academic writing is one of the most challenging tasks, especially, in various genre specific disciplines by L2 novice writers. This paper examines the role of diction and expression through error analysis in English language of L2 novice writers' academic writing in interdisciplinary texts of IT & Computer sciences and Business & Management sciences. Though the importance of vocabulary in L2 academic discourse is widely recognized, there has been little research focusing on diction and expression at higher education level. A corpus of 40 introductions of the published research articles, downloaded from the journals (e.g., 20 from IT & Computer sciences and 20 Business & Management sciences) authored by L2 novice writers, was analyzed to determine lexico-grammatical errors from the texts by applying Markin4 method of Error Analysis. '*Rewrites*' in italics letters is an attempt to demonstrate English language flexibility, infinite vastness and richness in diction and expression, comparing it with the excerpts taken from the corpus.

Keywords: diction & expression, academic writing, error analysis, lexico-grammatical errors

1. Introduction

Academic writers and searchers, especially those associated with the field of applied linguistics and education from across the globe have generally recognized that, among four functional skills of English language, writing remains one of most difficult tasks for L2 novice writers (Hartley, 2002) cited (Hartley & Braithwaite, 1989). Research writing in the higher education context demands using the specific academic language to analyze, interpret and evaluate knowledge in order to develop an argument, to quote a theory and elaborate a conclusion by adhering to logical order, employing a correct terminology, using texts in its original form, contributing suggestions and interpreting facts.

Academics concerned with the field of English language and applied linguistics of L2 learners' writing at higher education level deem punctuations, vocabulary (diction) grammar besides the ability to elucidate structure and interpret facts are some of the most serious difficulties faced by L2 novice writers (Lea, 1994; Lea & Street, 1998 and Hartley, 1998).

Through various means and methods applied in classifying a number of errors concerning error analysis, almost all the previous studies carried out in various settings of Europe, Africa, Australia, Gulf States and Asia at different levels have found nearly similar nature of difficulties faced by L2 learners. Most frequent and common error-types in their written assignments analyzed are: punctuations, subject-verb-agreement, redundancy, prepositions, spellings, un-parallel sentence-construction, tense-sequence, pronouns, etc. in addition to semantic, syntactic and lexico problems. However, there has been little focus on diction (applying vocabulary with contextualized meaning) and expression (style; arrangement of words). Thus, the present study has emphasized, besides other types of error-categories through error analysis (EA), diction and expression in the texts of L2 novice writers from their published work in order to justify the author's hypothesis that diction and expression is key to enhance and develop academic writing competence of L2 novice writers besides other linguistic and communicative ability.

Majority students at tertiary level of education, especially, postgraduates in most of universities in Pakistan have diversified educational background i.e. with exception to elite class school system whereas those coming from average private and public sectors of schools and colleges show inefficiency in English language, particularly, lack of academic writing ability.

Postgraduate students are expected to have already developed their academic writing competence before entering at this level of study and must show mastery in English language to apply linguistic and communicative competence while writing research-based work. L2 novice writers not only in Pakistan's universities but also from across the world face problems in producing a quality text, for instance, Johns, (1997) found that majority of non-native speaking undergraduate and graduate students, after more than a decade learning as L2 at school and college levels of education, frequently fail to realize as to why they cannot appropriately use the characteristics and conventions of academic writing style, especially, in diction and expression. Applied linguists have pinpointed various factors that the academic writing of even well trained and highly advanced L2 learners persists on exhibiting numerous difficulties and

shortcomings; (Leki & Carson, 1997; Johns, 1997; Jordan, 1997; Prior, 1998 and Hinkel, 2002).

2. Review of Literature

Since the beginning of Swales' genre analysis, hosts of studies analyzing various sections of different genres, for instance, business and academic have been carried out so far. Research articles (RAs) among the studies have gained prominence. Thus, academic writing has widely been recognized as a key skill, influencing educational performance of the learners at tertiary level of studies. In Europe, higher educational settings - where the research spotlights on problems relating to supporting foreign L2 learners in their research writing – the researchers are mainly concerned to explore ways to assist L2 learners within the institutions (Felix & Lawson, 1994 and Woodward Kron, 2007).

Scholars and academics from across the world recognize the fact that research findings endorsed for publication should be published in English language in the journals of high impact. The recent decade has witnessed an upsurge in research with the rapid increase of publication sites, English being a leading language disseminating novelty of academic discourses. However, emphasis to write and publish academically in English has led to cross cultural analysis within (EAP) English for academic purposes Connor, (2004).

Academic vocabulary is a kind of high frequency vocabulary common to a wide range of academic texts and is considered useful for learners studying English for academic purposes. In the words of Nation (2001) "any time spent learning it is time well spent" (p. 196). The current assumptions in L2 vocabulary research being that when learners know around 4,000 word families in academic texts, they will know approximately 19 out of every 20 words in the texts (95%). This knowledge will enable L2 readers to adequately comprehend text and infer meanings of unfamiliar words. Given the importance of academic vocabulary in L2 academic reading (Coxhead, 2000 and Nation & Coxhead, 2001), it is suggested that L2 learners at the university level be introduced to academic vocabulary as soon as they are familiar with the most frequent 2,000 general service words in English (Kim, 2006; Laufer, 2005 and Nation, 2001). More importantly, this research has focused on diction and expression among some of the error-categories relating to lexico-grammatical features through error analysis (EA).

2.1 Current Development in Writing

For about three decades, there has been tremendous change in research on academic writing with different perspectives; the researchers concerned with the field of applied linguistics are, in most cases, divided on national, disciplinary and theoretical frameworks. Recently, Writing Research across Borders (WRAB), a series of conferences, has attempted to integrate different disciplines with their subfields, assessing writing in an open forum for the researchers from the world at all levels for interchanging their inherent pedagogical experiences to contribute their latest updates in the current works. This widespread research network derived from emerging conferences has led to the emergence of the International Society for Advancement of Writing Research (ISAWR) aimed at advancing academic writing in the international perspective.

The 4th conference of the series, 'Writing Research Across Border II, WRAB was held in Feb' 2011 hosted at George Mason University in north Virginia, Washington, DC participated by over 625 scholars from 40 countries; who reciprocated ideas and shared ongoing works as they were well-versed with the latest developments taking place in research writing with a wide range of inter-disciplinary studies e.g. (sociology, education, linguistics composition, etc.) The recent volume shows development and progress from the volume, Traditions of Writing Research, derived from the first Writing Research across Borders conference held in 2008. The volume introduces a wide-range of work being carried out at international level with unique methodologies and theories in different national and historical perspectives.

2.2 Rationale of Study

In recent times, increasing number of international students at tertiary level of education studying in universities with English language as medium of instruction has stressed upon the need to enhance academic writing skills in English language, especially, with the focus on improving diction and expression in writing to produce a quality text to participate successfully with discourse community and contribute their research findings with genre-specific interdisciplinary approaches in postgraduate studies. The last couple of decades have witnessed a tremendous growth in research writing triggering to bring forth a number of publication sites with English as a leading language for disseminating unique and inventive academic knowledge. Therefore, the emphasis on writing and publishing in English has accelerated, to great extent, to cross cultural analyses (Connor, 2004) with English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

Among a number of error categories, expression (style of English language and writing) and diction (vocabulary with contextualized meanings) are some of the distinctive features of the study. '*Rewrites*' shows English language richness, vastness and flexibility of its style that is the benchmark to learn expeditiously and overcome deficiencies exhibited in academic writing L2 learners at higher education level. Furthermore, '*Rewrites*' applied in each of the excerpts taken from various discipline-specific genres aims at analyzing the texts of the novice writers to distinguish comparatively diction and expression. Thus, it may encourage L2 novice writers to write concisely and to avoid verbosity in their writing style.

3. Methodology

Methodology employed in this study is based on error analysis (EA) of lexico-grammatical errors, mainly, emphasizing on expression and diction in the different genre-specific interdisciplinary texts written by L2 novice writers from Pakistan. The taxonomy analyzes lexico-grammatical errors found in academic writing of L2 in postgraduate studies.

3.1 Source and Type of Data

The corpus applied in this study consists of 40 'INTRODUCTIONS' of published research articles (RAs) authored by L2 novice writers from Pakistan downloaded online such as 20 from IT & Computer Sciences (ITCS) and 20 Business & Management Sciences (BMS) of various genres of interdisciplinary from different research journals of Pakistan.

3.2 Data Analysis Procedure

A corpus of 40 published research articles was carefully selected and downloaded online in PDF format. To convert PDF file into Word doc., ABBYY FineReader 12.0.101.264 Professional software was used. This software provides two important functions: 1) converting PDF into MS Word.doc into PDF and 2) enabling scanned data to write & edit. Thus the Word doc. converted copies of Introductions were used for tagging various categories of error classifications in the process of EA.

3.3 Instrument

Except diction, expression, un-parallelism in sentence construction and redundancy, rest of the taxonomies of errors have been adopted from Markin4 software relating to Windows 95/98/2000/XP/ME/NT4 programs developed in 1996 by Martin Holmes. This is applied as a tool designed for teachers to mark and annotate written texts submitted electronically by students. Statistical Package (SPSS) 17th version is used in drawing certain tables and figures to display outcomes in frequencies, percentage, comparisons and other indicators.

Among a number of error categories found in Markin4 software include: Article, Conj/Trans, Count/Non-Count, S/VAgreement, Capitalization, Cut, Formatting, Fragment, Modifier, Parallel, Sing/Plu, Preposition, MissingW, Paragraphing, Punctuation, Quote, Repetition, Space, Spl, Vague, WChoice, WForm and WOrder, VForm, VTense,???, the researcher has adopted the followings for analyzing errors: *Active/Passive, Addl comma, Art, Capitalization, Cliché, Comma-omitted, Diction, Prep-error, Redundancy, S/Vagreement, Sing/Plu, Unparrallel V-phrase, Unparrallel S-structure, Vtense, WForm and Worder*, however, some of error categories have either been amended or merged to suit the frequency of error-types for display in the tables and graphs. As previously stated in above paragraph that "Rewrites" incorporated at the end of each excerpt aims at demonstrating the capacity, flexibility and richness of English language, especially, attempting to improve diction (contextualized vocabulary) and expression (proper arrangement of words) of the texts to enhance academic writing competence which is prerequisite for L2 novice writers at higher education level.

Table1. Error taxonomies with frequency & percentage exhibited in ITCS text

Error Types	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diction	97	22.40
Poor Expression	43	9.93
Prepositions	18	4.15
Punctuations	78	18.01
Redundancy	12	2.77
Sub-V-Agreement	9	2.07
Singular/Plural	34	7.85
Un-parallel Structure	10	2.30
Word Form	42	9.69
Verb Tense	27	6.23
Others	63	14.54

The above table shows some of lexico-grammatical deviations exhibited in the texts of introduction section from the published research articles (RAs) in the discipline of Information Technology & Computer Sciences (ITCS). Error of diction is the most recurring showing inappropriate use of vocabulary which is not contextualized in the implied meaning. Error in punctuations remains one of the most serious problems for the L2 novice writers as it is more concerned with expression than diction. Poor expression is one the most obvious difficulties confronted by almost all L2 novice writers, even sometimes for native speakers as well. It is important to highlight such types of errors which not only badly affects writing ability but also causes intimidation and fear of attempting to scholarly writing. Based on error analysis, few of the excerpts taken from introduction sections of ITCS following Rewrites written by the researcher in an attempt to demonstrate diction and expression avoiding verbosity of the texts as compared with the texts of authors are as under:

Excerpts

1. Exponential growth of the World Wide Web aggravates the problem of *Prep-error* (in) finding specific information precisely **almost impossible because of the losing rich semantics** *PoorExpression* and necessitates human presence for Web contents **interpretation**.

Rewrite: Exponential growth of the World Wide Web aggravates the problem in finding specific information, rendering it semantically incomprehensible; thus it requires concerted efforts of the professionals to interpret web contents.

2. **In general** computing terminology, legacy system is an old application program or computer system which is in running form to be used due to their *Unparrallel pronoun* cost of replacing or redesigning it **and** *Unparrallel S Structurere* **often despite its poor competitiveness and compatibility with new techniques and modern equivalence** – the repercussion is, the huge- system, massive and very hard to amend. *PoorExpression* **That’s why**, Software maintenance is also called sever problems. This is certainly the case for legacy software systems **where frequently there are** non-trivial relations between different components of the system that are not known.

Rewrite: In computing, a legacy system is an old application program that refers a system as ‘legacy’ implying that the system is too old to be replaced but is functioning despite its less competitiveness and compatibility as compared with modern technology; apart from being huge and too hard to amend. Hence, software maintenance is called server problem as non-trivial relations between both the components of the legacy system often occur mysteriously.

3. Second **youngest** *Redundancy* web browser after Google Chrome is Mozilla Firefox(MF), released in 2004 by Mozilla company. It is supported by **all operating system** and also by the browser is available by default in various flavors *Diction* (features) of Linux operating system. Security and Bug fix control are strength *WForm* **(strong/supporting) features** of browser, **apart from it attractive themes and valuable add-ons** are *Vtense* significantly enhancing its market share *Unparrallel S-structure* [1,2,3].

Rewrite: Mozilla Firefox (MF), a second web browser released in 2004 by Mozilla after Google Chrome, supports all operating systems and contains various supporting features found in Linux operating system. Besides its attractive themes and valuable add-ons to enhance its market share, it is secured by Bug fix control system having robust features of browser.

4. This discrepancy can be *Diction* solved, *Add comma* **when the work is performed in right** *Diction* **manner**. In daily life, people **do compares** *Vtense* the quality of work with time. **They though** *PoorExpression* **quantum of effort is only possible with quantum of time**. *Unparrallel S-structure* **In today’s life** *Cliche’* **this is not a 'measuring standard' of quality**. **Might be possible** that a person who is taking lesser *WForm* **time; he suffer** from “learning curve effect” and he **can be** *Vtense* **apply** suitable effort on task while **using less time**. *PoorExpression*

Rewrite: This discrepancy can be addressed by performing the work in right time. People usually compare quality of work with time, though it is not a ‘measuring standard of quality. Most probably, a person taking less time suffers from “learning curve effect” and can complete the task within some hours.

5. When **we** *Personal* talk about time and effort of a specific task, **we** *Personal* **can’t ignore its cost** *PoorExpression*. Cost estimation is also important. **Although**, budgeting is used *Poor Expression* but cost which is to be incurred is still vague in many situations *Diction*. **The problem** of suspension variance highly **affects** *Poor Expression* the cost. **So, the need is to use better estimator to predict the best estimate**.

Rewrite: Besides time and effort, cost estimation, blurred as budget in many cases, is an important factor as the issue of suspension variance greatly affects the cost and this requires using better estimator for the efficient forecast.

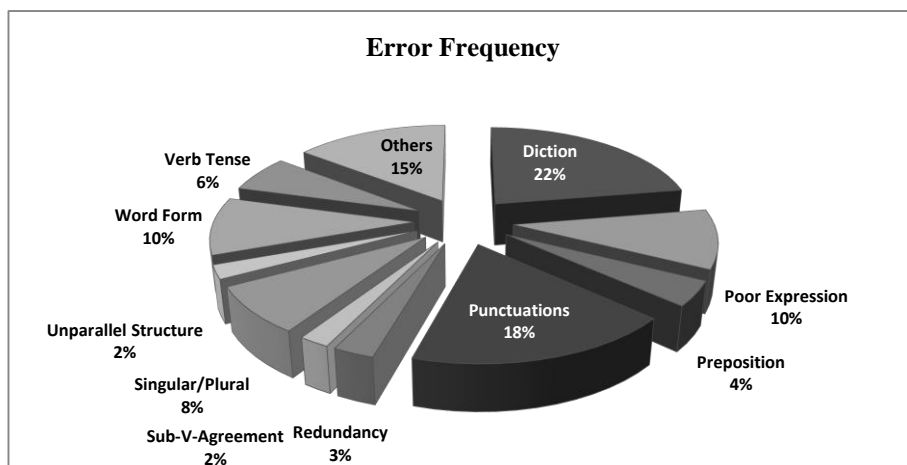


Figure1. Classifications of Errors in Percentage through Error Analysis in ITCS Text

As indicated earlier in the table, the above figure 1 shows percentage based errors found in the texts of ITCS showing errors of diction, punctuations and expression more dominantly than the other error types. Understanding the use of academic vocabulary may enhance diction implying contextualized use of words. One of the most important parts of

speech in English language is the proper use of punctuations. Applying comma requires more than 16 different uses in a sentence depending upon compound or complex sentence construction. However, in this study, most frequent errors in punctuations were either omission or additional use of comma that is one of the serious problems affecting academic writing ability.

Poor expression is related to inappropriate arrangement of words (syntactic flaws) along with a number of other lexico-grammatical errors in a sentence construction. Thus, there is a considerable frequency of errors around 10% found in the text of ITCS requiring to be overcome, particularly in research writing intended for publication in a journal with high impact factor.

The following table 2: presents the results of Error Analysis in the text relating to the disciplines of Business and Management Sciences, showing more or less the similar nature of errors found in the text written by L2 novice writers and published in an accredited research journal:

Table 2. Error taxonomies with frequency & percentage exhibited in BMS text

Error Types	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Diction	117	21.50
Poor Expression	87	15.70
Prepositions	28	5.14
Punctuations	89	16.36
Redundancy	17	3.12
Sub-V-Agreement	13	2.38
Singular/Plural	42	7.72
Un-parallel Structure	19	3.49
Word Form	31	5.69
Verb Tense	22	4.04
Others	79	14.52

Among some of the lexico-grammatical deviations, the above table 2 exhibits errors in diction the most frequent found in the of BMS and, similarly, errors in punctuations and expression are as dominant as can be noticed in the previous table 1 of ITCS. Similarly, below are few of the excerpts taken from introduction sections of BMS research articles from SAJMS journal and their Rewrites has been written by the researcher to demonstrate diction and expression as compared to texts of the authors in an attempt to prove the hypothesis of the study that poor diction and expression is the key to academic writing:

Excerpts:

1. Doing business is **not easy anywhere** in the world. To run a business successfully *Comma-omitted* funds *Diction* are the basic and **important part** of it. **Arrangements** *WordForm* of finance are difficult always *Worder* and nowadays *Comma-omitted* it becomes *Vtense* (has become) more difficult and problematic to arrange funds for running *Redundancy* a business, **to arrange** one *Cliche*, owner usually contacts financial institutions to help **them** *Unparallel Pronoun* out *PoorExpression*. **In the third world** *Comma-omitted* **countries where** *RelativePronoun Error* literacy rate is not good enough *Comma-omitted* people don't know how to deal with banks and **credit providers** so they use the alternative ways to arrange the finances for their businesses such as **they borrow it** *Unparallel Pronoun* from known persons, friends and relatives (Curan & Blakburn, 1993). *PoorExpression*

Rewrite: Among other fundamental means and resources, capital is the prerequisite for establishing and running a business successfully in a country. Seeking monetary assistance from a financial institution is simplistic for the obvious reason that semi-illiterate or illiterate persons from third world countries have little knowledge about credit in banking affairs and policies. The only alternative to resolve their financial issues is to borrow money from their circle of friends and relatives.

2. Education is an enlightenment, *AddComma* which **explores** *Diction* **the person about the distinction between the two notions** *Diction* of right and wrong. **Making a person knowledgeable is not the only purpose of education,** but also making him/her to learn about rationale thinking, the right attitude, behavior, and creating knowledge *Unparallel S-structure* and autonomy. *PoorExpression* When there is an inspiration to bring a revolution, there is room for improvement everywhere *PoorExpression*. Innovation can be **enhanced** *Diction* which paybacks both students and the teachers.

Rewrite: Education induces enlightenment, a criterion that awakens human conscience, a sense to distinguish between right and wrong. The purpose of acquiring education is not confined to be well-informed but to be well-behaved,

rationally motivated and highly inspired to act and serve for welfare of society and humanity. Inspiration brings about innovation, resulting in revolution.

3. Lubricating oils are extensively used in industrial, business and transport sectors for lubricating machinery and engines. As oil becomes dirty and contaminated, it is withdrawn and used lube oil is replaced. The disposal of used lube oil is a serious environmental problem. As a part of lube oil supply chain, this oil needs to be returned to the manufacturers for recovering the principal ingredient, which is the base oil. It needs to be appreciated that lubricating oils are almost indestructible. When lube oil is replaced, it is just contaminated with external impurities and products of oil declension. These impurities can be removed by re-refining used oil. The re-refining process regenerates used lube oil into base oils, which are as good as pure base oil produced in petroleum refineries (U.S. Department of Energy, 2006). The re-refined base oil can be reused repeatedly after adding the usual additives.

Rewrite: Lubricant is extensively used in a number of industries for lubricating mechanical devices, plants and automobiles to reduce friction. After exhaustion of its lubricant level because of its use for some time, it is removed and replaced, thus amassing thousands of barrels of used oil poses serious threat to the environment. However, lubricants are not detrimental as they can be re-refined for re-use after removing certain external impurities and adding the required additives during the process.

4. Due to terrorist attacks, a number of countries have issued advices (directives) to their citizen (citizens) against travelling to Pakistan. According to BBC World Service Country Rating Poll conducted in 2011 and 2013, Pakistan was the third most negatively viewed country after Iran and North Korea and Liam Fox, former Defence Secretary, UK is convinced that Pakistan is the most dangerous country in the world (Crilly, 2013). In view of such development, it is necessary to ask ourselves: Should we leave Pakistan's country image to aggravate?

Rewrite: Due to increasing incidents of terrorism, many foreign countries have warned their citizens from travelling to Pakistan. BBC in its 'Country Rating Poll' quoting Liam Fox, former Def Secretary of UK (Crilly, 2013) is said to have commented/expressed his reservation that Pakistan is the most dangerous country in the world after Iran, N. Korea. In the given circumstances, the citizens need to ask themselves how long they should allow others to tarnish Pakistan's image.

5. Public have gained awareness towards the subject and value of corporate governance, after the detection of foremost scandals like Enron, WorldCom etc that were occurred due to failure of governance. The corporate governance is not a new concept, but this concept comes into existence at the same time when the management and ownership in an organization were separated and concept of agency theory applied. Like, when a child cry to acquire his mother's concentration, the companies also needs a well-built corporate governance mechanism, because when the minor investors cry after losing their investments due to corporate governance failures, then the professional & regulatory bodies starts to pay their notice to develop a highly structured corporate governance mechanisms.

Rewrite: People learnt enough from Enron and WorldCom scandals about the subject and value of corporate governance that collapsed because of failure of the governance. The concept of the corporate governance based on agency theory existed with the separation of management from ownership in an organization. Just as a mother instinctively responds to her infant's cry, similarly, the companies require a well-established corporate governance mechanism to support and compensate the small investors in view of their financial losses or crises.

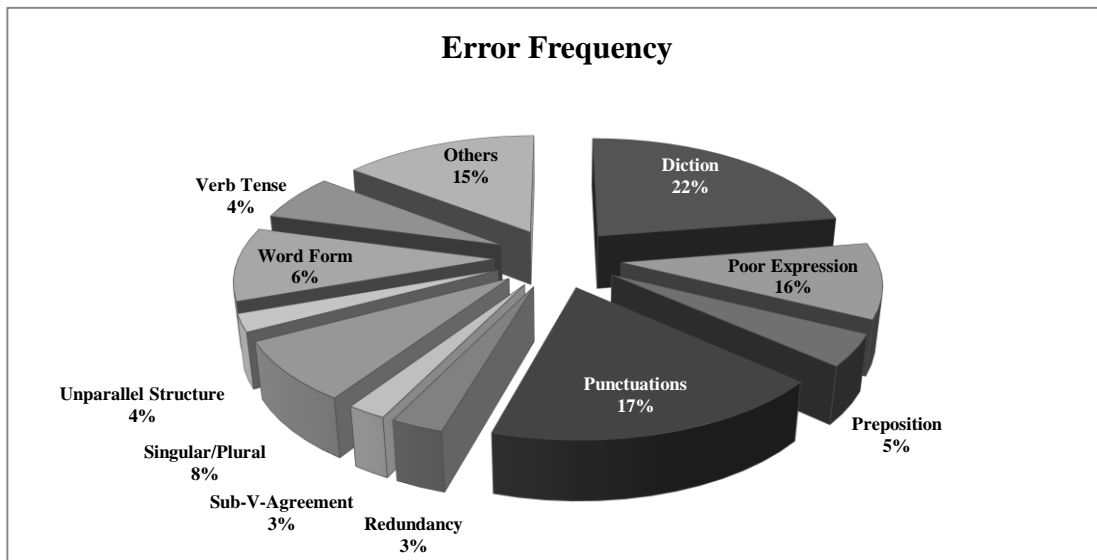


Figure 2. Classifications of Errors in Percentage through Error Analysis in BMS Text

As shown earlier in the table 2, the above figure 2 shows the results of error analysis based on percentage labeling clearly each type of the errors found in the texts of BMS in which errors of diction, punctuations and expression are more prevalent than other types of errors. Without realizing the need to focus on difficulties of diction with regard to academic vocabulary and expression relating to lexico-grammatical deviations, especially, focusing on style of writing, problems of L2 postgraduate students cannot be addressed expeditiously at higher education level.

The Table 3 given below consists of 40 introductions, 20 each from ITCS and BMS, displays comparative analysis of various words' frequencies in both disciplinary areas indicating more word-length in the text of ITCS indicating total as 8593 words compared to BMS with 6407. This comparative analysis provides certain other reasons of showing different results for contrasting in error frequencies as shown:

Table 3. Comparative Analysis of Discipline-wise Words' Frequency in Texts of Introductions of ITCS & BMS

No of RAs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total
ITCS	471	509	285	911	254	572	419	714	222	373	379	440	459	430	481	209	387	477	198	403	8593
BMS	305	350	287	478	310	248	394	295	382	230	197	245	310	412	213	384	274	521	245	327	6407

Table 4 given below further elaborates the results of error analysis with empirical data showing comparative analysis of interdisciplinary studies. Diction and expression remains as a key in EA to develop academic writing skills at higher education level for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) as novice writers.

Table 4. Comparative Analysis of Cross-disciplinary Data through Error Analysis

Disciplines	Words Min-Max	Total Words	Total Errors	Highest Freq. & Type of Errors	Lowest Freq. & Type of Errors	Total E of Diction	Total E of Expression
BMS	197 - 521	6,407	544	Diction 117	Sub-V-Agreement 13	117	87
ITCS	198 - 911	8,593	433	Diction 97	Sub-V-Agreement 09	97	43

The above Table 4 presents a comprehensive and consolidated outcome, describing with facts and figures. Among a number of errors selected for this paper, three most recurrent deficiencies exhibited in the texts of introductions of the published research articles are: poor diction, punctuations and poor expression found less or more in almost all the disciplines. (Astika,1993; Engber, 1995 and Ellis, R 1994) unanimously agree that a number errors consequently affects the quality of academic writing, irrespective of the categories of errors exhibited in the text, particularly, in research writing, tarnishing scholarly image of an author.

4. Findings

Though Error Analysis is one of the most effective ways to create awareness about various types of errors existed in the different kinds of texts of any discipline at all educational levels but, at higher education level, it is the most effective mechanism to develop understanding about various types of writings. However, in postgraduate studies in which a student is anticipated to have already developed the required linguistic competence in English language, diction and expression is more significant category than any other categories of errors in enhancing their linguistic communication, especially, research writing. The present study based on EA (error analysis) finds that a learning process of a language as an empirical evidence for example, (Grauberg 1971; Meara 1984 and Lennon 1991) are of the view that lexical errors are the most frequent found in written English.

This paper provides empirical evidence, reaffirming hypothesis of the researcher that writing academically at postgraduate education level poses a serious challenge for L2 novice writers. For the last few decades, the methods and means of error analysis have been applied in various categories of errors such as formal, informal, lexico-grammatical, semantics errors to identify, classify, and explain a number of errors, analyzing diverse texts of RAs. Among other common errors, this paper spotlights on diction and expression finding a gap in the area of applied linguistics since it is concerned with academic writing in producing a quality of text by L2 novice writers.

'Rewrites' given after each of the excerpt aims at demonstrating infinite vastness, richness and flexibility of English language with respect to diction and expression and developing understanding at postgraduate level of education in comparison to the texts in the excerpts, enabling L2 novice learners to realize about how diction and expression may be improved.

4.1 Limitations

Since linguistic competence of different postgraduate students is different depending on their educational background, social environment, linguistic strength, their self-efforts etc., their capacity to analyze, compare and rephrase in improving diction and expression may be diverse. Similarly, 'Rewrites' given by the researcher is based upon his own capacity and linguistic ability implying that there is always room to improve more in diction and expression.

The researcher has to undergo certain difficulties in rewriting the texts to improve diction and expression of the excerpts by adhering to the texts and contexts of the authors, thus, leaving more room to improve in expression of the texts.

5. Discussion

Error analysis in second language acquisition (SLA) began in the 1960s when Stephen Pit Corder and his colleagues sought to develop a typology of errors classified according to basic type relating to word order, Corder, S.P. (1967). The emphasis shifted from examining the grammatical structure of language to the underlying rules that govern language in

order to study of error treatment in language teaching, later adopted as teaching methodology.

A few among a constellation of studies conducted recently in error analysis on L2 novice writers' written work, particularly with reference to academic writing correspond with the ongoing development taking place in the area of applied linguistics at tertiary level of education. For instance, a study conducted by Agha, J., Kazemian, B., & Shahbaz, M. (2015) attempts to investigate as to why Pakistani ESL and Iranian EFL learners fail to produce grammatically correct sentences in English despite English being taught as a compulsory subject at all levels of education. The corpus comprises written assignments of tertiary level of student. Results show lack of grammatical accuracy in their writing and grammatical rules. The study shares some of the lexico-grammatical features affirming author's hypothesis that L2 novice writers face serious challenges in writing academically.

Another study undertaken by Darmstadt, T. (2011) on the theme of '*Lexico-grammatical properties of abstracts and research articles a corpus-based study of scientific discourse from multiple disciplines*' examines deductive & inductive empirical analysis of Abstract sections with the focus on textual and contextual variation in genre based disciplines. Though the study examined text and context analysis in genre-specific discipline, the current study corresponds with the feature of genre specific disciplines.

The instrument Markin4 software applied in this paper is also used in a case study by Darus, S. (2009), on '*Error Analysis of the Written English Essays of Secondary School Students in Malaysia*' that examines errors in a corpus of 72 essays written by L2 students. This instrument is widely used for analyzing, tagging and annotating students' written assignments submitted electronically. Diction and expression among other error classifications have been focused for analyzing contextualized use of vocabulary and improvement in writing style.

There is growing evidence that lack of competence of L2 university students in academic writing affects overall academic performance indicated in a study by Giridharan, B. (2012) under the title, '*Identifying Gaps in Academic Writing of ESL Students*'. Olivas and Li (2006) associated low L2 English proficiency level with poor academic performance of international students studying at higher education level in the United States. The study has examined the difficulties of the students in academic writing and identified common grammatical, structural and syntactic errors exhibited in written work.

The significance of vocabulary in L2 writing is highlighted in the study by Hemchua, S. (2006), entitling: '*An Analysis of lexical errors in the English compositions of Thai learners*'. The study analyzes error taxonomy based on James (1998) of 3rd year university students' English compositions for lexical errors. The findings show lexical errors in the written work of learners, having certain implications for L2 vocabulary teaching and learning.

With reference to L2 university students' use of tone and style, a study by Lai Chi, A.M. (2010), entitled: '*Applying Formal Vocabulary to Academic Writing: Is the Task Achievable?*' investigates the effectiveness of English course in teaching academic writing. The study recommends improvement of vocabulary by use of dictionary.

Academic writing in Asian EFL contexts is emphasized in a study by Luna Jing Cai, (2013) on the topic of '*Students' Perceptions of Academic Writing: A Needs Analysis of EAP in China*'. Through error analysis, the study undertaken by Zahoor, H., Hanif, M., Saqia, I.A., & Abaid, R. (2013), on '*An Error Analysis of L2 Writing at Higher Secondary Level in Multan, Pakistan*', finds out and describes the errors, their causes and sources, suggesting changes in the current teaching, testing, and methods.

All the above mentioned studies imply that in the field of applied linguistics especially in academic writing development, there is the dire need to create and produce more gaps to address the issues faced by international L2 university students in order to enhance their academic writing ability. Genre-specific interdisciplinary studies based on textual and contextual evaluation, analysis of language and style, diction and expression and other linguistic features still await more research by linguists in all educational settings. The excellence of higher academic institutions lies in producing a quality research work that depends only upon academic writing development of majority L2 university students.

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