

# Spotting the Errors Acquisition in Second Language Learning

D.Suruthi, Guest Faculty  
Department of English and Foreign Languages  
Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal.

## Article Info

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## Abstract:

In Indian schools and colleges also continue to teach English as a second language. To learn any language four fold skills are needed like listening, speaking, reading and writing (known as LSRW). In mastering English, all the languages skills (LSRW) must be applied and integrated. When students learn to write in a second language, they often meet great challenges at all stages. Students need a good knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar rules to produce good essays in English. When students write essays in English, most of them are translate the words and sentences from their mother tongue to English which results in wrong sentence structures. Due to the lack of grammatical knowledge, students are prone to make errors. They find it difficult to write essays free of errors of various types. They often make spelling errors, errors in tenses like subject-verb agreement and prepositions. The paper focus the common errors in LSRW.

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## Introduction

English is a widely spoken language in the world today. It is considered a global language due to its dynamic and flexible and progressive characteristics. It has become the language of science, commerce and trade. English is taught as a second language in many countries including India. In a country like India which has 22 official languages, 122 major languages and 1599 other languages, English serves as the lingua franca across the nation. It also has importance in the legal, financial, economical and educational fields in India.

According to Macaulay, the Indian educational system in native languages was inferior. So he advocated English as the medium of instruction. He wanted to make Indians "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in Education." The British government established primary, middle and high schools, and colleges and universities in British India offering English as a subject. The British government also offered jobs to

those Indians who had English knowledge. For the sake of government jobs, people in India started to learn English.

Even after independence, English continued to be one of the most spoken and written languages in India and serves as the communication tools among Indians who speak different languages. Indian schools and colleges also continue to teach English as a second language. To learn any language four major skills are needed: listening, speaking, reading and writing (known as LSRW). In mastering English, all the languages skills (LSRW) must be applied and integrated.

Students need a good knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar rules to produce good essays in English. When students write essays in English, most of them are translate the words and sentences from their mother tongue to English which results in wrong sentence structures. Due to the lack of grammatical knowledge, students are prone to make errors. They find it difficult to write essays free of errors of various types. They

often make spelling errors, errors in tenses like subject-verb agreement and prepositions. So it is important to have a sound of knowledge grammar and for good written composition.

### Spelling

Learning a proper spelling is a basic element of education, especially when learning a foreign language. It is an essential component for successful writing. Proper spelling helps to understand the connection between the sounds and letters. Good spelling

helps to avoid confusion and helps in the progress of communication. Spelling instructions improve reading ability, as they build a learner's knowledge of alphabetic system as it is used in reading, bad spelling gives a bad impression and reflects very poorly on writer.

### Commonly Misspelt Words

In general writing, some words are frequently misspelt. Some of the most common misspelt words are given below.

Misspelled Words	Correction
Acheive	Achieve
Acknowlege	Acknowledge
Becuase	Because
Buisness	Business
Calender	Calendar
Catagory	Category
Collegue	Colleague
Desparate	Desperate
Disapoint	Disappoint
Existance	Existence
Extreem	Extreme
Foriegn	Foreign

### Subject-Verb Agreement

The subject and the verb in a sentence must agree with each other in number and person. If the subject is singular then the verb also must be singular. If the subject is plural, then the verb too must be plural.

### Rules in Subject-verb Agreement

- The verb is made to agree in number with the noun near it, instead of with its proper subject.  
Examples: The quality of the mangoes was not good.  
His knowledge of Indian vernaculars is good.
- The verb must agree with the subject when the subject is a combination of two or more nouns/pronouns joined by 'and'.  
Examples: Gold and silver are costly metals.  
She and I are friends.
- When the subject is joined by conjunctions like 'with' and 'as well as' the verb should be in singular.

Examples: The shop with its products was insured.

English as well as French is taught in my school.

- When two or more subjects are connected by 'or' or 'nor', the verb should be in singular.

Examples: Either the book or the note is missing.

Neither food nor water was to be found there.

- When the subject is joined by 'or' or 'nor' of different persons, the verb must agree with the subject which is nearer to it.

Examples: Either he or she has the book.

Neither the teachers nor the principal has to blame.

- Nouns like mathematics, politics, news are plural in form but singular in meaning and so take a singular verb.  
Example: Mathematics is not my favourite subject.

7. Nouns like family, audience, team are singular in form but plural in meaning must take a plural verb.  
Examples: His family were against his plans.  
The audience are enjoying the show.

### Prepositions

Prepositions are words which link nouns, pronouns and phrases to other words in a sentence. Wren and Martin defined preposition as “a word placed before a noun or pronoun to show in what relation the person or thing denoted by it stands in regards to something else” (128). According to article in *TeachingBanyan*, prepositions can be divided into five kinds. They are simple preposition, compound preposition, participle preposition, phrase preposition and double preposition.

#### Simple Preposition

Simple prepositions are used in the simple sentences. *In, on, by, to, with, at, of, for* are some of the simple prepositions

Examples:

- The cow is *in* the garden.
- I am going *to* the temple.
- Someone is *at* the door.

#### Compound Preposition

Compound prepositions are applied to join two nouns, pronouns or phrase. *Between, around, below, behind, beside, before, among above, inside, beneath* are some of the compound prepositions. Examples: Naga sat *between* Mary and Suruthi.

- They quarreled *among* each other.

#### Participle Preposition

Participle preposition refers to a participles (an, ed or ing verb) which acts as preposition in certain places. *Pending, during, regarding, respected, provided* are some of the participle prepositions.

Examples:

- I practiced *during* holidays.
- My project work is still *pending*.

#### Phrase Preposition

Prepositional phrases are group of words made up of prepositions indicating the relationship between a noun or pronoun and another word in as sentence. *In spite of, in front of, in order to, according to, due to, for the sake of* are some of the prepositional phrases.

Examples:

- According to* Shakespeare, ‘All the world is a stage’.
- The flight is cancelled *due to* the weather.

#### Double Preposition

Two prepositions connected together to make a new preposition is known as a double preposition. *Into, onto, out of, within, because of* are some of the double prepositions.

Examples:

- I have to finish my project *within* one week.
- He answered nine questions *out of* ten.

The prepositions can be divided into eight kinds. They are: Preposition of Time, place, movement, manner, agent or instrument, measure, source and possession.

Types	Definition	Prepositional Words	Examples
<b>Preposition of Time</b>	Preposition of time used to indicate when a particular event happened.	in, on, before, after, by, since, for, during, until	I am playing football <i>after</i> school. He is leaving <i>in</i> five minutes.
<b>Preposition of Place</b>	Preposition of place used to indicate the location of the noun.	in, on, between, near, over, under, above	I live <i>in</i> Dindigul. My house is opposite <i>to</i> the temple.
<b>Preposition of Movement</b>	It is used to describe the movement of one noun/pronoun towards another noun/pronoun.	into, towards, upon, through, onto	He put the balls <i>into</i> the basket. The rat ran <i>towards</i> the trap.
<b>Preposition of</b>	It is applied to describe the way by which something happens or	by, for, with, like, except, among	She told everyone <i>except</i> me.

<b>Manner</b>	happened when used in a sentence.		I am going to temple <i>with</i> my mother.
<b>Preposition of Instrument or Agent</b>	It is used to indicate an action of a noun caused by another noun.	by, with	Thirukkural was written <i>by</i> Thiruvalluvar. He locked the door <i>with</i> his password
<b>Preposition of Measure</b>	It is applied to connect the quantity of the noun with the noun itself.	of, by	He bought the pound <i>of</i> cheese yesterday.
<b>Preposition of Source</b>	It is applied to convey that one noun/pronoun has originated from another noun/pronoun.	from, by	I get energy <i>from</i> milk. This essay is written <i>by</i> him.
<b>Preposition of Possession</b>	It is applied to indicate that one noun/pronoun owns another noun/pronoun in the sentence	in, with, of	I lost my purse <i>with</i> money. He is a man <i>of</i> dignity.

### Characteristics of Prepositions

Some of the characteristics of preposition are;

1. A preposition can have two or more objects. E.g., the cat fell into the pit and dirt.
2. Preposition can be placed after the subject.  
Examples: Who are you looking *for*?  
He is the man I spoke *of*.
3. Some of the prepositions like *for*, *from*, *in*, *on* are often omitted before the nouns of place or time.  
Examples: I am going home.  
Wait a moment.

### Conclusion

The four language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing are important. Students frequently make errors when they write in a foreign language because of and the lack of grammatical knowledge in foreign languages. The most frequent errors are made in the areas of spelling, tenses, subject-verb agreement, prepositions, and vocabulary. So it is important to have adequate knowledge of both grammar and other aspects in the foreign language to make good written compositions. Learning the proper spelling is a basic element of education, especially when learning a foreign language. It is an essential component for successful writing. Proper spelling helps to understand the connection between the sounds and letters. Subject-verb agreement is important to construct sentences without grammatical errors. Prepositions are important to link nouns, pronouns and phrases

with other words in a sentence. Prepositions can be divided into five kinds: simple preposition, compound preposition, participle preposition, phrase preposition and double preposition. Prepositions can also be divided into eight kinds such as prepositions of Time, place, movement, manner, agent or instrument, measure, source and possession.

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