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GRAMMAR FOCUSED ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE WRITING

PRODUCTION: AN ERROR ANALYSIS STUDY.

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Quito, octubre 2022

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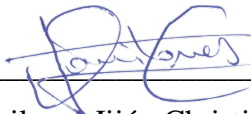
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**PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DEL ECUADOR FACULTAD DE
CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN**

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims to help tenth grade EFL students in Cumbaya, Ecuador, reduce morpho-syntactic errors in their writing skills at an A2 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Firstly, a pre-test was given to 40 tenth grade learners to identify and classify morpho-syntactic errors. In the first writing prompt, participants were asked to write an email answering 3 questions. In the second writing prompt, they were asked to write a brief story of the objects that they had in 3 separate images. The most common morpho-syntactic errors that the pre-test revealed are: word order, subject verb agreement, Morpheme/word Omission, Morpheme/word addition. Second, learners were given grammar-focused activities for two months to help them make less morpho-syntactic errors. These activities were based on the errors they made on the pretest. Third, the students took a test after the two-month program to see if they had made less morpho-syntactic errors. The researcher found that the post-test showed a big drop in errors. The post-test gave the researcher information about how the tenth graders' writing skills had improved by the end of the program. The study has implications for teaching because it can help teachers come up with ways to improve their students' writing skills.

Keywords: error analysis; foreign language; A2 Key English Test (KET); morpho-syntax; writing.

El presente estudio tiene como objetivo ayudar a los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera de décimo grado en Cumbaya, Ecuador, a reducir los errores morfo-sintácticos en sus habilidades de escritura en un nivel A2 de acuerdo con el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas (MCER). En primer lugar, se aplicó un pretest a 40 estudiantes de décimo grado para identificar y clasificar errores morfo-sintácticos. En la primera indicación de escritura, se solicitó a los participantes que escribieran un correo electrónico respondiendo 3 preguntas. En la segunda parte, se solicitó que escribieran una breve historia basada en 3 imágenes separadas. Los errores morfo-sintácticos más comunes que reveló el pretest son: orden de palabras, concordancia entre sujeto y verbo, morfema/omisión de palabra, morfema/adición de palabra. En segundo lugar, los alumnos recibieron actividades de gramática durante dos meses para ayudarlos a reducir la cantidad de errores morfosintácticos. Estas actividades se basaron en los errores que cometieron en el pretest. En tercer lugar, los estudiantes realizaron una prueba después del programa de dos meses para ver si habían cometido menos errores morfo-sintácticos. El investigador encontró que el post test arrojó una reducción en los errores morfo-sintácticos. El post test mostró al investigador información sobre cómo los estudiantes de décimo grado habían mejorado las habilidades de escritura al final del programa. El estudio tiene implicaciones para la enseñanza porque puede ayudar a los maestros a encontrar formas de mejorar las habilidades de escritura de sus alumnos.

Palabras clave: análisis de errores; lengua extranjera; A2 Key English Test (KET), morfosintaxis, escritura.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the last few years, research in the field of error analysis has increased. EFL teachers, educators, researchers, and linguists have intended to identify and describe the origin of learners' errors. Error analysis is a fundamental part of foreign language teaching and learning. It helps to understand why learners commit errors. Making errors is natural in second language acquisition. Ellis (1994) mentions that learners make errors in comprehension and production. These are regarded as negative aspects of acquisition that must be avoided. Errors also have a positive point, Schillinger (1981) states that errors show how far learners have progressed; they may also provide information about the plans and methods that learners use to communicate in the target language. They might indicate the learners' needs and how they are learning the language.

Writing is a productive skill, which EFL learners are worried about. It demands a cognitive process to convert ideas into words and structures. EFL learners find their writing skill difficult to develop because it requires several processes, including: planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Writing is a complex process; sometimes foreign language learners do not take into account the rules of English writing. As a consequence, learners are not able to cultivate the skill of expressing themselves. The failure of Ecuadorian EFL learners in a private high school in Cumbaya to express themselves accurately in written form might prevent them from getting a good grade in their international certification (A2 Key for schools). When these students are writing, they run into different kinds of learning problems, such as with vocabulary, syntax, morphology, semantics, and so on.

Even though English has been taught to learners since the beginning of their education in the private school in Cumbaya, still, a number of morpho-syntactic errors can be found in their language activities, in this case, writing. At first, the morpho-syntactic errors might not seem like a big deal, but they could affect how well the writing is done. Students' writing errors show evidence that it is difficult to write in the target language. The main reason for this problem may be the differences between the Spanish

and English grammatical systems. Both languages have different word formation and sentence structures.

In a private high school, tenth grade students have studied to obtain the A2 (KEY for Schools) certification. Nevertheless, students have made certain errors at the level of morpho-syntax when writing their compositions. From this, it is necessary to execute a morpho-syntactic analysis of students' writings since these errors reflect students' insufficient language competence. Once tenth grade learners pass the international examination Key for Schools (A2), they will have the determination to advance further in learning English and study for higher-level exams, for instance, PET Preliminary English Test (B1) or FCE First Certificate (B2).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Error analysis

The term "error analysis" is associated with Corder (1967), whom experts consider the creator of error analysis. He considered errors as "flaws" that had to be eliminated. At the same time, he saw errors as "devices", which learners use as strategies to learn a language. Error analysis is seen as a source to learn and improve. It indicates that learners are making progress in their learning. Applying error analysis activities is essential as a mechanism for improving writing skills.

2.2. Syntax

Greenbaum & Nelson (2002) state: "Syntax is the set of rules that allow us to combine words in our language into larger units" (P 1). Syntax deals with the study of clauses, phrases, and sentences and how they are coupled. In simple words, Syntax is the placement of words and phrases in a particular order. According to Ngangbam (2016), a syntactic error is a disagreement with the syntactic rule. It means that syntax rules are not

respected when learners use the target language. When students do not place the words in the proper place, they commit syntactic errors. Learners' low ability in syntax can inhibit them from writing effectively.

2.3. Morphology

Burton-Roberts (2016) mentions: "The systematic study of word-structure is called morphology" (p. 3). It refers to the rules that govern the construction of words and how they are accommodated. If second-language learners misapply these rules, they have made morphological blunders. (Safawati Basirah, Radzuwan Ab, Nor Jijidiana, & Siti Sarah, 2017, p. 130). Morphology is very significant to develop vocabulary and accuracy in writing, since it demonstrates learners' ability to use the necessary vocabulary correctly.

2.4. Writing

Writing is a complex skill that second-language apprentices need to develop. According to Alqhtani (2017, p. 6), writing is considered a means for conveying messages and thoughts. Moreover, it is a productive skill that requires a conscious mental effort. Beyond that, to write well, learners need to go through several stages to produce good writing. This skill helps educators detect learners' progress in the target language.

2.5. Common European Framework of Reference

The CEFR outlines linguistic proficiency standards. It is based on a set of abilities that the student must master to speak appropriately in a foreign language. It provides descriptive scales with illustrated examples of writing creation. The CEFR provides descriptor scales to assist students to create a variety of profiles. On the one hand, these characteristics can be used to determine which student activities are meaningful. On the

other side, the descriptors define the level that students must achieve to achieve their objectives.

In brief, these descriptor scales describe the proficiency of language learners in terms of their communicative language acts and competencies.

2.5.1 CEFR descriptor scales:

2.5.1.1 Overall written production

According to the CERF, A2 speakers, “Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like ‘and,’ ‘but’ and ‘because’.” (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 75).

2.5.1.2 Creative writing

In terms of creative writing, many authors have seen the possibility of determining descriptors. In the case of the CERF, they mention these essentials:

- A2 learners possess the ability to write coherently about common aspects of their environment, such as places or people.
- They are capable to use very short, simple sentences to talk about events, things they did in the past, and their own experiences.
- Learners can relate a simple tale. To illustrate, future events, holiday activities.
- They can compose a sequence of basic words and sentences describing their family, friends, school, living situations.
- If they have access to a dictionary and other reference materials, they can write, either an introduction to a story or the next chapter of an ongoing story. (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 76)

2.5.1.3 Written reports

A2 learners can use basic everyday language skills and expressions to write about things that interest him or her, such as cultures, storytelling, and other things. Furthermore, Sentence connectors like "and," "because," and "then" are used to show a logical progression in writing. (Council of Europe, 2018, p. 77)

The CEFR document provides generic descriptions of text types that can be utilized to evaluate pupils' development. These descriptors are helpful for determining whether written activities are appropriate for a certain set of students. In addition, it assists in determining which level students must attain to fulfill their objectives.

2.6. Key English test (A2)

Middle school students are the intended audience for this test. This certification attests to a student's proficiency in speaking and writing simple, fundamental English. More than 56,000 people take KET annually in more than 60 countries, according to the Council of Europe (2009). The key for schools assesses students' abilities in speaking in two parts, hearing in five parts, and reading and writing in seven sections. A2 Key for Schools certificate shows that a student can understand and use simple written and everyday language, as well as have simple conversations with English speakers.

2.7. Previous Studies

Various studies have carried out; however, they were conducted in other countries, with different languages, populations, English levels, language skills, and general aspects of linguistics. For instance, Khansir, (2013), Kusumawardhani (2015), Hulvová (2017), and Al-Shujairi, (2017) conducted various investigations in order to help their students overcome errors. Investigations in error analysis are widely used in learning a new language. However, after some time of research, no definite conclusions have come up and there is a lot to do in this field.

Firstly, Khansir (2013), with the research “Error Analysis and Second Language Writing”, compared and examined a range of errors committed by ESL (India) and EFL (Iran). The researcher also suggested some strategies to reduce the number of errors in the written production of these students. For the study, 200 students were selected for data collection. The results showed that the Iranian students committed 3045 errors and the Indian students committed 3274 errors. The researcher concluded that the two groups of students had difficulties applying the rules of English in their written production. The reason for written errors in the students’ data in the two countries may be due to learning strategies and teaching English.

Secondly, Kusumawardhani (2015), investigated the learners’ errors in English narrative compositions in order to identify errors, correct errors, and to obtain data and an explanation of the errors in narrative compositions. The English narrative compositions were taken from 20 students. The study revealed that learners made errors of selection (15%), ordering (12, 5%), omission (57, 5%), and addition (15%). Finally, the researcher corrected learners’ errors so as to minimize and avoid the same errors in future English narrative compositions.

Thirdly, Al-Shujairi (2017), studied grammar errors made by pre-university Iraqi English Language Learners in writing production. The researcher collected 112 written compositions and found that the pre-university Iraqi high school students presented difficulties in the correct use of verbs, prepositions, and articles. The researcher found 752 errors in students’ composition papers. Furthermore, the study found that students made more errors in omission and addition. On one hand, omission errors were dominant in Possessive case (60%) followed by errors in singular and plural nouns (56%). On the other hand, addition errors were higher in the use of articles (46%) followed by conjugation errors of irregular verbs (75%).

This study aims to assist tenth grade learners reduce morpho-syntactic errors in their EFL written production in a private high school in Cumbaya during the school year 2021-2022. It also aims to:

- Identify the most common morpho-syntactic errors that students commit in their written production.
- Describe the types of morpho-syntactic errors that students commit in their written production.
- Expose tenth grade learners to grammar-focused activities to improve their written production at an A2 level for two months.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodological aspects of the study are reviewed. Errors are a natural part of learning a language, so the researcher used a quasi-experimental qualitative and quantitative study to collect, identify, and classify the number of morpho-syntactic errors made by tenth grade students.

This research employed a mixed qualitative and quantitative methodology. According to Jackson (2009), the focus of qualitative research is on natural occurrences, and the data are typically analyzed without the use of statistics. (p. 86). Quantitative research "transforms data such as conversations, actions, stories, facial twitches, or any other social or physical activity into numbers" (Tracy, 2013, p. 24). On the one hand, it is qualitative because it is supported by variable theory, in this case, morpho-syntactic errors and level A2 written production. On the other hand, it is quantitative because the data obtained needs statistical analysis. In other words, it specifies the numerical value assigned to the studied phenomenon. The researcher uses it to describe the percentage and frequency of morpho-syntactic errors made by the participants in the tenth grade.

It is quasi-experimental research. The experimental research method "relies on hypothesis testing," in which a test is created to see, in a controlled and systematic manner, if the predicted outcome occurs (Leavy, 2017, p. 259). A pre-test was administered to the students to determine their baseline measure in the written production area at a level of A2 prior to the experimental intervention. Learners in the tenth grade made use of a resource that was supplied by the researcher in an effort to minimize the number of morpho-syntactic errors that appeared in their written work. Later, a post-test

was applied to assess the experimental intervention impact. Furthermore, it is descriptive as it describes individuals, groups, activities, events, or situations. The researcher describes the characteristics of a particular group. They are students attending a private high school in the city of Cumbaya and are in the tenth grade there.

Non-probabilistic, it is used when "the number of elements in a population is either unknown or cannot be individually identified" (Kumar, 2011, p.187). The type of non-probabilistic sampling is convenience sampling, also called opportunity sampling, which "involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained" (Louis Cohen, 2000, p. 102). In the private school, the researcher targets a particular group to which he has easy access; they are the tenth grade learners who are studying to get the A2 Key for Schools certificate in English.

Additionally, the present research is cross-sectional also known as transversal. This is a kind of developmental design inside which members of varying ages are examined simultaneously (Jackson, 2009, p. 327). The researcher collects data over a period of time, and all of the students included in the study share similar characteristics, such as age (tenth grade students aged between 13 and 14).

The present research is classroom research; it occurs in the field or wherever the people who participated ordinarily carry out their activities (Jackson, 2009, p. 86). The study is conducted in the real-life setting of a private school with actual students. Furthermore, the study's design is determined before to data collection and is frequently guided by theory.

3.1. Participants

This study's participants were 40 tenth grade students (18 females and 22 males) between 12 and 14 years old at a private high school in Cumbaya during the academic year 2021–2022. Their mother tongue is Spanish, but they have been learning English ever since they started attending school. They have been preparing to obtain the

Cambridge A2 level certification (Key for Schools certificate) according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

3.2. Instruments/materials

A pre-test and a post-test were administered to collect data. Both the pre-test and post-test consisted of two writing prompts created in a digital programme and reviewed by a group of professors. This was done so that the professors could give the researcher suggestions and comments about the validity of the test.

Part 6 of Key for Schools (the first writing part) asked students to write a short email or note with at least 30 words. In the task, students were provided with information that they were required to use in his\her writing.

Part 7 of KEY (the second writing part) asked participants to compose a short story including at least 40 words based on three images in the task.

3.3. Procedure

The researcher contacted the parents of the students attending the private high school in Cumbaya, Ecuador, as well as the authorities of the institution to secure the appropriate permits to apply the instrument. Afterwards, the researcher established the schedule of applications. The instrument was implemented during the first semester of the academic year 2021–2022. The confidentiality of the obtained data and the anonymity of the participants were ensured.

The researcher administered the pre-test, analyzed the errors, applied the focused grammar activities, and administered the post-test. The treatment was administered during the months of March and April. Students worked once a week with different grammar activities based on the errors they made in the pre-test. Students engaged in a variety of weekly grammar exercises based on their pre-test performance.

The written compositions of the students were evaluated using Ellis' four stages (1994, p. 48). These are the stages:

Collecting a sample of the language of the learner, identifying errors, describing errors, and explaining errors.

Students were encouraged to write freely and they were given sufficient time (about 30 minutes) to write the 2 writing prompts. The researcher identified and classified the students' morpho-syntactic errors into the following categories:

- Word order
- Subject-verb agreement
- Morpheme/word Omission Errors
- Morpheme/word Addition Errors

3.4. Error correction activities

In order for this study to be conducted, the participants had to complete the error correction tasks on a weekly basis for a period of two months. These activities were also scheduled in accordance with what was taught in their English textbooks to avoid delaying the institution's overall planning.

Table1. Error correction activities

Activities	Time	Strategies used to reduce errors.
1. The verb to be	2 hours	Feedback
2. Word order (SVOMPT)	2 hours	Error correction Self-correction Pair correction
3. Simple present	2 hours	Group correction Collaborative work
4. Present continuous	2 hours	Rewriting
5. Simple past	2 hours	Reading Word order exercises
6. Past continuous	2 hours	Dictation
7. Future	2 hours	Unscrambling Singular and Plural
8. Spelling	2 hours	exercises

3.5. Analysis

The data obtained from the participants was analyzed utilizing computer programs (Microsoft office word, excel). The researcher created a table in order to classify and provide an explanation of the morpho-syntactic errors. Besides, the data collected was classified and converted into percentages to display the results. In addition, the data is presented in the form of a bar chart, which allows for a more concise comparison of the pre-test and post-test morpho-syntactic errors.

3.6. Results

ITEMS	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST	
	PRE-TEST	Percentage %	POST-TEST	Percentage %
Word order	40	16%	12	15%
Subject- agreement verb	85	35%	31	39%
Morpheme/word Omission Errors	65	27%	21	26%
Morpheme/word Addition Errors	53	22%	16	20%
	243	100%	80	100%

Table 2. Table describing items, number of errors, and percentages

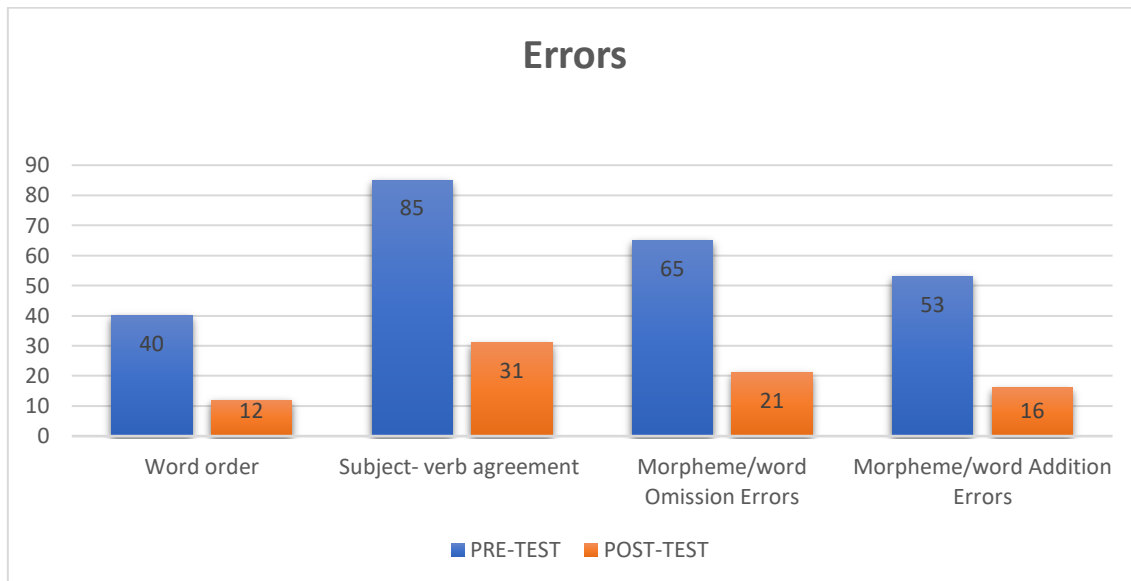


Figure 1. A descriptive bar chart of the items and the total number of errors on both the pre-test and the post-test

4. DISSCUSION

Based on the tenth grade learners' writing, the present study found different errors at both morphological and syntactical levels. In Table 2, the researcher shows the most common types of morpho-syntactic errors such as word order, subject-verb agreement, morpheme/word omission errors, and morpheme/word addition errors.

Table 2 also displays the frequency of errors made by tenth graders during pre- and post-test writing production. Subject-verb agreement is the most common error type on both the pre-test and post-test.

This finding is mirrored in a previous study (Shamsan & Attayib, 2016), in that Arab native students faced problems with tense, noun, verb, pronouns, word order.

Word order

Word order refers to the sequence in which the components of a sentence, a phrase, or a clause are presented (Leech, 1989, p. 550). The basic word order in an English sentence is SVO (subject-verb-object). English grammar relies heavily on the order of words to determine grammatical relationships. When a morpheme or group of morphemes is put in the wrong place in a sentence, this is called a word order error.

Error Example: My mother is all the time busy.

Correct sentence: My mother is busy all the time.

Explanation: Adverbs that talk about time are added at the start or end of a sentence.

Error Example: It was their day free...

Correct sentence: It was their free day...

Explanation: In English, the noun being described comes after the adjective that characterizes it. The adjective “free” must be placed before the noun “day”.

Subject-Verb Agreement

The subject-verb agreement was another area of difficulty in the English writings of students in the tenth grade that were included in the current study. It indicates that the subject and the verb do not have the same number. The issue with subject-verb agreement is that learners do not follow the rules that dictate that the verb must agree with the subject in person and number. It is clear that there are inaccuracies in the following examples:

Error Example: There is two girls walking down the street.

Correct sentence: There are two girls walking down the street.

Explanation: For plural subjects, the singular verb 'Be' (is) was used.

Error Example: I can't go to your house because my mom don't have her car and...

Correct sentence: I can't go to your house because my mom doesn't have her car and...

Explanation: When expressing a negative opinion about a third-person singular subject in the simple present tense, the English language requires the use of the phrase "does not/doesn't." The student, on the other hand, applied the rule that was appropriate for the other subjects.

Morpheme/word Omission Errors

Pramestia Dewi . et al., (2021) mention that omission errors are errors that occur when a component that ought to be present in a well-formed utterance is missing (p. 109). When learning a language, students frequently leave out morphemes, resulting in incomplete sentences.

Error Example: Sofia and Camila waiting for their ice cream...

Correct sentence: Sofia and Camila were waiting for their ice cream...

Explanation: When speaking in the past continuous tense, the verb "Be" (were) is left out of the sentence before the verb with {-ing}. As a result, this constitutes a case of word omission error.

Error Example: Rita and Anahi entered their favorite ice cream saloon and order some...

Correct sentence: Rita and Anahi entered their favorite ice cream saloon and ordered...

Explanation: The student omitted the past tense suffix {-ed}. By deleting this prefix, the student forms the infinitive "(to) order". As a direct consequence of this, we have a case of morpheme or word omission error here.

Morpheme/word Addition Errors

An addition error can be identified by the existence of a morpheme or group of morphemes that do not belong in a correct or well-formed utterance. In other words, the term "addition error" refers to the situation in which a student adds a morpheme or collection of morphemes that should not be added.

Error Example: I cannot go to your house because I have a homeworks...

Correct sentence: I cannot go to your house because I have some homework...

Explanation: The indefinite article 'a' was added before an uncountable noun in a sentence. Moreover, the word "homework", which did not require it, was given the plural inflectional morpheme "s" resulting in a morpheme/word addition error.

Error Example: I think we can going next week...

Correct sentence: I think we can go next week...

Explanation: The student added the bound morpheme {-ing} after a modal. As a direct consequence of this, we have a case of morpheme or word addition error.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that Spellman high school students in the tenth grade made a lot of morphosyntactic errors in their written work. This error analysis study was conducted to help tenth grade learners reduce morpho-syntactic errors. Based on the analysis of tenth grade learners, the researcher focused on four morpho-syntactic errors.

According to the results of this study, tenth graders were able to improve their writing skills to an A2 level and make fewer morpho-syntactic errors when they participated in focused grammar activities following error analysis over the course of a two-month programme.

To illustrate, Figure 1 demonstrates that the post-test contained fewer errors than the pre-test. Students in the tenth grade were able to pass the Cambridge (A2) Key for Schools examination without any trouble and with a rating scale that was somewhere between a medium and a high thanks to a number of grammar activities that helped reduce morpho-syntactic errors.

In addition to this, this study can assist teachers in identifying the most frequent errors made by Ecuadorian learners in to provide them with exercises that can reduce and

improve problematic concepts in English. This study may play a crucial role in encouraging students to eliminate their grammatical errors.

On the basis of this study's findings, the researcher provides recommendations for future research. First of all, the participants of the study. This study worked with 40 EFL learners, so future researchers are advised to do their studies with more than 40 participants. Second, the context of research. The researcher worked with high school students, so similar studies may be conducted in universities or English institutes in the future. To conclude, to replicate this study, future researchers can work on other skills like speaking.

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7. APPENDIXES

APPENDIXE 1. INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

KEY ENGLISH TEST

READING AND WRITING PART 6 AND 7

1. Your best friend Gabriel has invited you to see a movie in his house tomorrow, but you can't go.

Write an email to Gabriel:

- tell him that you are sorry
- explain why you can't go
- tell him which day you can go instead.

Write from 40 to 50 words.

2. Look at the three pictures. Write the story shown in the pictures. Write from 40 to 50 words.



APPENDIXE 2. EXAMPLE: INTERVENTION MATERIAL/ACTIVITIES

VERB TO BE

TENTH GRADE




GRAMMAR PRESENTATION

Use the verb to be:

- with age: **My sister is/was fifteen. I'm nineteen.**
- with an adjective: **You're beautiful.**
- with this and that: **This is/was my car. That is/was your book.**
- with nationality: **They are/were Ecuadorian. We're French.**
- with jobs: **She is/was a doctor. They are/were vets.**
- with time: **It is/was 4 o'clock.**
- where things are: **The book is on the table.**

SIMPLE PRESENT	STATEMENTS		
	I am I'm You are You're	He is He's She is She's It is It's	We are We're They are They're
	NEGATIVE		
	I am not I'm not You are not You aren't	He is not He isn't She is not She isn't It is not It isn't	We are not We aren't They are not They aren't
	Yes/No QUESTIONS		
Am I...? Are you...?	Is he...? Is she...? Is it...?	Are we...? Are they...?	
SIMPLE PAST	STATEMENTS		
	I was You were (singular)	He was She was It was	We were You were They were
	NEGATIVE		
	I was not I wasn't You were not (singular) You weren't (singular)	He was not He wasn't She was not She wasn't It was not It wasn't	We were not We weren't You were not You weren't They were not They weren't
	Yes/No QUESTIONS		
Was I...? Were you...?	Was he...? Was she...? Was it...?	Were we...? Were they...?	

 DO NOT SAY	I have 14 years old. X People is... X She/He/It are..... X Is cold/hot I/You/He/She/It/We/You/They be ... X I/You/He/She/It/We/You/They not be... X You are tired? X I are happy. X Do you be a student?
---	---

FOCUSED PRACTICE

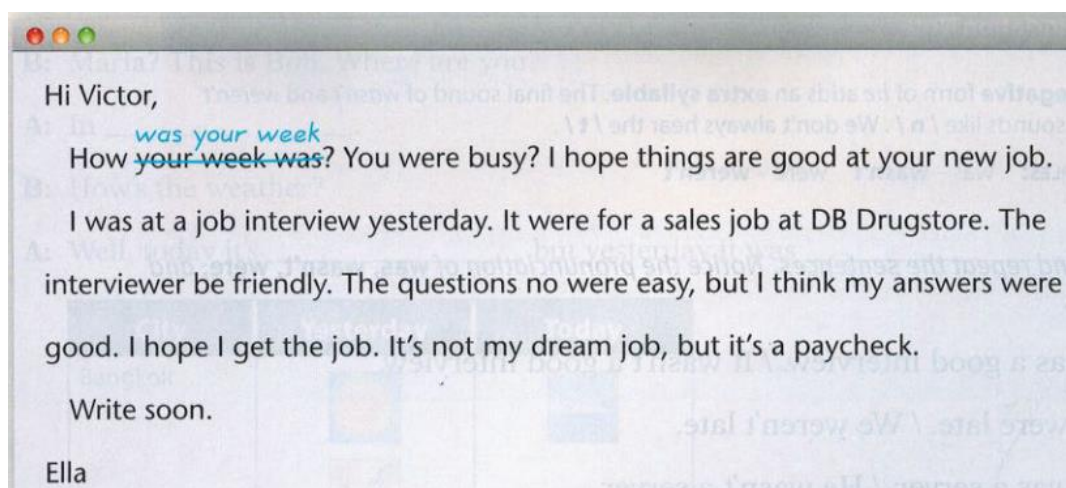
A. Learners often make mistakes with the verb to be. Correct the mistakes in these sentences.

This not are my family.	
These is my parents.	
Lucy am be English.	
We not are in the garden.	
This am not her pen.	
Maria and Anna is students.	
My dog are happy.	
I am happy?	
Quito, Guayaquil, and Cuenca is cities.	
An apple no is sour. It are sweet.	
Iron are cheap. Gold are expensive.	
Jets don't be slow.	
Susan am here today but she not was here last week.	
Mariella is tall now. She were tall ten years ago.	
Yesterday, It are sunny, but today it were raining.	
Vanessa is happy now but he be not yesterday.	
Mon was at home last night?	
The kitchen was be old.	
We're were at the cinema yesterday.	
Was you tired?	

- B. VERB TO BE SIMPLE PRESENT:** There are nine mistakes, the first one is already corrected. Correct the following paragraph. Find 8 more mistakes. Check your answers with a partner.

My family ^{is} in Mexico. I in Los Angeles. My father is a businessman, and my mother a math teacher. Alessandra is my sister. She an engineer. Marco is my brother. Is in the family business with my father. We all soccer fans. Our favorite team is the Club de Fútbol Monterrey. Our team on TV very often. I call my family, and we talk about the game on TV. They far away, but thanks to email and cell phones, we close.

- C. VERB TO BE SIMPLE PAST:** There are 5 mistakes, the first one is already corrected. Correct the following paragraph. Find 4 more mistakes. Check your answers with a partner.



Hi Victor,
How ^{was your week} ~~your week was~~? You were busy? I hope things are good at your new job.
I was at a job interview yesterday. It were for a sales job at DB Drugstore. The interviewer be friendly. The questions no were easy, but I think my answers were good. I hope I get the job. It's not my dream job, but it's a paycheck.
Write soon.
Ella

- D. In pairs.** Ask your classmate these questions. Write down his/her answers (long answers). If there is a mistake correct it.



1. Are clouds blue or white?
.....
2. Is blood red or white?
.....
3. Are you a student?
.....
4. Where were you last month?
.....
5. Was your breakfast Delicious?
.....
6. Was your homework easy?
.....
7. Are your parents at home?
.....
8. Where is your English book?
.....
9. Is Canada in America or in Africa?
.....
10. Are you tired?
.....

PRODUCTION

Writing

Write 5 sentences about a person that you admire. Give the person's name, age, country, qualities. Use the present or past of the verb to be.

Example:

Maria Freire is my mother. She's 55 years old. She is a teacher. She is from Ecuador. She is strong, talented, and kind.

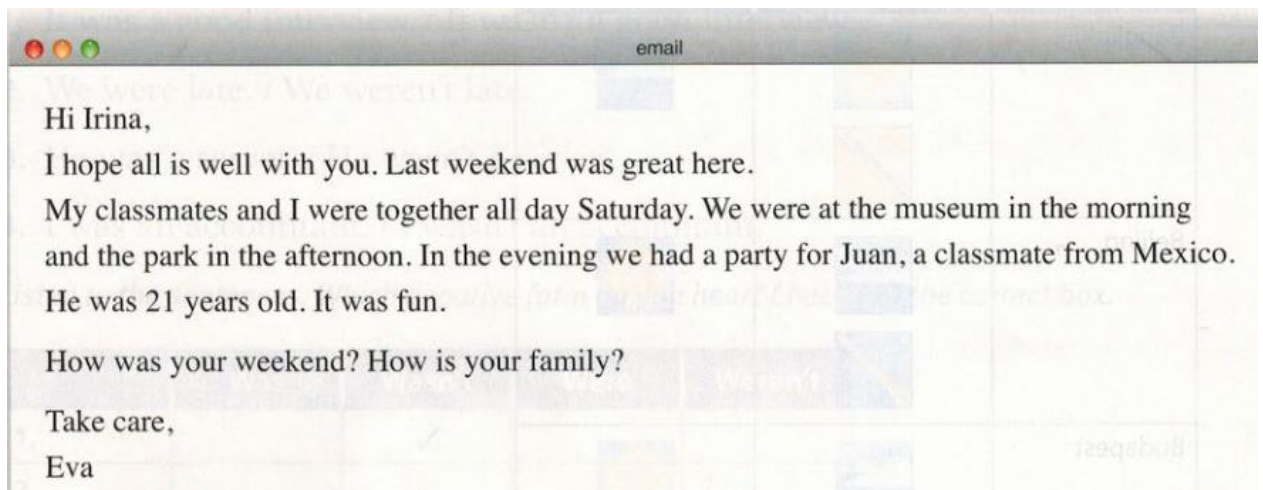
Your paragraph:

Writing

Write an email to a friend. Tell him/her about your last vacation. Use the present and the past of the verb to be.

Write from 40 to 50 words.

Example:



Your Email

Activities adapted from:

Schoenberg, I. (2012). Focus on grammar 2: An integrated skills approach. (Fourth ed.).

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