

Identifying Grammatical Errors in Job Applications: A Comprehensive Analysis of Potential Employees' English Writing Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates grammatical errors through an analysis of potential employees' written job applications. The researchers have collected a total of 25 written compositions as a target sample from 5 different schools of Multan. The researchers identified lexical, syntactic and punctuation errors in each application and then compared the frequency of occurrence in the selected writing samples. Results show that syntactic errors have the highest frequency of occurrence (42%) followed by punctuation and lexical errors (29%) which have the same percentage. The study concludes that these errors arise due to learners'; insufficient inter-lingual competency, the effect of the applicant's first language, lack of grammatical knowledge and underdeveloped writing skills. The present research recommends investigating spoken errors during job interviews and also investigating the errors committed by potential employees who have completed 18 years of education.

Keywords: Grammatical errors, job applications, potential employee, writing skills, English

Introduction

Job seeking or job hunting requires some specific skills including mastery over language. In Pakistani context, job seekers are supposed to have a good command on English language especially in the education sector. Most educational institutes test the language command through a written document i.e. an application. However, all candidates are not skilled enough to write a formal and perfect application that can earn them a great job. Lack of writing skills, knowledge, and vocabulary leads to failure in job hunting. Therefore, it is necessary to find out the problematic areas by analyzing the written job applications of potential candidates.

Murcia and Olshtain (2000) claim that writing skill requires a high level of language control, problem-solving form, generating ideas, planning, goal setting, monitoring, and assessing what has been produced. Writing skill is rated as a hard task for most first and foreign language learners. For better understanding of the learners' problems in composing sentences, Error Analysis (EA) becomes a preferred tool of second or foreign language analysis. Zawahreh (2012) describes that error analysis tool compares the errors made by the learners in the target language and within the target language itself. The error analysis field was first established in the 1960s by Corder and his colleagues. Corder (1967) points

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out that error analysis encompasses two types: the theoretical type and the applied type. The theoretical type deals with understanding what and how learners learn a second or a foreign language. The focus of the applied type is on enabling learners to learn more effectively through using the knowledge of his language for pedagogical purposes. In any text written by humans there always occur errors in spelling, grammar, semantics and punctuation. Humans are not able to remove all of the errors. That is why publishing houses and editorial boards have to employ proof-readers who find errors in text, correct them and finally produce printed texts of the best possible quality. Brown (2000) states that in the writing skill, learners produce sentences in a particular order that are connected together in specific ways. However, learners encounter many difficulties when trying to produce sentences. Therefore, written production is one of the most difficult tasks for many ESL/EFL learners. Mastering writing skill involves a number of backward and forward movements between the ideas of the writer and the written text. Therefore, it is a complicated process and the correct choice of lexical items is very essential.

Words are the building blocks of language. When appropriately chosen, they help language structures hold together and also enable language learners convey their intended meaning. If they are improperly and inaccurately selected, they lead to the confusion and alteration of meaning. These lexical errors, in many cases, hinder communication and are less tolerated by readers as compared to syntactic errors. Also Vahallen and Schoonen (1989) attest to the importance of lexical knowledge in learning and communication in a foreign language. They emphasize that lexical knowledge is one of the most important factors in academic success. Many L2 teachers find that their students' wrong choice of words can be quite amusing. (cited in Shalaby et al., 2009). However, what is problematic, according to Zughoul (1991), is that the wrong lexical choice often causes the production of funny utterances and incomprehensible utterances. ESL/EFL teachers as well as researchers are confronted with the daunting task of dealing with their students' wrong lexical and syntactic choices, and often they do not know where to begin.

Furthermore, lexical errors and syntactic errors are quite widespread. An understanding of the nature of lexical errors calls for the employment of a well-founded and comprehensive taxonomy which acknowledges the highly complex nature of the process of ESL/EFL students' selection of words when writing. Further research is needed to explore the lexical errors in the areas of EFL and ESL to identify and resolve the problems which learners encounter. A limited number of error categories have been explored in the field of semantics. This renders us with a little knowledge about the complexity and inherent tendency of overlap of lexical errors. On contrary, research in syntactic field provides ample evidence for identifying and categorizing the errors. Syntactic errors are also common but it has been noted that a grammatically incorrect sentence often conveys the intended meaning. Correct use of punctuation marks is no less significant. It also alters the intended meaning especially in professional and formal writings.

As the present study focuses on formal job application writing, the correct use of punctuation is as necessary as the correct choice of lexis and the accurate sentence structure. A hand written statement by a candidate, seeking a job, is the first impression of his/her qualification, skills, knowledge and experience. So, erroneous writing lowers the market value of the candidate. Writing application for a job needs appropriate lexical resources. Presenting one's skills effectively may win one a job while erroneous writing

may cost one that job. In case of written language, the errors can be classified into two types: errors based on structure and those based on syntax. Errors based on structure involve form of written content, whereas those based on syntax are concerned with syntactic incorrectness that leads to unsuccessful language. The present study focuses on investigating the frequency of occurrence of errors in the written job applications by different degree holders. Furthermore, the researcher aims at categorizing the recorded errors in possible segregations.

Literature Review

Crystal (2003) defines error analysis, “as a way of identifying, classifying and systematically interrupting the unacceptable forms (of parts of speech) produced by someone learning a foreign language, using any of principles and procedures provided by the linguistics” (p.165). Likewise, Ellis (1997) defines four main steps concerning error analysis: identification, description, explanation and evaluation. It is also important to know the difference between error and mistake. According to Ellis (1997);

“Errors reflect gap in a learner’s knowledge. They occur because learner does not know what is correct. On the other hand, mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance. They occur because in a particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows.”(Ellis, 1997, p.17).

Pit Corder (1975) is known as ‘The Father of Error Analysis’. ‘Contrastive Analysis’ (CA) was the first way which was introduced to deal with errors. Corder (1975) introduced the concept of ‘Error Analysis’ (EA) in reaction to (CA). After the thorough review of the past literature, it is obvious that there were several attempts to define ‘writing’. Byrne (1996) defines writing as encoding of a certain idea or message through writing it in a sequence of sentences put together in a systematic way. Byrne (1996) is of the view that to organize the sentences properly, the learners should put some conscious effort such as taking notes, making drafts, revising, and refining. Furthermore, White and Arndt (1991) define ‘writing’ as;

“A form of problem-solving which involves such process as generating ideas, discovering a voice with which to write, planning, goal setting, monitoring and evaluating what is going to be written, and searching with language with which to express exact meanings” (p. 3).

A good writing sample must include a sufficient knowledge of grammatical rules, lexical items, and logical connections. A number of previous research provided different definitions for ‘error analyses’. Crystal (2003) defines EA in language teaching and learning as “the study of the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a language, especially a foreign language”. (p. 6). AbiSamra (2003) states that EA is generally applied to analyze the language skills and linguistic knowledge of the ESL and EFL learners. Ridha (2012) views EA as "the process to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second languages and to reveal the systems operated by learner" (p. 26). According to Hasyim (2002);

“Error analysis is carried out in order to: (a) find out how much one is competent in a language, (b) to find out how a person learns a language (c) to obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as an aid in teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials.” (p. 43).

Richard and Schmidt (2002) state that the errors in written composition are of two types;

Inter-lingual and intralingual errors. Inter-lingual errors can be detected as transfer errors caused by a learners' mother tongue merits such as grammatical errors, pragmatic errors or lexical errors. Intralingual errors can be attributed to the ignorance of rule restrictions, false concepts assumed, imperfect implementation of rules which often lead to overgeneralization. Ellis (1996) states that overgeneralization errors are caused when learners construct irregular structures unlike the target language structures, whereas unawareness of rule restrictions is the rule implementation in improper contexts. Ellis (1997) also added that imperfect implementation of rules arises when learners fail to develop a full structure, while false concepts assumed arises when learners misunderstand the distinction in the target language.

Error analysis is significant for all the parts involved in learning process. Corder (1974) affirms the significance of identifying errors committed by second or foreign language learners. He states that "the study of error is part of the investigation of the process of language learning" (p.125). Because instructors can measure the linguistic development of the learners and can predict the success of the learning process. The researcher recommends devising remedies and exercises that can address the troubled areas. Because language input is done on the part of the teacher but the output is determined by the learner. Therefore, error analysis is necessary as it provides guidance and a clear picture to the teachers, learners, and curriculum designers. Moreover, EA is also useful for the researchers in understanding the learners' strategies for the target language, reasons behind the repetitive errors and nature of the universal errors.

A number of studies have been conducted regarding error analysis. Summaira (2011) argues that the research goals to observe the errors in amount of 50 English essays written by 50 applicants (undergraduate Pakistani students). These applicants are non-native speakers of English language and all of them are from 'Intermediate background with weak English writing abilities. The occurrences of two kinds of errors; Inter- language errors and mother tongue (MT) interference errors have been matched and the outcomes show that the ratio of the occurrences of Inter-language errors is greater than those of errors causing from the interference of mother tongue (MT). The research has provided an awareness about language learning issues which arise when L2 learners assume the rules of target language (TL) in its construction at a certain point causing into errors in an unidentified and a more natural way. These errors serve as a beneficial guide for English teachers to strategy more effective syllabus for teaching and

learning of English as a second language'.

Some of the recent studies in the field of error analysis, focus on aspects such as proficiency levels, writing, and language learners. These ongoing researches provide insights into patterns of errors, their sources, and pedagogical strategies implied in language learning and teaching. Akbari and Zarrinabadi (2021) analyzed the errors of Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The analysis targeted the writing skills of learners at novice and intermediate levels. It compared the frequency and types of errors to identify common error patterns and developmental trends. A Corpus-Based analysis of errors in the writing of English Major students in Taiwan was carried out by Chen (2020). This study explored the errors which were commonly made by the learners targeted. It also investigated the relationship between linguistics features, error types, and proficiency levels. Likewise, El-Metwally (2020) investigated the writing produced by (EFL) students at Saudi University. The types and sources of errors for better understanding and language learning challenges were identified by the researcher and the pedagogical implications were also suggested. Sutoyo (2020) conducted a case study of Morphological errors in the

writing of Indonesian students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The study examined the frequency and

types of errors to improve their understanding of the language learning process. The present study focuses on three types of errors:

- Syntactic errors: At the sentence level such as incorrect arrangement of the sentence structure and wrong subject-verb agreement
- Lexical errors: At the words level including spelling errors and incorrect word choice
- Punctuation errors: Incorrect use of the punctuation marks, missing the punctuation or adding unnecessary marks.

In short, error analysis helps linguists to facilitate second or foreign language learners through training teachers and assisting them to identify and categorize learners' writing errors, as well as helping them employing appropriate strategies.

Objectives of the study

The present study has the following objective:

- To investigate the frequency of occurrence of errors in written job applications.
- Categorization of recorded errors in possible segregations in the written job applications of job seekers who have completed their 16 years education.

Research questions

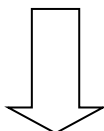
The present study focuses on syntactic errors. In this perspective, this study is an endeavor to answer following questions:

- What types of grammatical errors do graduate applicants commit while writing a job application?
- Among the identified grammatical errors, which errors occur most frequently and are consistently observed across all applications?

Methodology

The research methodology for the current paper involves contacting the relevant authorities, collecting the samples, analyzing each application and categorizing the errors. The researcher collected the applications through random sampling technique. This study concerning errors applies Corder (1975)'s amended approach to analyze employees' errors. Corder (1975) applied this model to the learners' write-up in the process of interlanguage and second language acquisition. The researcher has modified the model according to the requirements of the current paper. The figure 1.1 summarizes all the steps involved in conducting this research:

Error Analysis



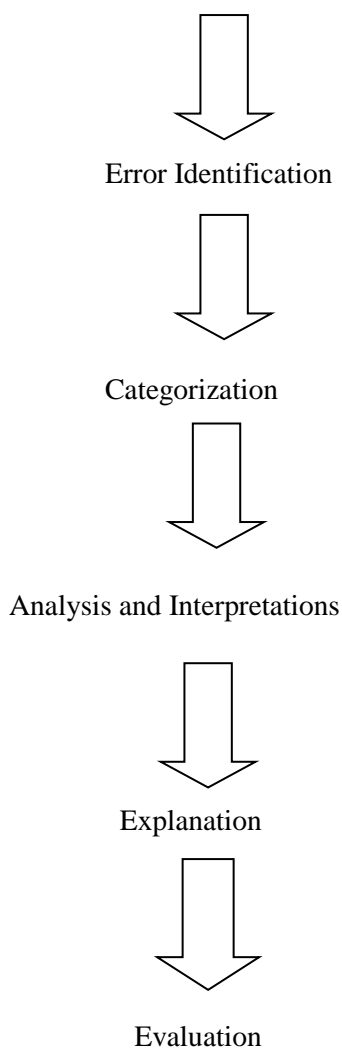


Figure: 1.1. Flow chart of research design

The researchers have identified errors in each application and then placed them into their respective categories. The next stage was to analyze and interpret the errors. A justification and explanation is given for each error. At the final stage, the researchers evaluated the data.

Data Collection

The population for this research is all the employees of private schools of Multan. The researcher has followed the random sampling technique. The data, written job applications, has been collected from 5 different private schools of Multan. The present study is delimited to the error analysis of 25 job applications written by the potential employees for different schools in Multan. The researcher has chosen only private schools. The research is further delimited to the selection of application written by the candidates who have completed their 16 years education. There is no gender specification; both male and female employees have been included in the population.

Data Analysis

The research is mixed involving both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Each application has been analyzed separately to identify the number of errors. The data is arranged in tables for the purpose of clarity and immediate identification. Qualitative analysis involves interpretation of the errors.

Application #1

Types	Syntactic Errors		Lexical Errors		Punctuation Errors	
	Sr.#	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement
1.	I saw your advertisement In newspaper, found that <u>Our</u> job requirements ...	Our	I did my matriculation and FS.c <u>exmination</u>	Examination	I did my matriculation and <u>FS.c</u>	FS.c
2.	I <u>have experience of</u> 3-year	Experience of	I <u>did/and continue</u> my Bs from..	And continue	I <u>did/and</u> continue	Did/and
3.	I tend to do my best in <u>his</u> field	his	If <u>slected</u>	slected		
4.	<u>I</u> would be my privilege	I	I look forward <u>to hearing</u>	To hearing		
5.	I look forward to hearing from <u>Your</u> soon	your				

Analysis and Interpretation

This job application reflects more syntactic errors than punctuation error. The writer (job Applicant) shows lack of knowledge of using certain pronouns such as ‘Our’ instead of ‘his’ and other words like experience, his, I and your. These words have been erroneously used in a grammatical construction. On the other hand, lexical discrepancies show the misspelled words and extra use of certain words such as ‘Examination’. Also, improper use of preposition with gerund such as ‘hearing’. At punctuation level, this application holds errors pertaining to poor formation of abbreviations and use of “/” in the words.

Application #2

Types	Syntactic Errors		Lexical Errors		
	Sr#	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word
	1.	I have <u>got</u> Master degree	got	<u>Master</u> degree	Master
	2.	I have adoped this sector <u>not</u> as <u>professionbut</u> passion	as profession but passion	I want to make my share in the progress of this upcoming generation <u>of</u> <u>development</u> Pakistan	Of development Pakistan
	3.	<u>I can satisfied</u> the administration	Can satisfied	I have <u>adoped</u> this sector	Adoped

Analysis and Interpretation

This job application reflects syntactic and lexical errors but no punctuation error has been found in it. The writer shows lack of grammatical knowledge of using form of verbs such as ‘have got’, ‘can satisfied’ instead of ‘have gotten’ and ‘can satisfy’ respectively and the improper use of certain conjunctions. While the lexical errors discrepancies show the inappropriate use of lexis such as ‘development Pakistan’ instead of ‘developing Pakistan’. Similarly ‘master degree’ instead of ‘Masters Degree’ and the misspelled words are also present.

Application #3

Types	Syntactic errors		Lexical errors		Punctuation errors	
	Statement		Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word
	1. I will work under <u>yours</u> kind headship	Yours	Which <u>fascinates</u> <u>to</u> me	Fascinates to	Visit to different <u>Locations, Areas</u> and Places	Locations, Areas and Places
	2. I <u>have been</u> teaching <u>from</u> six years	From	Different <u>area</u>	Different area		

Analysis and Interpretation

This job application reflects more syntactic and lexical errors than punctuation errors. The job applicant shows the lack of knowledge of using pronouns such as ‘yours’ instead of ‘your’ and the improper tense structure such as the use of ‘from’ instead of ‘for’ in present perfect continuous tense. While lexical errors include the use of some extra words, ‘to’ and the use of inflections. At punctuation level, the application holds errors pertaining to capitalization of common nouns in a sentence.

Application#4

Types	Syntactic errors		Lexical errors	
	Sr#	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement
1.	This school <u>is</u> promote	Is promote	I want <u>explore</u> my knowledge	explore
2.	The school is <u>make</u> progress	Is make		
3.	If I selected in this school	Selected		
	This <u>school</u> support me	School support		

Analysis and Interpretation

This job application reflects more syntactic errors than lexical errors. The writer(job applicant) shows the lack of knowledge of tense structure such as the use of simple present form with ‘is’ and the use of past indefinite tense instead of future indefinite tense and the incorrect subject verb agreement such as ‘school support’ instead of ‘school supports’. On the other hand, the lexical error discrepancies show the use of infinitive ‘to explore’ as the finite verb ‘I want explore’. At punctuation level, no error has been found.

Application#5

Types	Syntactic Errors		Lexical errors		Punctuation Errors	
	Sr#	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement
1.	This school has encourage me	<u>encourage</u>	I am an ideal candidate for teacher job	teacher	I am an ideal candidate for teacher job in This school	This
2.	Teaching is a low pay profession	Pay	I am attracted	attracted	That has strengthened my will to join This school	<u>This</u>
3.	A man can easily fascinated by envirnment	Can fascinated	A man can easily fascinated by environment	envirnment	I have good experience in different schools of multan as a teacher	Multan
4.			Well educated teaching faculty	faculty		

Analysis and Interpretation

This job application shows more lexical errors than syntactic and punctuation errors. The writer shows the lack of knowledge of tense such as the use of simple present form instead of past participle verb with ‘has’ and the use of past participle with modal verb ‘can’. Lexical discrepancies show the misspelled words. While, at punctuation level the capitalization of articles within the sentence and de-capitalization of proper noun ‘Multan’ is erroneous.

Application#6

Types Sr.#	Syntactic errors		Lexical errors		Punctuation errors	
	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word
1.	During my job I did as Acting Principal 03-04 times	Did	Three of them are studing in professional colleges		They are performing as Doctors, Engineers & Managers	Doctors, Engineers & Managers
2.	I have taken ll batches of 9 th +10 class taught urdu & got 5+/6 GPA in all classes	ll, 9 th +10 ,	I was appreciated	appriciated	During my job I did as Acting Principal	Job, Acting Principal
3.	I joined Fauji Foundation Model school on 13 th April 1992 & putting up about 25 years of job	Putting up	I am found of learning new things	found	I have taken ll batches of 9 th +10 class taught urdu	Taught urdu
4.			I received appreciation letters	Appriciation	I have taken ll batches of 9 th +10 class taught urdu	urdu

Analysis and Interpretations

This job application shows more lexical errors and punctuation errors than syntactic errors. The writer shows the lack of knowledge of proper sentence structure. Sentences have been incorrectly built and are more like phrases. While, the lexical discrepancies show the misspelled words and wrong word choice such as ‘I am found of learning’ instead of ‘I am fond of learning’. At punctuation level the capitalization of common nouns and some other words and the de-capitalization of proper noun such as ‘Urdu’ have been noted.

Application#7

Types	Syntactic Errors		Lexical errors		Punctuation Errors	
	Sr#	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement
1.	I am found of education as well as on teaching	On	I am found of education	found	Kindly give me the chance to prove myself	Kindly
2.	Mostly children dislike Math. I want to understand them that Maths is the mother of all science	Want to. Understand.	I am interested in teaching. My intrest	Intrested. Intrest.	Mostly children dislike math I want to understand them	Math I want to
3.	My interest to teach math and Physics to the matriculation students	interest	Mostly children dislike Math. My intrest to teach math. I taught math in Faislabad.	math		
4.			Maths is necessary in every feild of life	feild		
5.			Math is the mother of all science	All science		

Analysis and interpretation

This job application reflects more lexical errors than syntactic and punctuation errors. The writer (job applicant) shows the lack of knowledge of building correct sentence structure and the use of proper grammatical forms. The lexical inconsistencies show the misspelled words and the use of inappropriate lexis such as ‘I am found of education’ instead of ‘I am fond of education’. At punctuation level, this application reflects the capitalization and de-capitalization of certain words.

Application#8

Type	Syntactic errors		Lexical errors		Punctuation	Errors
	Sr.#	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement
1.	I have been offerd my self as a teacher	Have been	I have been offerd my self	offerd	I have been offerd my self	My self
2.	As according to my qualification if I Will be appointed I will do my best	As	I shall be very thankfull to your for this favour	Thankfull favour	Name# (ABC) Dated# (dd-mm-yyyy)	#
3.	To, Principal	(the)principal	Special interest; Mathamatics	mathamatics	To, Principal The ABC school	Principal,
4.	I shall be very thankfull to your for this favour	Your			As according to my qualification if I will be appointed I will do my best	According to my qualification, if I will be appointed, I will do my best
5.	Yours affectionate	affectionate				

Analysis and Interpretation

This job application shows more syntactic errors than lexical and punctuation errors. The writer (job applicant) shows the lack of knowledge of proper sentence structure and the use of correct tense such as ‘I have been offered myself’ instead of ‘I offer myself’ and the use of certain pronouns such as ‘thankful to your’ instead of ‘thankful to you’, ‘yours affectionate’ instead of ‘yours affectionately’. At lexical level the application reflects the misspelled words. At punctuation level the writer has used space improperly like ‘my self’ instead of ‘myself’ and the improper use of (#) mark and the comma (,) is missing where required.

Application#9

Types Sr.#	Syntactic errors		Lexical errors		Punctuation errors	
	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word
1.	Firstly I start a job in a software house	Firstly start	I have a well knowledge I have also a well experience	Well	Firstly I start a job in a software house in bahawalpur	Firstly, Bahawalpur
2.	After that I start working at leadership college	start	I can also give students a well knowledge and guidance	guidence	So I can teach the students with interest	So,
3.	Due to the work in a software house, I have a well knowledge.	Due to the work			I think islamic teachings are also very important for Students	Students
4.	I have also a well experience	Have also			I have Completed my masters	Completed Masters

Analysis and Interpretation

This job application reflects more syntactic and punctuation errors than lexical errors. The writer (job applicant) shows the lack of knowledge of use of proper form of verb and tense such as ‘firstly, I start a job’ instead of ‘firstly, I started a job’ and other similar errors. Also the sentence arrangement is incorrect such as ‘I have also a well experience’ instead of ‘I also have a well experience’. The lexical inconsistencies show the wrong word choice, ‘well’ instead of ‘good’ and misspelled word. At punctuation level this application holds the error pertaining to capitalization of common nouns and de-capitalization of proper nouns and also the lack of comma (,) at certain places.

Application#10

Types	Syntactic errors		Lexical errors		Punctuation errors	
	Sr.#	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement	Erroneous word	Statement
1.	I to become a good teacher to my students	Teacher to	To teach them in a well manner	well	My Name is ...	Name
2.	They have given me a additional charge	A additional	This will be an honour for me	honour	My aim is to provide Quality education to my Students. To teach them in a well manner	Quality Students. To
3.	I have also win the best teacher of the month award from there	Have win there			i will be obliged	i
4.	To enhance the skill i will be obliged if school provides me the opportunity	To				
5.	I have also done a job at call center	Have also done				

Analysis and Interpretation

This job application reflects more syntactic errors than lexical and punctuation errors. The writer (job applicant) shows the lack of knowledge of correct use of articles such as ‘a additional charge’ instead of ‘an additional charge’, of sentence structure and of form of verb such as ‘I have also win’ instead of ‘I have also won’ and the use of ‘to’ unnecessarily. On the other hand, lexical discrepancies show the improper word choice such as ‘to teach them in a well manner’ instead of ‘to teach them in a good manner’ and misspelled word. Punctuation errors include capitalization of common noun such as ‘name, students’ and de-capitalization of proper pronoun such as ‘i’ instead of ‘I’.

Findings and discussion

Syntactic errors are most frequent followed by punctuation and lexical errors. Abundance

of syntactic errors suggests that applicants show a lack of necessary knowledge for sentence building and structure. Lexical errors exhibit weak vocabulary and limited linguistic repertoire. While punctuation errors reflect confusion, unclear concepts and underdeveloped writing skills. Number and percentage of all three categories of errors found after analysis are as follows:

Types of errors	Syntactic errors	Lexical errors	Punctuation errors
Number of errors	102	69	70
Percentage	42%	29%	29%

Table: 1. Frequency of occurrence of each type of errors in 25 written samples

The following chart gives a concise picture of the comparative percentage of each type of error in all 25 written job applications.

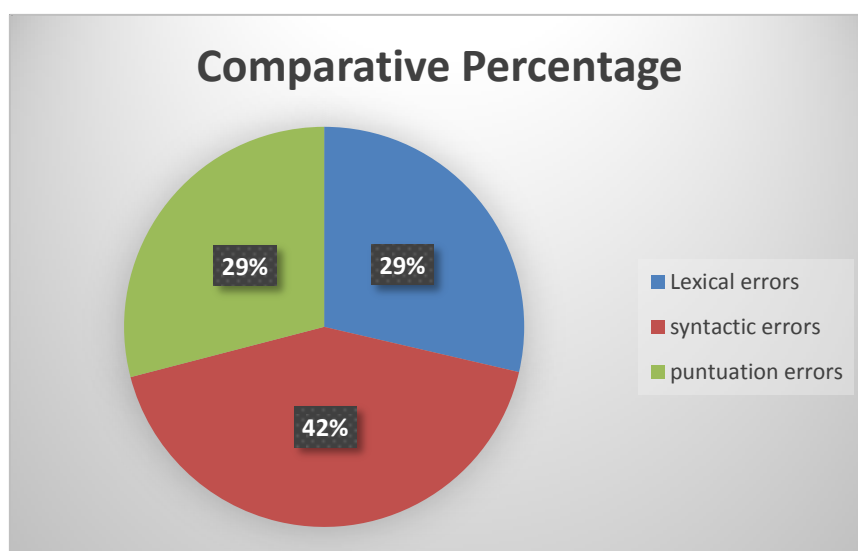


Figure: 1. Frequency of occurrence and percentage of grammatical errors in samples

The analysis of all 25 job applications reflects three main types of errors including syntactic errors, lexical errors and punctuation errors. The frequency of occurrence of syntactic errors is the highest of all. The table 2 below identifies the sub categories of each type of grammatical error.

Sr#	LEXICAL ERRORS	SYNTACTIC ERRORS	PUNCTUATION ERRORS
1.	Spelling errors	Subject verb agreement	Capitalization of common nouns and some other lexis
2.	Inappropriate lexical choice	Incorrect sentence structure	Unnecessary use of comma and full stop
3.	Use of noun instead of verb and vice versa	Use of pronouns	Absence of comma and full stop at required places
4.	Wrong word category	Tense and time choices	De capitalization of proper nouns and abbreviations
5.	Incorrect semantic choices	Incorrect form of verb	
6.		Inappropriate use of prepositions	
7.		Inappropriate use of conjunctions	

Table: 2. Sub-categories of lexical, syntactic and punctuation errors

The research indicates underdeveloped language and writing skills of potential job seekers who have completed 16 years of education. Many applicants adopted an informal writing style that is reflected through choice of words and sentence structure. They lack necessary knowledge of the sentence building and write according to the grammatical rules of their first language-Urdu. The choice of tenses is also wrong as the writers cannot differentiate between the time concepts that exists in L1 and L2. Likewise, punctuation errors reflect the unorganized thoughts and writing flow. Overall, the applications highlight significant gaps in L2 efficiency, learning, skills, and a heavy impact of L1. Lexical and punctuation errors have almost the same frequency of occurrence which suggests that both these grammatical areas have some sort of correlation. This phenomenon can be further investigated by carrying out research in this field.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the major types of errors reflected in writings of ‘job applicants’ are related to agreement-based errors, pronoun errors, tense and sentence errors, prepositional and conjunctive errors, spelling errors, word choice errors and punctuation errors that includes errors based on abbreviations, capitalization, de capitalization and other punctuation marks errors. Moreover, the highest frequency of errors is related to agreement-based errors. The study also concludes that some of the errors are intralingual that is they occur due to the influence of Mother tongue (MT) but MT is not the complete source of language errors. Some of the errors are also because of writer’s lack of linguistic knowledge of the target language. Therefore, errors have their relation to both learners’ MT and TL. The present research is limited only to job applicants (who have completed their 16 years education in any subject) at school level and only focuses on errors in relation to their L2 writing.

Future Recommendations

The present study is a unique research of its kind as it focuses on investigating the language skills and linguistic knowledge of the potential job seekers. Furthermore, this study recommends:

- Investigating the nature of the errors with respect to spoken language during job Interviews
- Investigating the errors committed by job applicants who have completed 18 years of education.
- Comparative study of job applications of less developed areas and more developed areas of Pakistan.
- Identifying and devising possible solutions in order to avoid error occurrences in the job applications.
- Formulating the teaching strategies in order to make learners more competent and skillful to avoid future problems.

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