İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLİĞİ ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN CÜMLE DÜZEYİNDEKİ HATALARININ ANALİZİ

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Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Anabilim Dalında okuyan birinci sınıf öğrencilerinin yazılı kompozisyonlarındaki hataları ve bunların türü, kaynakları ve sıklığını tespit etmektir.Yazma becerisi, öğrencinin doğru dilbilgisi ve sözcükleri seçmesi gereken ve amaçlanan mesajı vermek için dilbilgisi ve sözcüklerin belirli bir düzende sıralandığı karmaşık ve zor bir beceridir. Yazma becerisi üretime dayalı bir beceri olduğu için öğrencinin bu beceriyi geliştirmesi genellikle zordur ve uzun zaman almaktadır. Üretime dayalı beceriler, algılamaya dayalı becerilerin aksine, ayrı parçaların birleştirilmesini kapsamaktadır. Bir yazı, sözdizimi, içerik, süreç, hedef kitle, amaç, sözcük seçimi, düzen, noktalama ve dilbilgisi gibi birbiriyle ilgili unsurların birleştirilmesiyle üretilmektedir (Raimes, 1983). Öğrenciler, bağdaşık bir yazı için bütün bu unsurları eş zamanlı olarak uygulamak zorundadırlar. Corder'ın (1974) belirttiği gibi yazma becerisi öğrencilerin geliştirmeleri gereken en zor beceridir. Yazma becerisi, kendi dillerinde düşünen İngilizce'yi anadili olarak konuşanlara kıyasla genellikle ana dillerinde düşünen İngilizce'yi anadil olarak konuşmayanlar için nispeten daha zordur. Ancak Richards ve Renandya'ya göre (2002) yazmanın zorluğu yalnızca fikirleri üretmek ve organize etmekten kaynaklanmamakta, fakat aynı zamanda yazmada zorluk fikirleri bağdaşık bir metin haline getirmekte de yatmaktadır. Yazma becerisinin uzun bir zaman sürecinde deneyimle geliştirilip öğrenilebilecek bir beceri olduğu belirtilmektedir. Bağdaşık ve hatasız bir metin üretebilmek önemli ölçüde bilinçli bir çaba ve çalışma, yazma stratejileri, teknikleri ve becerilerini gerekli kılmaktadır.

Yazma becerisi, geliştirilmesi zor ve uzun bir süreç gerektirdiği için çoğunlukla önemsenmemektedir. Ancak, hedef dilde konuşma becerisi yanında genel bir yeterliğe sahip olmak için yazma becerisinin geliştirilmesinin esas olduğu düşünülmektedir. Yazma becerisi hem yeni öğrenilen yapıları hem de yeni öğrenilen sözcüklerin pratiğini yapma ve bunları güçlendirmek açısından önemli bir işleve sahiptir. Ayrıca, yazma da tıpkı konuşma becerisi gibi gerçek yaşam durumlarında iletişimsel işlevleri yerine getirmektedir. Raimes'e (1983) göre yazmanın bazı önemli yararları bulunmaktadır. Öncelikle yazma dilsel yeterliliğin gelişmesine katkıda bulunur ve yeni yapıları ve sözcükleri pekiştirir. İkincisi, dilbilgisi ve sözcüklerin yeni biçimlerde birleştirilmesini sağlayarak öğrencilerin hedef dilde yeni mesajlar üretmelerine olanak tanır. Üçüncüsü, göz, el ve beynin işbirliği içinde çalışmasına katkıda bulunarak hedef dilin iyice pekişmesine katkıda bulunur. Öğrenciler yazma becerisiyle fikirleri ve düşünceleri yeni biçimlerde ifade etme fırsatı bulurlar. Son olarak, yazma becerisiyle öğrenciler yalnızca pratik yapmak için değil gerçek bir ihtiyaçtan dolayı yazdıkça hedef dilde hem iletişim yeterliliği hem de pratik yapma imkânına kavuşurlar.

Rajatanun'a göre (1988), bir paragraf, ana fikir, konu cümlesi ve birçok destek ifadelerinden oluşan bir birimdir. O'Donnell ve Paiva (1993) bir yazının şu unsurlara da sahip olması gerektiğini belirtmektedirler. Bunlar konu cümlesi, destek cümleleri, ayrıntılar, mantıksal sıra, bağlaçlar, sonuç cümlesi, konu bütünlüğü ve bağdaşıklıktır. Bir yazıda fikirler, bağlaçlar ve geçiş ifadeleri kullanılarak mantıksal bir sırayla sunulmalıdır. Paragrafta ana fikri başka bir biçimde belirten bir sonuç cümlesi bulunmalıdır. Reid'a göre (1994) sonuç cümlesi, yazıyı özetler, bir probleme çözüm sunar, bir durumun tahmin edilmesini sağlar, bir tavsiyede bulunur ya da bir sonuç önerir. Bir paragrafın ana unsurları konu bütünlüğü, bağdaşıklık, ana fikir ve destekleyici fikirlerdir. Bu unsurlar olmadan paragraf anlamsız, ilgisiz ve bağlantısız cümleler karışımı haline gelir. Paragrafta konu bütünlüğü ve konu cümlesi bulunabilir ancak, paragraftaki cümleler arasında karşılıklı bağlantı bulunmayabilir. Bu ise bağdaşıklık denilen araçla sağlanmalıdır. Tüm bu unsurlar düşünüldüğünde, yazma becerisinin konuşma becerisinden daha karmaşık ve zor olduğu sonucuna varılmaktadır. Bu karmaşıklık ise yazma becerisinde birçok hata yapılmasına neden olmaktadır. Bu nedenle, yazma sürecinde hatalar kaçınılmaz hale gelmektedir. Corder'a göre (1971) hata yazma performansında meydana gelen kusurlardır. Benzer biçimde, Norrish (1983) hatayı, öğrencinin bir şeyi eksik ya da yanlış öğrendiği zaman meydana gelen sistematik sapma olarak tanımlamaktadır. Yazma becerisinde hataların dikkate alınması ve incelenmesi üç açıdan önem arz etmektedir. Birincisi, hatalar, öğrencinin hedef dilde nasıl ve ne kadar ilerlediğini gösterir. İkincisi, hatalar yabancı dilin nasıl öğrenildiği, edinildiği ve öğrencinin hangi stratejiler ve prosedürler kullanarak hedef dili keşfettiği konusunda araştırmacılara ve öğretmenlere deliller ve veriler sunar. Üçüncüsü, hatalar yabancı dil öğrenmede öğrencinin hipotezlerini test edip bunları düzelterek hedef dili öğrenmesini sağlar (Corder, 1974). Ayrıca hatalar teşhis amaçlı da kullanılabilir. Böylece, hatalar öğrencilerin hedef dili nasıl kavradığını gösterir ve öğretmenlerin kullandıkları öğretim materyallerini öğrencilerin ilgi ve ihtiyaçlarına uygun hale getirmelerini sağlar. Son olarak hatalar öğrenmenin gerçekleştiğinin bir kanıtı olarak görülmektedir.

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Araştırmaya Erciyes Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi İngilizce Öğretmenliği Anabilim Dalında okuyan 106 öğrenci katılmıştır. Bu amaçla, İleri Okuma ve Yazma dersinde öğrenciler tarafından yazılan 184 kompozisyonda yer alan hatalar tarama yöntemiyle tespit edilmiştir. Araştırmaya katılanlardan 87'si kız, 19'u erkektir. Her kategoride yer alan hatalar için yüzdelikler hesaplanmıştır. Öğrencilerin dilbilgisi ve imla kategorilerinin hemen hepsinde hatalar yaptıkları bulunmuştur. Ayrıca, hatalar ana dil kaynaklı ve dil içi hatalar olmak üzere iki ana kategoride incelenmiş ve hata türlerine göre alt kategorilere ayrılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda, öğrencilerin en fazla dil içi hatalar yaptıkları bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır. Verileri analiz etmek için (Corder, 1974: 147-170) tarafından önerilen üç adımlı hata analizi gerçekleştirilmiştir. (1) Hata örneklerinin toplanması, (2) Hataların türünün tespit edilmesi ve (3) Hataların tanımlanması. Hataların sınıflamasının doğruluğunu kontrol etmek için İleri Okuma ve Yazma dersini daha önce okutmuş olan İngilizce öğretmenliği anabilim dalındaki öğretim elemanlarının değerlendirmesine başvurulmuştur. Değerlendirmeci güvenirliği .75 olarak hesaplanmıştır. Öğrenciler yazılı kompozisyonlarında birçok dilbilgisi ve noktalama hataları yapmışlardır. Ana dilden kaynaklı hatalar kategorisinde altı hata türü ve 318 adet çok çeşitli hatalar tespit edilmiştir. Dil içi hatalar kategorisinde ise 21 hata türü ve 632 adet çok çeşitli hatalar tespit edilmiştir. Tüm hatalar içinde dil içi hatalar kategorisi en çok hatanın bulunduğu kategori olmuştur. Her kategoriye ait hatalar için öğrencilerin kompozisyonlarından alınan hatalar örnek olarak gösterilmiştir. Öğrencilerin yazılı kompozisyonlarında yer alan hataların ana nedeni hedef dilin kurallarının eksik uygulanması, hedef dilin kuralları konusunda yeni durumlarda gereğinden fazla genelleme yapılması ve bazı durumlarda hedef dilin kurallarının tam olarak öğrenilmemiş olmasında yatmaktadır. Öğrencilerin hedef dilde yapmış oldukları hatalar ana dillerinden de kaynaklanmaktadır. Yabancı dil öğrenmenin özellikle ilk aşamalarında ana dilden yoğun bir olumsuz transfer hedef dilde birçok hataların yapılmasına neden olmaktadır ve öğretmenler bu hata kaynağına çok dikkat etmelidirler (Brown, 1980). Hataların düzeltilmesine bir çözüm olarak öncelikle hatalar önemli ve önemsiz olmak üzere ikiye ayrılmalıdır. Öğretmenler öncelikle hangi hataların öncelikle düzeltilmesi gerektiğine karar vermelidirler. Hatalar üç türlü düzeltilebilir. Bunlar öğretmen düzeltmesi, akran düzeltmesi ve öz düzeltmedir. Öğretmen düzeltmesi başta gelmektedir ve öğretmen hataların kaynaklarını ve sebeplerini öğrencilere iyice anlatmalıdır. Öğrencilerin hatalarının farkına varabilmeleri için, öğretmen öğrencilere hatalarını nasıl düzeltebilecekleri ile ilgili bazı sembolleri öğretilebilir, öğrenci kompozisyonlarındaki bu hataları sembollerle belirtilebilir ve böylece öğrenciler hatalarının farkına varabilirler. Son olarak, öğrenciler bu sembolleri kullanarak bu hataları kendileri düzeltebilirler. Öğrenciler akran düzeltmesi yardımıyla birbirinden öğrenebilir ve hedef dili daha kritik biçimde değerlendirebilir ve hedef dil sistemini daha iyi keşfedebilirler (Zamel, 1985).

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yazma Becerisi, Hatalar, Ana Dil Kaynaklı Hatalar, Dil İçi Hatalar

An Analysıs Of Sentence Level Errors Of ELT Students

Abstract

The aim of this study is to identify the types, sources and frequency of errors made by first year ELT students in their compositions. The participants in the study are the 106 first year students who study at Erciyes University, Faculty of Education, ELT Department. For this purpose, errors in 184 compositions written by the 106 students in the Advanced Reading and Writing course were identified through survey method. Of the 106 students, 87 were female and 19 were male. Percentages were calculated for each category of errors. It was found that most students made errors in nearly all categories of grammar and punctuation. The errors in the compositions were put into two main categories: grammar errors and punctuation errors. The grammar errors were later categorized into preposition errors, tense errors, wrong form of adverb or adjective, wrong pronoun, coordinating conjunctions, articles, etc. The number and frequency of errors for each category was calculated. The most frequently made errors are intralingual errors. The intralingual errors contain a number of subcategories. The students also committed errors belonging to the category of interlingual errors with six subcategories. The findings are discussed in line with the literature and suggestions are offered as to how errors can be remedied.

Keywords: Writing Skill, Errors, Interlingual Errors, Intralingual Errors

1. Introduction

Writing is a complex and difficult skill to master in which the learner has to choose the right grammar and vocabulary items and he has to order them in certain ways in order to give the intended message. Because writing is a productive skill, it is usually difficult and takes a long time for the learner to develop this skill. Productive skills involve combination of separate parts, i.e. vocabulary and grammar as opposed to receptive skills which require the learner to decode already combined parts. A piece of writing can be generated through a combination of many interrelated elements such as syntax, content, the writer's process, audience, purpose, word choice, organization, mechanics and grammar (Raimes, 1983). Syntax relates to sentence structure, sentence boundaries, stylistic choices, etc. Content covers such features as relevance, clarity, originality, logic, etc. The writer's process has to do with getting ideas, getting started, writing drafts and revising. Audience refers to readers. Purpose is the reason for writing. Word choice deals with vocabulary, idiom, tone, etc. Organization which is beyond sentence level involves paragraphs, topic and support, cohesion and unity. Mechanics includes handwriting, spelling, punctuation, etc. Grammar comprises rules of verbs, agreement, articles, pronouns, etc. Because writing occurs with a variety of complex and interrelated features, the learner usually makes errors within some or all of these features of writing. Moreover, the learner has a greater difficulty in writing at essay level than paragraph level because essay writing is usually an extended writing activity and essay writing is composed of a number of rules. The learner has to orchestrate those rules simultaneously to produce a coherent piece of writing. Writing is not a simple skill, but it is made up of higher and lower level skills. Higher level skills include content, structure, and organization while lower level skills cover those aspects such as vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. The learner has to make a number of choices and decisions regarding these skills while writing at essay level (Richards and Renandya, 2002). Hedge (1998) gives an elaborated list of the requirements of writing. Accordingly, effective writing requires a number of things: a high degree of development in the organization of ideas and information; a high degree of accuracy so that there is no ambiguity of meaning; the use of complex grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and careful choice of vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and sentence structures to create a style which is appropriate to the subject matter and the eventual readers. Considering this complex nature of the writing skill, as Corder (1974) points out, writing is certainly the most difficult skill for L2 learners to master. They also draw attention to a significant fact regarding the difficulty of writing. Writing is relatively more difficult for non-native speakers who usually think in their native language than native speakers who can think in their own native language. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), the difficulty stems not only from generating and organizing ideas, but also from putting all those ideas into a coherent and legible text. Moreover, writing is a skill which must be learned, practiced and developed over time through experience. Thus, producing

coherent and error-free texts demands a considerable amount of conscious effort and practice together with the acquisition of proficiency in the use of the target language and learning of writing strategies, techniques and skills.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Research on Error Analysis

In the literature, there exists a number of studies which investigated different types of errors in students' written compositions. In a study conducted by Tan (2007) with 95 university students, students made errors regarding word choice, verb forms, missing subject, verb tense, preposition, word order, articles, parts of speech, spelling, etc. The major causes of these errors are attributed to limited vocabulary size, poor grammar knowledge and interference from first language. Liu (1999) studied lexical and grammatical errors from 127 final examination papers and from 94 students' written compositions. In this study, it is seen that causes of errors are attributed to negative interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer. Huang (2001) investigated the nature and distribution of different kinds of grammatical errors made by 46 English majors of a Taiwanese university. A total of 1700 errors were found and categorized into 13 error types. The common errors were (1) Verb (2) Noun (3) Spelling (4) Article (5) Preposition and (6) Word Choice. Overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, simplification, incomplete application of rules and L1 transfer were found to be the major causes of EFL learners' errors. In another study conducted by Chan (2004) with 710 ESL learners at different proficiency levels, it was found that students committed a number of errors such as incorrect placement of adverbs, verb forms, relative clauses, etc. The results showed that the students made negative syntactic transfer from Chinese to English. Huang (2006) analyzed 34 students' writing errors which included categories of grammar, mechanics, style and usage. It was concluded that these errors were not due to insufficient command of linguistic complexity, but a negative transfer from the native language to the target language.

When above studies are examined, it is seen that they include relatively small number of the types of errors. They are limited to investigating the types of errors such as verbs, nouns, spelling, articles, prepositions and word choice. However, in the present study, a variety of and detailed types of grammatical errors in the categories of interlingual and intralingual errors were identified and studied, which was not found in other studies. Those grammatical errors included subordinating conjunctions, singular/plural, countable/uncountable nouns, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, infinitives, gerunds, redundancy, etc. Thus, it can be concluded that this study is significant in terms of identifying a large and detailed types of grammatical errors.

The aim of the study was to identify the types and sources of errors made by first year ELT students in their compositions and to find out which errors are committed frequently by the learners.

2.2 The Significance of Writing

Although writing is largely ignored in many EFL classes because it is a difficult skill to master and it takes a long time to develop it. However, writing can be considered as an essential skill to master in order to ensure an overall competence in the target language along with speaking. It has the function of both practicing and reinforcing newly learned structures and lexical items. In addition, writing also performs a communicative function of language just like speaking since it is also used in real life situations. Furthermore, as learners write, they retain what they learn in lessons for long periods of time. Similarly, Raimes (1983) mentions some essential benefits of writing for the development of linguistic proficiency of learners in terms of ESL or EFL instruction. Thus, first, writing has the function of reinforcing the grammatical structures, idioms, and vocabulary items which were taught, and it also offers learners practice opportunities to use these linguistic elements in different contexts. Second, it gives learners a chance to combine grammar and vocabulary in novel ways to produce new messages. Third, as learners get involved with the new language, their effort to express ideas and the cooperation of eyes, hand and the brain lead to the reinforcement of the mastery of the new language. Moreover, as learners struggle with the new language, they may discover new ways of expressing ideas and thoughts. Finally, as learners put down new ideas on paper, they discover a real need to find the right words and sentences, which ensures that they use the new language for communicative purposes as well as practice purposes.

2.3 Essential Features of Writing

In addition to being a significant skill to master which leads to reinforcement of the new language items, production of novel messages and mastery of the new language, there are some essential features of writing to produce a well-organized and coherent paragraph. Writing at paragraph or essay level is difficult and necessitates a combination of many factors. Therefore, paragraph writing or the organization of a paragraph is of primary importance. However, in writing learners begin to build larger units from smaller ones. They use words to make sentences, sentences to make paragraphs, and paragraphs to write essays (Hart & Reinking, 1990). According to Rajatanun (1988), a paragraph is a unit of writing which expresses one central idea and consists of two kinds of sentences: a topic sentence and a number of supporting statements.

However, according to O'Donnell and Paiva (1993), there are more details about the essential parts for writing which include a topic sentence, supporting sentences, details, logical order, logical connectors, a concluding sentence, unity and coherence. The ideas in the paragraph must be presented in logical order by using transition markers or connecting words which indicate the relationship between the ideas (chronological, causal, spatial etc.). A paragraph may have a concluding sen-

tence, which restates the main idea in a different way. According to Reid (1994), the concluding sentence summarizes the material, offers a solution to the problem, predicts a situation, makes a recommendation, or states a conclusion.

The main components of a paragraph are unity and coherence together with the main idea and the supporting details. Without these components, the paragraph will be meaningless and a mixture of unrelated and unconnected sentences. The paragraph could be unified, and the topic sentence could be well supported; however, it can still lack logical and interconnected relationships among sentences unless the writer uses coherence devices to make the paragraph smoother. Coherence means "to stick together." In writing, it means that sentences are related and connected to each other semantically and logically through a spatial order, a temporal order, a cause-effect relationship, comparison-contrast, etc. Coherence also means that one thought in a sentence flows smoothly into the next. One way to achieve coherence is with the use of connectors called transition words or phrases that link one sentence to another (Wyrick 1999). Therefore, to produce an effective piece of writing, students should focus on organization by (1) choosing an appropriate topic sentence (2) identifying general and specific statements (3) arranging sentences in order and (4) inserting or deleting some sentences and ending with a concluding sentence.

Considering a combination of all these components and complexity of writing, it can be concluded that writing is much more difficult than speaking (Norrish, 1983). Writing is more complex because it tests both a person's ability to use a language and the ability to express ideas. Thus, a person needs to write both coherently and correctly, which requires a considerable amount of time and effort (Liu & Braine, 2005). Therefore, learners are more prone to making errors in their writing due to this difficulty of writing.

2.4 The Significance and Types of Errors

Learning the target language is a long and gradual process which develops over time, and achieving full competence in all aspects of the target language cannot be realized in a very short time. In the process of foreign or second language learning learners will inevitably and naturally exhibit some faulty performance until they have fully mastered the rules of the target language and approximated the norms of the target language. Therefore, errors or mistakes are inevitable during the process of learning a foreign language. According to Corder (1971), an error is 'the result of some failure of performance'. Similarly, Norrish (1983) defines 'an error' as a systematic deviation that happens when a learner has not learnt something and consistently 'gets it wrong'. Also, James (1998) identifies an error as an unsuccessful bit of language. Furthermore, he points out that error is unique to humans, and error analysis is the process of determining the incidence, nature, causes and consequences of unsuccessful language performance.

Although the terms mistake and error are used interchangeably, they refer to different faulty performance. According to Brown (1980), a mistake refers to a type of performance error which results in the learner using the language incorrectly while an error is a deviant structure from the standard language reflecting the interlanguage ability of the learner. Norrish (1983) makes a clear distinction between an error and a mistake. He states that an error is "systematic deviation when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong." He says that when a learner of English as a second or a foreign language makes an error systematically, it is because he has not learnt the correct form. On the other hand, he defines a mistake as "inconsistent deviation." When a learner has been taught a certain correct form, and he uses one form sometimes and another at other times quite inconsistently, so this inconsistent deviation is called a mistake.

Regarding these definitions of mistake and error, Corder (1967) and James (1998) give a criterion to identify a mistake and an error. A mistake does not require special treatment assuming they are recognized. Thus, a mistake is using the target language incorrectly due to faulty performance. When the learner is asked to correct the mistake, he can usually say the correct form.

However, an error refers to structures only. An error is a systematic deviation from the standard language, and it is likely to happen regularly and it is not recognized by the learner. When the learner is asked to correct an error, he usually cannot give the correct form. Hence, only the teacher or researcher can locate and identify an error; however, the learner himself cannot do this (Gass & Selinker, 1994).

Corder (1974) regards errors significant in three different aspects. First, errors inform the teacher about how far the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn. Second, errors are sources of evidence for researchers to see and understand how language is learnt or acquired and what strategies or procedures the learner employs in his discovery of the target language. Third, errors are indispensable means to the learner himself because they can be regarded as a device by which he tests his hypotheses about the target language in order to learn.

Furthermore, Corder (1974) suggests that learner errors can serve two main purposes: diagnostic and prognostic. Errors can be made use of diagnostically because they can tell us the learner's grasp of a language at any given point during the learning process. Also, they can serve prognostic purposes because they can tell the teacher to modify learning materials to meet the learners' problems. Moreover, he contends that errors are visible proof that learning is taking place. Thus, he emphasizes that a systematic study of errors can provide significant insights into how a language is actually learned by a foreigner. Studying students' errors of usage can find immediate practical applications in the classroom. For instance, errors provide feedback and they inform the teacher about the effectiveness of a number of factors affecting learning such as teaching style, methods, techniques, instructional materi-

als. As a result, an effective use of error analysis and appropriate corrective techniques can serve to diagnose and remedy errors and it can lead to an effective learning of the target language.

Ellis (1995) states that the most significant contribution of error analysis lies in its success in elevating the status of errors from undesirability to that of a guide. Thus, errors are no longer regarded as 'unwanted forms', but as evidence of the learner's active contribution to second language acquisition.

Norrish (1983) gives some sources for the occurrence of errors. These are carelessness, L1 interference, translation from L1, contrastive analysis, general order of difficulty, overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, material-induced errors and a part of language creativity. These sources inform us that the learner makes use of the knowledge of both L1 and L2 in producing his sentences. Thus, this indicates that errors should be studied multi-dimensionally to understand and identify the nature and sources of errors and gain insights into how learning or acquisition proceeds and what processes or stages he goes through in learning or acquisition. However, the study of the types of errors indicates that there are usually two sources of errors which can be termed as interlingual and intralingual (Brown, 1980).

Interlingual errors are those which stem from the native language. Such errors occur when the learners' native language habits (patterns, systems or rules) interfere or prevent them, to some extent, from acquiring the patterns and rules of the second language. Interference occurs when one language is put in contact with another one. In the case of a foreign language learner, there will be interference when all his previous linguistic habits are put in contact with new ones he has to acquire (Corder, 1971). Interference is the negative influence of the native language on the performance of the target language (Lado, 1964). Thus, the errors at the earlier stages of learning can be accounted for by a good deal of interlingual transfer or interference from L1. Brown (1980) suggests that, at early stages of learning, L1 is the only linguistic system on which the learner can depend before he becomes familiar with the system of the target language and discerns a systematic order of the rules of the target language. Thus, interlingual errors are characterized by a number of interferences such as grammatical, syntactic, prepositional, and lexical.

Intralingual errors or intralingual transfer can be described as the negative transfer of language items within the target language and such errors usually occur in the rule learning stages of language. Such errors illustrate the general characteristics of rule learning, such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules, failure to learn conditions under which rules apply, and hypothesis of false concepts. The learner who commits intralingual errors attempt to build up hypotheses about the target language from his limited experience of it in the classroom or textbook. Also, intralingual errors reflect the learner's competence at a particular stage of learning

the target language, and they illustrate some of the general characteristics of language acquisition. The origins of such errors are found by studying the structure of the target language itself and by referring to strategies employed by learners while they are acquiring or learning the target language. For instance, the learner overgeneralizes grammar rules within the target language or he fails to apply rules of the target language under appropriate situations. However, intralingual or developmental errors do not occur because learners cannot keep the two languages apart, i.e. the mother tongue and the target language (Richards, 1970, 1974)

2.5 Models for Error Analysis

There are various taxonomies for error analysis which include some steps. The early taxonomy was developed by Corder (1967, 1974). This model of error analysis basically includes three steps: (1) Data collection: recognition of idiosyncrasies, (2) Description: accounting for idiosyncratic dialect and (3) Explanation. Ellis (1997) and Brown (1994), who elaborated on this model of error analysis, provided clear examples of how to identify and analyze learners' errors. Initially, a corpus of language is selected followed by the identification of errors. The errors are then classified. After giving a grammatical analysis of each error, the next step involves an explanation of different types of errors. A similar model was proposed for error analysis by Gas and Selinker (1994). This model is made up of six steps followed in conducting an error analysis: (1) Collecting data, (2) Identifying errors, (3) Classifying errors, (4) Quantifying errors, (5) Analyzing the source of error, and (6) Remediating for errors.

Thus, the research questions included the following:

1.	What types of errors are committed by the learners?

2.	What sources are the learners' errors attributed to?

3.	Which errors are committed frequently by the learners?

However, the present study includes some limitations. First, the study is limited to the students' performance in written English. Second, only 106 students' compositions were analyzed in the study. Third, only the grammatical and punctuation errors in the compositions were taken into consideration in the study. Last, the purpose of the study is to identify the grammatical and punctuation errors and find pedagogical implications to overcome such errors.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The population of the study consisted of the 106 first year students who study at Erciyes University, Faculty of Education, ELT Department. All of the first year students taking the Advanced Reading and Writing course were included in composition writing tasks assigned by the instructor in the study in the spring semester of the academic year 2010 - 2011. Of the 106 students, 87 were female and 19 were male. The students study the Advanced Reading and Writing course for two hours a week for only one semester.

3.2 Data Collection and Analysis

In the study, the errors in 184 essays written by the 106 students in the Advanced Reading and Writing course were identified through survey method. To conduct the analysis of data, the three steps of analysis of errors proposed by Corder (1974: 147-170) were followed: (1) Collection of sample errors, (2) Identification of errors, and (3) Description of errors. The source of the data was obtained from 184 compositions written in the Advanced Reading and Writing course. The compositions which were written by the students contained between 150 – 300 words. The data were collected during the spring semester of the 2010 – 2011 academic year. All the errors in the essays were identified by the course instructor. Following the identification of the errors, they were classified into Corder's (1974: 147-170) model of analysis of errors by the instructor. Then the percentages were calculated for each category of errors. Finally, the accuracy of the classification of the errors was checked by three instructors who had taught the same course before. The inter-rater reliability was found to be .75.

It was found that the students made a number of grammatical and punctuation errors in their essays. Six types of errors and a total of 318 errors were identified within the category of *interlingual* errors. Twenty-one types of errors and a total of 632 errors were detected within the category of *intralingual* errors. Most of the errors committed belong to the category of intralingual errors.

4. Findings

Below the findings which were obtained from the analysis of the errors contained in the students' compositions are given. A total of 2 main categories (*interlingual* and *intralingual*), 27 error types and 950 individual errors were identified in the students' compositions. The results indicate that the *intralingual errors* (No = 632) committed by the learners were about two times as high as *interlingual errors* (No =

318). The two major categories of errors were also subcategorized according to the type of the error. The type, number and frequency of errors are laid out in table 1 and table 2. Also, sample sentences which illustrate the types of all errors are given after each table.

Table 1
The relative frequency of interlingual errors

Types of Errors	N	%
Interlingual errors		
Prepositional interference		
1 Addition of prepositions	19	10,05
2 Omission of preposition	45	23,80
3 Misuse of prepositions	51	26,98
4 Misuse of subordinating conjunctions	74	39,15
5 Misuse of generalizations	89	47,08
6 Misuse of countable and uncountable nouns	40	21,16
Total	318	100

As can be seen in table 1, a small number of types of errors are observed within the category of *interlingual* errors. The number of errors within this category is 318. Errors within the category of *interlingual errors* were subdivided into 6 subcategories depending on the kind of errors committed by the learners. Of the *interlingual errors*, the subcategory *misuse of generalizations* ranks the highest (No = 89), and the subcategory *addition of prepositions* has the lowest number of errors (No = 19).

4.1 Samples of Errors

4.1.1 Interlingual Errors

Native and target languages have different grammatical rules. Therefore, when the learner transfers grammatical elements from his native language to the target language, he commits errors.

It was found in this study that the learners made *prepositional* errors in three different ways: by adding the wrong *preposition*, omitting the *preposition* and misusing the *preposition*. The following sentences illustrate *prepositional* errors.

Adding the wrong preposition

People who cannot attend **to** school can participate in distance learning.

Some begin **from** simply being curious.

We mention **about** some effects of air pollutions now.

I come to Kayseri **in** this year.

Firstly, you can buy a lot of things and you enjoy **from** this.

These represent the sample errors for each category which were drawn from the whole corpus of errors randomly. When related studies are examined, it is seen that they do not categorize errors by gender. Therefore, in this study, the errors were not categorized by gender. However, the gender of all the participants are stated in the participants section of the study.

Omission of preposition

People access **(to)** any information through the internet.

They go **(to)** school.

For example, you are responsible **(for)** everything you do by yourself.

Obviously, they are different **(from)** one another in size, culture, location, etc.

Alcoholism is commonly referred **(to)** as family disease.

Misusing the preposition

They go school to fulfill some tasks while students are (on) **in** holiday.

(In) **To** my opinion, its advantages are more important than its advantages.

They have inadequate time to talk (about) **to** the problems with their partners.

She may have to take some responsibilities (by) **on** herself.

Turkey advertisements can be seen (in) **on** newspapers, magazines.

The learners made a great number of errors in the *subordinating conjunction* "because." When we look at the way the *subordinating conjunction because* is used, they obviously make a negative transfer from the native language to the target language. The following are examples of the misuse of the *subordinating conjunction because*.

We must think twice. **<u>Because</u>** it can bring us both good and bad things.

University life is the dream of every young people. **<u>Because</u>** university means freedom.

There are more advantages than disadvantages. **<u>Because</u>** we want an excellent life.

We get used to be lazy about so many subjects. **<u>Because</u>** technology helps us.

In the dormitory, studying lesson is also hard. **<u>Because</u>** everytime it's very noisy.

When we need to make a general statement in English, countable nouns are used in plural. However, this is not the case in Turkish. All the countable nouns are put in singular form to make a general statement. Thus, the learners made a negative transfer from the native language to the target language, and they used countable nouns in singular. The following sentences contain examples of errors in the use of *generalizations*.

People used to go with **<u>horse</u>**, **<u>donkey</u>**, **<u>oxcart.</u>**

Doctors diagnose **<u>disease</u>**.

<u>Machine</u> is used in factories.

They get information from television **<u>program</u>**.

People used **<u>animal</u>** more in the past.

Some nouns which are always *uncountable* and used only in singular form were used in plural by the learners. Here, the learners obviously made a negative transfer from the native language to the target language because those nouns can be used in plural in the native language. The following sentences demonstrate examples of such errors.

They have very good **<u>informations</u>**.

Cold **<u>weathers</u>** are uncomfortable for some people.

Women only had to do **<u>houseworks</u>**.

<u>Researches</u> show that men process information in the brain's left hemisphere

<u>Homeworks</u> help to understand knowledge which is learnt.

Table 2
The relative frequency of intralingual errors

Types of Errors	N	%
Intralingual errors		
1 Misuse of singular / plural	9	1,42
2 Verb tense	46	7,27
3 Wrong adverb form	19	3,00
4 Wrong adjective form	20	3,16
Use of articles		
5 Addition of articles	37	5,85
6 Omission of articles	124	19,62
7 Misuse of articles	5	0,79
8 Misuse of coordinating conjunctions	50	7,91
9 Word order	33	5,22
10 Use of wrong adverb	9	1,42
11 Wrong pronoun form	10	1,58
12 Misuse of infinitives	20	3,16
13 Misuse of gerunds	25	3,95
14 Wrong noun form	17	2,68
15 Omission of pronouns in comparative sentences	6	0,94
16 Misuse of distributive plural	7	1,10
17 Redundancy	35	5,53
18 Misuse of Reference Words	10	1,58
19 Omitting punctuation marks	80	12,65
20 Addition of punctuation marks	6	0,94
21 Misuse of punctuation marks	64	10,12
Total	632	100

When table 2 is examined, it is observed that a large number of errors were committed by the learners within this category. The number of errors within this category is 632. The category *intralingual errors* were subdivided into 21 subcategories by the kind of errors produced by the learners. When *intralingual errors* are examined, it is seen that the subcategory *omission of articles* has the highest number of errors (No = 124), while the subcategory *misuse of articles* gets the lowest number of errors (No = 5).

4.1.2 Intralingual Errors

In the present corpus of errors data analyzed in this study, a total of 632 errors were identified. The main cause of these *intralingual* errors in the written linguistic performance of adult learners of English as a foreign language stems largely from incomplete application and overgeneralization of the rules of the target language system, and, in some cases, lack of mastery of the rules of the target language system. In other words, the learners make a negative transfer of target language items and grammatical rules in the target language. They fail to apply the rules of the target language system under appropriate situations.

Incomplete Application of the Rules of the Target Language

The learners produced the following deviant structure of *singular / plural* because they did not master thoroughly the rules of *singular / plural* formation in the target language. The learners used the *plural* form after certain determiners, which normally require the use of *singular* form. The following are the samples of such errors.

It makes you forget **every difficulties.**

University life is dream of **every young people.**

Every students takes English lesson from 4th years to university in Turkey.

Computers are being used for **every needs** of people.

The life is expensive, especially for students who come from **another cities.**

The learners produced the following various faulty sentences containing *verb tense* errors due to incomplete application of the rules of tense formation in the target language, respectively using *past tense* instead of *present*, *present continuous* instead of *simple present*, *base form* instead of *simple past*, *simple past* instead of *present perfect*, and *present form* of a *modal* instead of *past form*.

People attending in this education can study anything, anytime and anywhere they **wanted.**

Television **is being used** to show a film.

Everything seems more beautiful than it **be**.

The divorce rates **rose** recently.

In the past, men **have to** earn whole money.

The following sentences exhibit examples of wrong *adverb form* because the learners applied the rules of adverb formation incompletely in the target language.

They can study **slow** if they do not understand.

If you grow many good people and educate them **in a good way**, it worth everything.

People live **easier** due to technology.

Doctors diagnose disease **easier**.

In fact people don't do this **arbitrary.**

The following faulty sentences produced by the learners constitute the examples of wrong *adjective form* due to incomplete application of the rules of adjective formation.

When you teach something and your students understand and look **gratefully**.

İstanbul is a **cosmopolitic** city that includes almost all kind of human.

Beneath waves is a vast full of life and **wandereous** beauty.

Brazil has many **diversity** of ethnic groups.

They eat fresh food, totally **nature** foods.

Unlike most European languages, the Turkish language does not have definite or indefinite *articles*. Therefore, Turkish students tend to make numerous errors in using *articles* correctly. When the corpus of data of errors was analyzed, errors in *articles* stemmed from three reasons: by omitting the *article*, by adding the *article* and by misusing the *article*, as in the following samples:

Omitting the article

People say being **(a)** teacher is easy thing.

Communication is **(a)** very important factor for people's being social.

Living in **(a)** dormitory provides studying environment.

They don't have to go to **(a)** library to find information.

Television is **(a)** very popular device.

Adding the article

There is at least one computer or laptop in **the** each home.

If we are careful about **the** using of technology, it is beneficial for us

If we love **the** life, we should keep alive our world.

Many parents elect **the** dormitories for their child's education.

Advertising informs **the** buyers.

Misusing the article

Drug addiction has become (a) **the** major problem in the world.

It is (a) **the** fact that not all people have the opportunity to go on vacation.

The learners made a number of errors in the use of *coordinating conjunctions*. They used wrong punctuation and capitalized the *coordinating conjunctions* due to incomplete application of the rules of using *coordinating conjunctions*. The following sentences exhibit errors in the use of *coordinating conjunctions*.

They also help and direct their students **and so** they affect students' life.

Technology has improved in the last years dramatically. **So** its effect has increased.

We eat unhealthy foods, fast foods, canned foods. **So,** we are ill easily.

We always surf on internet. **So** we cannot study.

They are unhealthy. **So** we must be careful for these foods unhealthy.

The learners placed some items incorrectly within the sentence, and made errors in *word order*. The following sentences are examples of such errors.

Internet is indispensable (for people of all ages) **for all ages people**.

Computer technology is (commonly) used at universities **commonly**.

They depend on (each other) for living **each other**.

It causes (the social life) to disappear **the social life**.

Every team wants (them to play) to **them play** for their teams.

The learners used some wrong *adverbs* in their sentences, and made errors in the use of *adverbs*. The following sentences contain errors in the use of *adverbs*.

Beforehand, (In the past) every student became a teacher.

At the previous time (In the past) people used to go with horse, donkey, oxcart.

But internet isn't (always) beneficial **every time**.

In similarity (Similarly), either reading or experiencing one will be able to learn.

In old times (In the past) this comparison was between Pele and Maradona.

The learners failed to modify the form of the pronoun *it* where necessary, or modified *it* incorrectly. Thus, they made errors in the use of the pronoun *it*. The following sentences show examples of such errors.

Being a teacher has disadvantages besides (its) **it** advantages.

We should think (its) **it** is every aspect.

It is so common that we only notice (its) **it's** worth when it is not available.

Every country is doing (its) **it's** best to develop (its) **it's** cinema.

This is one way to advertise (its) **it's** culture and language

The learners made some errors in the use of *infinitives*. They used the *infinitives* incorrectly or they used *gerunds* or *infinitives* where the use of other form was correct. The following are examples of such errors.

To educate, teach students (Educating and teaching students) are very hard.

It will be very difficult **living** (to live) there.

To become a famous star (Becoming a famous star) is both advantages and disadvantages.

There are a lot of advantages and disadvantages of **to be rich**. (being rich.)

(Being rich) **To be rich** allow to make our wishes.

The learners made some errors in the use of *gerunds*. They used the *gerunds* incorrectly or they used *gerunds* where the use of *infinitive* or other form was correct. The following are examples of such errors.

The (development) **developing** of highways our life has dramatically changed.

These students learn (to use) **using** the money.

You go there (to relax) **for relaxing** yourself.

It has no sense to (buy) **buying** a roll

Turkish people immigrated (to work) **for working** in Germany.

The learners failed to modify the form of *nouns* within the sentence, and they used wrong form of *nouns*. They usually used *adjective* or *verb* form in their sentences. The following sentences exhibit such errors.

Computer is a useful machine for not only (the elderly) **elders**, but also (the young) **youngs**.

There is no (humidity) **humid** in Kayseri

Communication is very important factor for people's (socialization) being **social**.

Youth which is a place of time between (childhood) **childish** and oldness.

There are our hopes and (expectations) **expectings**.

When the learners compared two things or people, they omitted the pronoun which refers to the same noun in the *comparative* sentences. The following sentences show examples of such errors.

Pollutions in İstanbul are more bigger than **(that in)** other cities.

The houses, fruits and vegetables in big cities are more expensive than **(those)** in small cities.

It makes our life easier than **(that in the past)** past.

If a noun used in the sentence belongs or relates to another noun in the sentence, that noun must be used in plural. This is called *distributive plural* in English. However, the learners used the second noun in singular form. The following are examples of such errors.

They live away from their (families) **family**.

Technology is the most important in people's (lives) **life**.

People live their (lives) **life**.

Most people are afraid of losing their (jobs) **job**.

Robotic machines are doing people's (jobs) **job**.

When the learner is in a bad mood, or when his attention is distracted by some factors, he commits errors. The learners inserted some unnecessary words or structures in the sentences, which is referred as "*redundancy*" by Corder (1974). Redundancy errors are different from the inherent error which is associated with a natural learning activity. Below are examples of *redundancy* errors in the learners' compositions.

People spend much more time **by** watching TV.

Children waste time **by** playing computer games.

If they are beautiful **as** physically, generally people approach them positively.

Eating is a habit that people do **it** regularly.

Most people can smell **the smell of** fruit to identify it.

Reference words are used to refer back to people, objects and ideas that have been mentioned earlier, or refer forward to people, objects and ideas that will be mentioned later. These words allow the writer to avoid repeating words, paragraphs, and sometimes whole sentences. When the learners mentioned the person or thing for the second time, they used a wrong pronoun to refer to the person or thing. The following sentences show examples of such errors.

Canned foods lose some of the original fresh food nutrients when stored. **It** has to be tinned with many conservatives and chemical factors.

First of all **computers** are very useful at school. **It** helps students to revise for tests or exams.

Drugs has been restricted as **it** is danger to human health.

They can study slow if they don't understand, so (this) **it** reduces stress on students.

We use computers wrongly. (This) **It** can be dangerous.

Punctuation is the use of spacing, conventional signs, and certain typographical devices as aids to the understanding and correct reading, both silently and aloud, of handwritten and printed texts. In writing, *punctuation* is necessary to make the meaning of sentences clear. The learners made errors in *punctuation* in three ways: by omitting the *punctuation* marks, by adding the *punctuation* marks, and by misusing the *punctuation* marks. Below are examples of *punctuation* errors.

Omitting the punctuation marks

Teachers keep guard(,) so they may also have physical problems.

For example(,) teaching students are very hard.

In contrast(,) everybody know teachers have many free days.

Teaching is good thing(,) but teachers don't teach only.

When I live with my family(,) my mother wash my clothes and sometimes iron them.

Adding the punctuation marks

It is true; teenagers have less responsibility.

Another point is, that you can buy a big house with you money.

Another problem is kidnapping children of stars, because of the lot of money.

All in all I can say on the one hand I want to become famous, because of the money.

We forget some bad or good events about our lifes so that, we are relax

Misusing the punctuation marks

People eat too much so, this situation must change.

They have difficulty in finding a house, so they make up their house illegally.

All students want to live in home, But families don't want to home.

For example; people can watch all kinds of programs on TV.

In addition; both large cities and small towns have stores where items can be purchased.

5. Discussion

As can be seen clearly from Table 1, the students made a number of errors stemming from the native language. The students tend to think that the native language and the target language systems operate in the same way. They transferred grammatical and syntactic features of the native language to the target language, which resulted in a number of errors. However, native and target languages have different grammatical rules and different syntactic structures. Therefore, when the learner transfers grammatical elements from his native language to the target language, he commits errors. As Brown (1980) suggests, at early stages of learning, native language is the only linguistic system on which the learner can depend before he becomes familiar with the system of the target language and discerns a systematic order of the rules of the target language. Before the adult learners have fully mastered and discerned the system of the target language, they usually draw upon their native language to understand and use the target language, Turkish. Therefore, at early stages of foreign language learning, native language is seen and utilized as a base to understand and produce target language meaning and forms, which results in a number of interference errors stemming from the native language. Interlingual errors are characterized by a number of interferences such as grammatical, syntactic, prepositional, and lexical. At this stage, the learners tend to transfer the grammatical rules and lexical features of their native language to the target language. As Brown (1980) notes, early stage of foreign language learning is characterized by a prominence of *interlingual* errors.

When Table 2 is examined, it can be seen that the learners made a large number of intralingual errors. According to (Richards, 1970 & 1974), intralingual errors occur when language items within the target language are transferred negatively at the rule learning stages. They note that such errors indicate the general characteristics of rule learning, such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules, failure to learn conditions under which rules apply, and hypothesis of false concepts. When the learner builds up hypotheses about the target language from his limited experience

of it in the classroom or textbook, he usually commits intralingual errors. Intralingual errors are also indicators of the learner's competence at a particular stage of learning the target language, and they illustrate some of the general characteristics of language acquisition. Such errors can be detected by studying the structure of the target language itself and by referring to strategies employed by learners while they are acquiring or learning the target language. The results of the present study clearly indicate that the learners overgeneralized grammar rules within the target language or they failed to apply rules of the target language under appropriate situations. The intralingual errors of the learners can also be accounted for by the fact that the rules of the target language was largely applied incompletely. Furthermore, in some cases, the learners lacked a complete mastery of the rules of the target language. With inadequate knowledge of how the target language operates under different circumstances, the learners produced a large number of intralingual errors.

Based on personal observations of the students in the class and interviews with the instructors and the learners themselves, the most plausible explanation for the occurrence of a great number of errors in the learners' compositions can be attributed to two other main factors as well. First, the learners come from secondary schools with inadequate instruction of grammar. The learners who come to the university are usually at the upper elementary level in terms of grammar, which is considered a very low level for tertiary education. Therefore, grammar instructors struggle to bring the learners to a satisfactory level in grammar. The second factor responsible for the learners' errors is that very little time is allocated to grammar instruction in the curriculum. The learners receive very little grammar instruction which is limited to only three hours a week for two semesters. Therefore, because of curricular shortcomings, the learners are deprived of considerable amount of grammar instruction which can be considered as the basis for all four skills.

Another significant reason for the persistence of grammatical errors relates to how grammar instruction is given. Today the learners receive contextual grammar lessons. Although this approach to teaching grammar is welcome, there are some problems with this approach. When the learners learn grammar in context, they usually focus on the use of language in natural situations without giving much attention to grammatical rules of the target language. However, grammatical rules are also important to use language correctly and to give intended meaning in the target language. The learners should be first equipped with a sound knowledge of the rules of grammar. A grammar instruction which primarily aims at appropriate use of the target language will be insufficient and will not be able to provide long term goals of using language appropriately and correctly in real life situations without focusing on form and meaning. An approach which gives equal emphasis on grammatical rules and use of the target language would bring about the desired result in grammar instruction on the part of the learners. Thornbury (1999) suggests teaching grammar as a skill in which the teacher carefully guides the learner to utilize grammar for their

own communication by focusing on the meaning aspect. According to Thornbury (1999), grammar serves to build sentences, and it offers the learner the means of potentially limitless linguistic creativity. Also, grammar prevents the learner from fossilizing because of the errors they commit.

Another reason for the weakness in writing skill can be attributed to secondary education teachers who may not have spent more time on teaching the writing skill due to the time limit of the course they were teaching. Instead, most of the time they focus on extensive vocabulary and grammatical rules to meet the requirements of the formal exams. It is common observation and knowledge in Turkey that students preparing for university entrance examinations, teachers and teaching materials are primarily concerned with obtaining required scores in the university entrance examination whose main component is grammar and vocabulary.

A great difficulty the composition teacher faces is to find the rights methods of activating the passive knowledge of the writing skill and the grammar component meaningfully, in addition to making the learners proficient in writing and grammar. Also, it is the teacher's duty and responsibility to teach the learners how to eliminate errors they commit. If the teacher has a better understanding of the L1 influence on L2 in the process of EFL writing, he will be able to diagnose the sources of errors and understand the learners' difficulties in learning English. Thus, the teacher can adopt appropriate teaching strategies to help students to become proficient in the writing skill and the grammar component.

There is empirical evidence that learners' errors should be considered as an effective means of improving grammatical accuracy (Carroll & Swain, 1993; White et al, 1991). Carter (1997) emphasizes that if a learner knows more about how grammar works, he will understand more about how grammar is used and misused. Thus, the teacher should make learners aware of the significance of errors so that they can grasp the nature of errors. A sound grasp of errors will not let the learner repeat the same errors in writing and he will become more careful about and aware of how to apply the rules of the target language and how the target language system works.

The present study is found to be consistent with similar studies conducted on error analysis. In a study conducted by Ngangbam (2016) it was found that the learners committed errors due to mother tongue interference and overgeneralization, overuse and lack of mastery of grammatical rules of the target language. As is the case with this study, those errors included sentence fragments, wrong word order, wrong verb form, wrong use of punctuation marks; conjunctions; articles; pronouns and prepositions. In another study conducted by Abushihab (2014) on Turkish university students' grammatical errors in their written compositions, similar errors to the present study were identified. Thus, the errors belonged to grammatical features such as tense errors, preposition errors, article errors (misuse and omission of articles), wrong use of active and passive, wrong adjective form, wrong word form, misuse of uncoun-

table nouns and morphological errors (misuse, addition and omission of the plurality morpheme). It was found in this study that the learners committed errors stemming from negative transfer from the native language and overgeneralization and overuse of the target language rules. Kırkgöz (2010) examined a corpus of 120 essays produced by Turkish university students. She identified a number of similar errors to those contained in the present study in two main categories: interlingual and intralingual. The errors which were detected in the study belonged to various grammatical sub-categories such as pluralization, verb tense, prepositional errors (addition, omission and misuse of prepositions), wrong use of articles (addition, omission and misuse of articles) and redundancy. The causes of errors were found to stem from largely negative transfers from the native language to the target language and in some cases, the learners committed errors because they made wrong hypotheses about the target language, they overgeneralized the rules of the target language, or failed to apply target language rules under appropriate situations. When the findings of these studies are considered, it can be concluded that there is consistency and similarities among the present study and the above studies in terms of the types and causes of errors. However, this study can be considered to be a little different from other studies in that it identified a large and comprehensive types of intralingual errors.

6. Conclusion

The present study has investigated the types of written errors produced by university first year students who were at pre-intermediate level. Findings indicate that the early stages of language learning is heavily influenced by a predominance of interlingual errors. Also, it is seen that a great number of errors were committed as a result of overgeneralization, overuse and incomplete application of the rules of the target language, which can be termed as intralingual errors. Furthermore, lack of a thorough mastery of the target language caused the learners to produce numerous intralingual errors. It is suggested that student errors should not be regarded as a failure, but rather as a real progress made by the learner in order to approximate and master the target language system. Errors have the function of offering evidence to the teacher or the researcher regarding how language is being learned or acquired and what strategies are utilized by the learner in the discovery of the target language system. Moreover, by studying errors, teachers can understand what aspects of language items have been understood, learned, mislearned or confused. Finally, errors can offer help teachers to minimize or overcome learners' learning problems. As a result, errors are inevitable during the learning process and they contribute to both the teacher and learners in many ways.

7. Suggestions

As a remedy for the correction of errors committed by learners, it is suggested that distinguishing between serious and minor errors may be a good guide in choosing what to correct (Zamel, 1985). Therefore, the teacher should decide on errors which are to be corrected primarily. Errors may be corrected in three ways: teacher correction, peer correction and self-correction. In the case of teacher correction, the teacher can utilize methods to show their students what types of errors they made and where they made those errors. Lists of symbols are usually beneficial for students. However, the teacher first should train his students on what those symbols mean and what he expects them to do when they see a particular symbol. As a second method of correction, peer correction can be used by students. As students correct each other's mistakes, they view the target language critically and they begin to discern the system of the target language. As a third method, the student himself can correct his own errors, thus becoming aware of the sources and types of errors he makes. As he learns to self-correct, he also develops autonomy in terms of understanding how the target language works and gaining independence from the teacher.

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