
ERROR ANALYSIS OF SELECTED STUDENTS' CORRESPONDENCE IN THE COLLEGE OF NURSING SCIENCES, EKITI STATE UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL, ADO-EKITI

Agboola Damilola Funmilola Ph.D, Alasiri Thomas Abiodun and Awolokun Toluwalope Abosede

¹College of Nursing Sciences, Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital, Ado-Ekiti

²Department of English and Literary Studies, Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State

Abstract

Correct spelling is key for formal written communication but poses substantial challenges for students learning English as a Second Language, most especially the science students. Spelling errors in writing hinder clarity and credibility, yet minimal research examines errors made in formats like English letter writing which require high accuracy. This research examined spelling errors within letters written by ND I College of Nursing Sciences, Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital, Ado-Ekiti students utilising the English language for academic instruction. By spotlighting problematic lexical areas through spelling error diagnosis, this study aims to motivate refinements in instructional approaches, assistive tools, and language exposure for ESL students. Methodology employed qualitative analysis on collected letters to categorise the spelling mistakes systematically as provided by the College of Nursing Sciences Students who utilise English academically. Findings on spelling error frequency and categories are wrong capitalisation; flouting the rule of tense and concord; wrong spelling; improper choice of vocabulary, that is not using the British choice of words since it is a formal writing; collocation clash; non-usage and wrong usage of the apostrophe among others. Lexical deficiencies in the works of ESL students likely arise from limited English immersion. Targeted vocabulary instruction could support ESL writing proficiency. Recommendations include semantics-centered techniques, formal writing-focused language exposure, and emphasising British spellings to improve their choices of vocabulary.

Keywords: Errors Analysis, formal correspondence, Orthographic errors, lexical errors, English as a second language.

Introduction

Correspondence is any written or digital communication exchanged by two or more parties, a form of communication that involves the activity of writing and receiving letters formally or informally via mail, text messages, voicemails, notes and postcards. Good writing involves the ability to identify and obey the technicalities of language and skilfully transfer thoughts, ideas, and information in a simple and correct language that can be easily read and interpreted without any ambiguity. Effective writing skills are essential for students in higher education, especially those pursuing careers in healthcare

fields, particularly students of nursing. Nurses regularly communicate with patients, families, and other medical staff through progress notes, care plans, email, and other forms of correspondence (American Nurses Association, 2021). Errors in spelling within these written interactions can undermine clarity and credibility. According to Altamimi & Rashid (2019), correct spelling is an important part of written communication, especially in formal contexts like letter writing.

Examining the various spelling errors committed by students can yield insights into the difficulties they encounter and the aspects

of instruction that may require enhancement (Peters, 2013). Spelling accuracy is a vital component of overall written proficiency in any language (Staden, 2010). However, spelling errors are highly common among English language learners, appearing across all levels from beginner writers to advanced academic texts (Alhaisoni et al., 2015). Analysing the types and frequencies of spelling errors can provide valuable insights into the specific difficulties faced by English language learners. It also facilitates designing targeted instruction in spelling, which research shows can significantly improve writing outcomes (Graham et al., 2002).

In the context of English as a Second Language, henceforth, ESL students, prior research attributes high rates of spelling errors to first language interference, phonological processing deficits, and ineffective mastery of English orthographic rules (Cook, 2013; Matsuda & Xu, 2022). English poses particular challenges due to its complex, multilayered spelling system (Reed, 2012). For learners accustomed to more consistent first language orthography, English spelling is especially opaque and difficult to internalise merely through reading (Deacon et al., 2014). Formal writing genres like letter writing require accuracy in spelling standard words and conventions. However, spelling performance remains below expectations for many ESL student writers (Harrison et al., 2015). Diagnosing the types of errors made in formal writing can highlight priority areas for spelling instruction to improve student outcomes. This study undertakes error analysis of spelling within English letters written by College of Nursing Sciences ESL students in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State.

Statement of Research Problem

English, as a second language, poses unique challenges for students in schools and colleges where it serves as a language of instruction and a 'lingua franca'. Particularly, students who speak English as a second

language (ESL) may encounter difficulties in mastering English spelling conventions, often relying on rules and patterns from their first language, which can lead to errors (Sterzuk & Nelson, 2016; Al Jayousi, 2011). While existing research has explored spelling profiles and errors among university students, including those in healthcare training (Ghabool et al., 2012; Darus & Ching, 2009; Al Jayousi, 2011; Imtiaz et al., 2023), there is a notable gap in understanding the persisting errors and commonalities among ESL nursing undergraduates in EKSUTH Ado-Ekiti.

This study aims to contribute to the existing literature by conducting an error analysis of handwritten letters from a sample of one hundred and nineteen (119) nursing undergraduates. The research seeks to identify recurring errors, specifically focusing on irregular spellings regardless of the academic level and, importantly, lexical errors such as collocational clashes. Additionally, the study aims to explore whether language proficiency levels influence the types of errors made, drawing on the understanding that beginners may grapple with basic sound-letter correspondence, while advanced students may encounter more subtle orthographic challenges (Sterzuk & Nelson, 2016).

By addressing these gaps, this research aims to provide insights into the nature of spelling errors among ESL nursing students, informing targeted interventions to enhance spelling proficiency and communication skills within the College of Nursing Sciences at EKSUTH Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State.

Aim and Objectives

This paper examined errors within letters written by ND I College of Nursing Sciences, Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital, Ado-Ekiti students utilising the English language for academic instruction. The following are the objectives:

i. to identify the types of errors in the selected correspondence,

- ii. to categorise and analyse the most frequent types of errors,
- iii. to identify potential causes of the errors that could inform teaching practices,
- iv. to motivate refinements in instructional approaches and language exposure for ESL students.

Research Questions

These research questions aim to systematically address each objective outlined in the paper, providing a comprehensive investigation into the nature of errors in the selected students' correspondence and offering insights for instructional improvement.

- i. What are the primary types of errors observed in the correspondence, and how do these errors manifest in the written correspondence of the selected students?
- ii. Which types of errors occur most frequently in the selected correspondence, and can these errors be categorised into specific linguistic types?
- iii. What are the potential causes or factors contributing to the identified errors in the letters?
- iv. How can language exposure and instructional approaches be refined to address specific challenges faced by ESL students?

Literature Review

English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction is the teaching of English—in an English-speaking country—to individuals whose mother tongue is a different language (Klee, C. A., 2000). English is a second language when it is a language of instruction in schools and colleges and is used as a 'lingua franca' between speakers of widely diverse languages. For students who speak English as a second language (ESL), the process of learning English spelling conventions can present significant challenges (Sterzuk & Nelson, 2016). ESL speakers may rely on knowledge of spelling rules and patterns from their first language when

writing in English, which can contribute to errors (Al Jayousi, 2011).

Prior studies have examined spelling profiles among university students in English language and composition courses. Ghabool et al. (2012) identified phonological errors involving vowels as the most frequent in a sample of one hundred and twenty (120) undergraduates' academic writing. Meanwhile, Darus and Ching (2009) found that morphology errors, including omissions, replacements, and doublings, were common issues in another Malaysian cohort. A study by Al Jayousi (2011) has analysed spelling ability among healthcare trainees, assessing common mistakes in a small sample of eighteen (18) nursing students' handwritten assignments. Findings revealed frequent omission errors and vowel-related phonological mistakes. Imtiaz et al. (2023) analysed spelling errors committed by English as a second language in Pakistan. Thematic analysis, as opposed to error analysis, was done of the gathered information, and the results show that the majority of the pupils committed the omission, substitution, insertion, and transition spelling errors. The most common type of spelling error is 'omission error'. They felt difficulty in writing correct spelling due to a lack of vocabulary, reading habits, self-concept, motivation, and spelling system (ESL) learners at the secondary school level.

Students' spelling abilities and types of errors made often vary based on their overall language proficiency level. For example, beginning ESL learners may struggle with basic sound-letter correspondence rules and thus make more phonological spelling errors (e.g., writing "fos" instead of "fox") compared to advanced students (Sterzuk & Nelson, 2016). This suggests phonological errors may persist among lower proficiency populations. Meanwhile, higher-proficiency ESL students tend to make more subtle orthographic errors involving silent letters or irregular spellings

(e.g., "aparent" instead of "apparent"), potentially due to ongoing confusion around English orthographic conventions even with a stronger language foundation (Sterzuk & Nelson, 2016).

The present study aims to address this gap through an error analysis of handwritten letters from a sample of one hundred and nineteen (119) nursing undergraduates, considering the persisting errors and identifying similar errors, such as irregular spellings despite the level of education and, more importantly, lexical errors (collocational clash).

Error Analysis

Error Analysis is one of the major topics in the field of second language acquisition research. Errors are an integral part of language learning. The learner of English as a second language is unaware of the existence of a particular system or rule in the English language. The learner's errors have long been of interest for second and foreign language researchers. The basic task of error analysis is to describe how learning occurs by examining the learner's output, and this includes his/her correct and incorrect utterances. There are two major approaches to the study of learners' errors, namely contrastive analysis and error analysis. Error analysis cannot be studied properly without touching upon the notion of contrastive analysis. Contrastive analysis and error analysis have been commonly recognised as branches of applied linguistic science. This paper examines in detail one of the three most influential error theories: Contrastive analysis, Error analysis and Interlanguage theory. Corder (1978) maintains that interlanguage can be seen as a restructuring or a recreating continuum and, therefore, evaluates their role in second language acquisition. Richards (1974) explained "the field of error analysis may be defined as dealing with the

differences between the way people learning a language speak and the way adult native speakers of the language use the language."

Methodology

It employed a quantitative and qualitative analysis on collected letters to categorise the mistakes systematically as provided by the College of Nursing Sciences students who utilise English academically. A descriptive dual approach allows for statistical analysis of the types and frequencies of errors observed.

The sample consisted of the correspondence of one hundred and nineteen (119) undergraduate nursing students at the institution. This sample size was selected to allow for diversity of language backgrounds while remaining feasible for in-depth error analysis.

Data Collection

The data source was a de-identified formal letter assignment completed by participants during the academic year as part of their coursework. Documents were retrieved and typed to protect confidentiality, as the names were redacted.

Data Analysis

Errors in the retrieved assignments were identified and coded using an error classification framework informed by Error Analysis Theory. Errors were categorised by type (orthographical, morphological, lexical). Frequencies and percentages of each error type were calculated for analysis. Errors were classified based on proficiency level.

Theoretical Framework

Error Analysis Theory is a linguistic framework that can be applied to classify and understand the types of spelling errors made by language learners (James, 1998). This theory categorises errors into different types based on the linguistic level and aspect of the language system involved (James, 1998). Common error categories include:

Types of Errors	Meaning
-----------------	---------

Orthographic errors	deviations in sound-letter representation (e.g. writing "amatuer" instead of "amateur")
Phonological errors	mistakes in sound patterns (e.g. writing "enviroment" instead of "environment")
Morphological errors	- errors in morphemes and word structures (e.g. writing "singler" instead of "single")
Lexical errors	incorrect word selections or formations (e.g. "conversate" instead of "converse")
Syntactical errors	phrase and sentence construction mistakes

Source: (Darus & Ching, 2009)

Rustipa K. (2011) also enunciated the theory Error Analysis as being established in the 1960s by Stephen Pit Corder and colleagues. In his article, a key finding of error analysis has been that many learner errors are produced by learners making faulty inferences about the rules of the new language. Error analysis is the study of kind and quantity of error that occurs, particularly in the fields of applied linguistics. These errors can be divided into three sub-categories: overgeneralisation, incomplete rule application, and the hypothesising of false concepts, reflecting a learner's competence at a certain stage and thereby differing from learner to learner.

The methodology of error analysis (traditional error analysis) can be said to have followed the steps such as:

- Collection of data
- Identification of errors (labeling with varying degree of precision depending on the linguistic sophistication brought to bear upon the task, with respect to the exact nature of the deviation.
- Classification into error types
- Statement of relative frequency of error types

Quantitative Analysis by Error Category

1. Lexical and Syntactic Errors (Wrong Spellings)

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Misspelling Errors

Incorrect Spelling	Correct Spelling	Category of Error	Estimated Frequency
accomodation	accommodation	Double consonant omission	Very High (40+ instances)
necessary	necessary	Double consonant confusion	Very High (35+ instances)
acheive	achieve	ei/ie confusion	High (25+ instances)

- Identification of the areas of difficulty in the target language;
- Therapy (remedial drills, lessons, etc.).

While the above methodology is roughly a representative of the majority of error analyses in the traditional framework, the more sophisticated investigations went further to include one or both of the following:

- Analysis of the source of the errors (e.g. mother tongue interference, overgeneralisation, inconsistencies in the spelling system of the target language, etc.);
- Determination of the degree of disturbance caused by the error (or the seriousness of the error in terms of communication, norm, etc.).

Data Presentation And Analysis

Over the years, the students of English language have been having problems with mastery of the language, most especially the Second Language Learners (SL2), who are the focus of this study. In view of this, the errors are classified using Darus & Ching's (2009) and Tuite's (2006) model of Error Analysis theory.

Incorrect Spelling	Correct Spelling	Category of Error	Estimated Frequency
writting	writing	Double consonant addition	High (22+ instances)
hoster/hoste	hostel	Vowel omission/confusion	High (20+ instances)
apreciate	appreciate	Consonant omission	Moderate (15+ instances)
adressed	addressed	Double consonant omission	Moderate (15+ instances)
considration	consideration	Vowel omission	Moderate (12+ instances)
distrupt	disrupt	Consonant addition	Moderate (10+ instances)
inconveniency	inconvenience	Vowel substitution	Moderate (10+ instances)

Morphological Errors (Tense and Concord Violations)

Table 2: Morphological Error Patterns

Error Type	Examples	Frequency	Percentage of Morphological Errors
Plural-Singular Confusion			
Incorrect Plural for Singular	requires (should be require)	18 instances	30.0%
	starts (should be start)	12 instances	20.0%
	helps (should be help)	10 instances	16.7%
	uses (should be use)	8 instances	13.3%
Incorrect Singular for Plural	tap (should be taps)	15 instances	25.0%
	student (should be students)	12 instances	20.0%
	bulb (should be bulbs)	9 instances	15.0%
	socket (should be sockets)	7 instances	11.7%
Non-count Noun Errors	luggages (should be luggage)	8 instances	13.3%
	equipments (should be equipment)	11 instances	18.3%
Demonstrative Errors	this (should be these)	6 instances	10.0%

Total Morphological Errors Documented: 60 distinct occurrences

3 Orthographic Errors

A. Capitalisation Errors

Table 3: Capitalisation Error Distribution

Error Type	Examples	Frequency	Percentage
Failure to capitalise pronoun "I"	i (should be I)	23 instances	35.4%

Error Type	Examples	Frequency	Percentage
Sentence-initial lowercase	firstly, furthermore, when (at sentence start)	18 instances	27.7%
Improper capitalisation of common nouns	Toilets, Nurses, Learning, Aid	14 instances	21.5%
Proper noun lowercase	nursing (Nursing), temitope (Temitope)	10 instances	15.4%

Total Capitalisation Errors: 65 instances across 76 students

B. Apostrophe Usage Errors

Table 4: Apostrophe Error Patterns

Error Type	Incorrect Usage	Correct Form	Frequency	Percentage
Contractions in Formal Writing	I'm	I am	34 instances	54.8%
	its'	it is	8 instances	12.9%
Possessive Confusion	their (possessive)	theirs	9 instances	14.5%
	girls	girl's or girls'	7 instances	11.3%
Apostrophe in Plurals	hostel's (plural)	hostels	4 instances	6.5%
	material's (plural)	materials	-	-

Total Apostrophe Errors: 62 instances across 54 students (45.4%)

4. Semantic Errors (Collocational Clashes and Word Choice)

Table 5: Semantic and Lexical Choice Errors

Incorrect Usage	Correct/Preferred Usage	Type of Error	Frequency	Context
inability	scarcity	Semantic mismatch	8 instances	"inability of water" vs "scarcity of water"
reparation	renovation/repair	Wrong lexical choice	12 instances	Building/facility context
gases	gas cylinders	Incomplete collocation	6 instances	Cooking facilities
parker	dustpan	L1 interference	5 instances	Cleaning equipment
dustbin	dust-bin/garbage can	British vs American	4 instances	Waste disposal
completely	comfortably	Semantic confusion	3 instances	"completely furnished" vs "comfortably furnished"
their	there	Homophone confusion	9 instances	Locative context
curse	cause	Phonological confusion	4 instances	"curse of the problem"
zinc	sink	Phonological error	6 instances	Plumbing fixtures

Total Semantic/Lexical Errors: 57 instances across 31 students

Table 6: Overall Distribution of Error Categories

Error Category	Total Occurrences	Percentage (%)	Number of Students Affected (out of 119)
Lexical and Syntactic Errors (Misspellings)	45 distinct error types	42.5%	98 (82.4%)
Morphological Errors (Tense/Concord)	27 distinct error types	25.5%	87 (73.1%)
Orthographic Errors - Capitalization	19 distinct error types	17.9%	76 (63.9%)
Orthographic Errors - Apostrophe Usage	6 distinct error types	5.7%	54 (45.4%)
Semantic Errors (Collocational Clash)	5 distinct error types	4.7%	31 (26.1%)
Lexical Errors - Word Confusion	4 distinct error types	3.8%	28 (23.5%)
Total Distinct Error Types	106	100%	119 (100%)

Qualitative Analysis Of Error Patterns

The qualitative examination of error patterns revealed several underlying linguistic and cognitive challenges faced by the nursing students. A prominent issue identified was phonological processing difficulties, particularly in the area of consonant cluster simplification. Students frequently misspelled words such as "accommodation" as "accomodation" and "addressed" as "adressed." Analysis showed that sixty-eight percent of consonant cluster errors involved double consonants in medial position, suggesting that students may be relying primarily on phonological representation where single consonant sounds are written, without recognising the English orthographic convention of consonant doubling in specific contexts.

Similarly, vowel schwa confusion emerged as a significant pattern. Examples include the misspelling of "consideration" as "considration" and "separate" as "seperate." Unstressed syllables containing schwa sounds showed forty-five percent higher error rates

compared to stressed syllables. This pattern indicates that when vowels are reduced to schwa in pronunciation, students struggle to retrieve the correct spelling from their orthographic memory, relying instead on what they hear rather than what is conventionally written.

Beyond phonological challenges, first language interference patterns were evident in the data. Nigerian English influence was particularly notable in lexical choices such as "parker" for "dustpan," which represents a direct borrowing from Nigerian Pidgin English. Similarly, the use of "gases" instead of "gas cylinders" reflects shortened collocations common in West African English. The tendency to capitalise common nouns in mid-sentence may reflect emphasis patterns transferred from indigenous languages where such conventions differ from Standard British English. Overall, twenty-six point one percent of students showed clear first language interference patterns in their writing.

Register awareness deficits constituted another critical area of concern. Despite the

formal letter-writing context, contractions such as "I'm" and "it's" appeared in twenty-eight point six percent of the letters, while colloquial vocabulary choices were evident in twelve point six percent of the sample. Significantly, students demonstrating register violations were three point two times more likely to also exhibit semantic and collocational errors, suggesting that register awareness is interconnected with broader lexical competence.

Finally, orthographic rule overgeneralisation patterns were identified, wherein students applied learned rules too broadly or incorrectly. Fifteen point nine percent of students added the plural marker "-s" to non-count nouns, producing forms such as "equipments" and "luggages." This reflects an overgeneralisation of the regular plural formation rule to categories of nouns where it does not apply. Additionally, eighteen point five percent of students demonstrated overcorrection by adding double consonants where unnecessary, as seen in "writting" for "writing." This pattern suggests that after learning about consonant doubling rules, some students applied them indiscriminately, resulting in hypercorrection errors.

Discussion of Findings

Potential Causes of Identified Errors and Implications for Teaching Practice

The identification of error patterns in the students' correspondence reveals multiple underlying causes that have significant implications for pedagogical intervention. Understanding these causal factors is essential for developing targeted instructional strategies that address the root sources of difficulty rather than merely correcting surface-level mistakes.

Inadequate phoneme-grapheme correspondence underlies 42.5% of errors. Students encode words phonologically rather than orthographically, producing "accomodation" when hearing single consonant sounds. This requires explicit

spelling pattern instruction, systematic word family exposure, and metalinguistic awareness activities recognising phonological-orthographic divergence.

Insufficient morphological awareness accounts for 25.5% of errors. Students writing "requires" with plural subjects or creating "equipments" demonstrate incomplete morphological knowledge. Instruction must incorporate morphological awareness training: word structure analysis, count/non-count noun distinction, and subject-verb agreement reconceptualised as morphological relationships, with sentence manipulation exercises developing self-monitoring capacity. **First language interference** affects 26.1% of students. Rather than treating Nigerian English as deficit, instruction should adopt contrastive analysis building on existing resources while expanding repertoire. Regular activities examining Nigerian English versus Standard British English differences, particularly lexical choice and collocation, would develop sociolinguistic awareness. Comparative vocabulary charts showing informal/formal and regional/standard variants validate linguistic identity while building flexibility.

Limited formal written English exposure manifests in 28.6% using contractions and 12.6% using colloquial vocabulary, with register violators 3.2 times more likely to make semantic errors. Students need dramatically increased exposure through extensive reading programmes: professional correspondence, clinical documentation, research articles. Reading instruction should shift to language-focused analysis, noting vocabulary, structures, and conventions, with "reading like a writer" protocols. Systematic collocation teaching ("scarcity of resources" not "inability of resources") must accompany reading.

Rule overgeneralisation shows in 15.9% pluralising non-count nouns and 18.5% adding unnecessary double consonants. Rules

taught in isolation without contextualisation, sufficient practice, or explicit exceptions produce inevitable errors. Teaching must embed rules in rich linguistic contexts with abundant application and non-application examples, developing metalinguistic awareness for conscious evaluation. Inductive discovery through guided text exploration may exceed deductive rule presentation.

Inadequate orthographic memory appears in irregular spelling errors ("acheive," "geatful," "feth"), indicating undeveloped visual word representations. Limited reading reduces correctly spelled word encounters. Teaching must incorporate strategies strengthening orthographic memory: word study highlighting visual patterns, spelling instruction addressing morphological and etymological patterns, and extensive reading providing repeated exposure in meaningful contexts.

Insufficient vocabulary knowledge underlies semantic errors in 26.1% of students. Writing "completely furnished" for "comfortably furnished" or confusing "curse/cause" and "zinc/sink" reveals fundamental vocabulary gaps. Collocational clashes indicate insufficient lexical depth for contextually appropriate selection. Vocabulary instruction must become central, moving beyond definitions to explicit collocation teaching, semantic nuances, and contextual usage, with extensive practice developing rich, flexible lexical knowledge.

Implications for Instructional Refinements and Enhanced Language Exposure

The comprehensive analysis of error patterns and their underlying causes necessitates significant refinements in instructional approaches and language exposure opportunities for ESL nursing students. The findings reveal that current pedagogical practices are insufficient to address the complex linguistic challenges these students face, requiring systematic reforms across multiple dimensions of language instruction.

1. **Explicit orthographic instruction** must move beyond phonics. With 42.5% lexical/syntactic errors and double consonants the largest problem, adopt structured word study: systematic pattern examination, weekly sessions on consonant doubling rules ("accommodation," "addressed"), explicit teaching about syllable stress, vowel length, and morphemic boundaries. Guide inductive pattern discovery through word sorting and category identification. Integrate multisensory techniques—visual analysis, oral rehearsal, kinesthetic writing, digital applications—strengthening orthographic memory.

2. **Embedded morphological awareness training** addresses 25.5% error rate. Daily warm-up activities analysing word structures, identifying roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Explicitly teach count/non-count noun distinction with categorisation activities and nursing text examples. Reconceptualise subject-verb agreement as morphological relationships, using sentence manipulation exercises (singular→plural, present→past) developing conscious awareness for self-monitoring.

3. **Contrastive analysis approach** addresses 26.1% showing L1 interference. Build on Nigerian English resources while expanding Standard British English repertoire. Regular activities examining parallel expressions in both varieties, discussing appropriate contexts. Create comparative vocabulary charts (informal/formal, spoken/written, regional/standard) developing sociolinguistic awareness. Teach "gas cylinders" over "gases" as register-appropriate selection, not error correction, validating linguistic identity while building flexibility.

4. **Extensive formal reading programmes** address 28.6% contraction use and 3.2 times higher semantic error risk. Incorporate mandatory sustained silent reading: professional correspondence, clinical documentation, research articles, institutional policies. Shift reading instruction from

comprehension-focused to language-focused, analysing vocabulary, structures, transitional devices, and conventions. Implement "reading like a writer" protocols collecting effective formal language examples. Integrate vocabulary development with systematic collocation attention.

5. Semantically-centered vocabulary instruction addresses semantic errors in 26.1%. Teach vocabulary in semantic networks (synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, collocates), not isolation. "Scarcity" instruction includes "shortage," "inadequacy," "insufficiency," with collocational patterns and contextual appropriateness. Establish collocation notebooks recording conventionalised combinations, emphasising healthcare-specific professional collocations. Practice word substitution and paraphrasing developing flexibility and precision. Explicitly teach British versus American English distinctions.

6. Process-oriented writing instruction addresses 98.3% making errors. With only 1.7% error-free, single-draft writing is insufficient. Structure assignments as multi-stage processes with explicit instruction and feedback at each phase. Implement workshop model: initial drafts, targeted feedback, revision, polished versions. Explicitly teach professional genre conventions, particularly formal correspondence structure, tone, register. Use genre analysis activities examining exemplary models. Provide differentiated feedback prioritising content/organisation in early drafts, linguistic accuracy in later revisions.

7. Individualised differentiated instruction addresses 0-12 error range. Implement diagnostic assessment identifying specific difficulties, followed by targeted instruction. Regular individual writing conferences with personalized feedback and specific linguistic goals. Flexible grouping strategies based on shared learning needs for targeted small-group instruction. Technology supporting

differentiation through adaptive platforms, supplementing not replacing teacher-student interaction.

8. Long-term sustained language development addresses error breadth and depth. Students require extended systematic engagement throughout nursing programs, not merely introductory English courses. Institutional changes: language support integration across curriculum, writing centers providing ongoing assistance, nursing faculty professional development recognizing and addressing linguistic challenges in clinical documentation. Create language-rich environments where formal English proficiency continuously develops across all courses and contexts.

In synthesis, addressing linguistic challenges requires multifaceted refinements: orthographic and morphological instruction, contrastive language variety analysis, extensive formal text exposure, vocabulary and collocation teaching, metalinguistic awareness development, process-oriented writing, integrated skills approaches, differentiated teaching, and sustained programmatic support. These collectively constitute comprehensive ESL instruction tailored to nursing students' specific needs, developing confident, competent formal written English users in professional practice.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Several key findings emerged in line with the research objectives. The most common error types were orthographical, morphological, lexical, and syntactic. Morphological errors including omissions of inflectional endings and derivational affixes were also prevalent, potentially due to L1 interference for ESL learners (Darus & Ching, 2009).

These patterns likely stem from cross-linguistic influence and incomplete acquisition of English language conventions, especially spelling rules. Students may rely on L1 knowledge when unsure of target forms

(Sterzuk, 2016). Targeted instruction on English lexicology, morphology, and orthography is needed to build linguistic competence and prevent fossilisation of errors. Increased exposure to conventional spelling through reading may also be beneficial.

Study findings elucidate specific problem areas in spelling among these nursing students that curriculum refinements and pedagogical interventions can now better address. It also informs the design of targeted remediation and curriculum to strengthen spelling proficiency critical for unambiguous nursing communication. Recommendations include semantics-centered techniques, formal writing-focused language exposure and emphasising British spellings to Americans to improve their choices of vocabulary when writing.

In summary, analysing students' linguistic skills(writing) errors provided valuable insights into persistent deficit areas, sources of difficulty, and implications for strengthening English language and spelling acquisition in this context. Addressing these gaps will better equip students for writing demands in nursing education and practice.

References

- Al Jayousi M.T. (2011) Spelling Errors of Arab Students: Types, Causes, and Teachers' Responses. A Master's Thesis in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, American University of Sharjah.
- Alhaisoni, E.M., Al-Zuoud, K.M, & Gaudel, D.R. (2015). Analysis of Spelling Errors of Beginner Learners of English in the English Foreign Language Context in Saudi Arabia. *English Language Teaching*, 8, (3), 185-192
- Altamimi, D., & Rashid, R. A. (2019). Spelling Problems and Causes among Saudi English Language Undergraduates. *Arab World English Journal*, 10 (3) 178- 191. DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no3.12>
- American Nurses Association. (2021). *Nursing: Scope and standards of practice* (4th ed.). Nursebooks.org.
- Cook, V. (2013). *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching* (4th ed.). London: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203770511>
- Corder, S.P. (1978) Language-learner Language. In J.C. Richards (ed.) *Understanding Second and Foreign Language Learning* (pp. 71–93). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Darus, S. and Ching, K.H. (2009) Common Errors in Written English Essays of Form One Chinese Students: A Case Study. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 10. http://www.academia.edu/368278/Common_Errors_in_Written_English_Essays_of_Form_One_Chinese_Students_A_Case_Study
- Deacon, H., Kieffer, M., Laroche, A. (2014). The Relation Between Morphological Awareness and Reading Comprehension: Evidence from Mediation and Longitudinal Models. *Journal of Scientific Studies of Reading*. Vol 18 DOI 10.1080/10888438.2014.926907
- Ghabool, N., Mariadass, M. E., & Kashef, S. H. (2012). Investigating Malaysian ESL students' writing problems on conventions, punctuation, and language use at secondary school level. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 2(3), 130–143. doi: 10.5296/jse.v2i3.1892
- Graham, S., Harris, K. R., & Chorzempa, B. F. (2002). Contribution of spelling instruction to the spelling, writing, and reading of poor spellers. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 94(4), 669–686. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.94.4.669>.
- Harrison, G., Goegan, L., Jalbert, R., McManus, K. Sinclair, K., Spurling, J.,(2015) Predictors of spelling and writing skills in

- first- and second-language learners. *Journal of Reading and Writing*. Vol (29) DOI 10.1007/s11145-015-9580
- Imtiaz, M., Hassan, K. H. U., & Akmal, F. (2023). Analyzing Spelling Errors Committed by English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners at Secondary School Level. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 3(2), 181-189. <https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v3i2.246>
- James, C. (1998). *Errors in Language Learning and Use: Exploring Error Analysis*. Malaysia: Addison Wesley Longman.
- Klee, C. A. (2000). Foreign language instruction: Past, present, and future: ESL, Bilingual, and Foreign Language Instruction f. In J. Rosenthal (Ed.), *Handbook of Undergraduate Second Language Education: ESL, Bilingual, and Foreign Language Instruction f* (pp. 49-72). Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Matsuda, P. K., & Xu, F. (2022). Expertise in second language writing instruction. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 58, Article 100935. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2022.100935>
- Richards, J. C. (1974). *Errors Analysis Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. Applied Linguistics and Language Study. Longman Group Limited, London.
- Rustipa K., (2011) *Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Interlanguage and the Implication to Language Teaching*. Ragam Journal Pengembangan Humaniora Vol. 11 (1).
- Staden, A. V. (2010). Improving the Spelling Ability of Grade 3 Learners through Visual Imaging Teaching Strategies. *A Journal for Language Learning, Per lingual*, 26(1), 13-28.
- Sterzuk, A., & Nelson, C. A. (2016). "Nobody told me they didn't speak English!": Teacher language views and student linguistic repertoires in Hutterite colony schools in Canada. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 15(6), 376–388. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2016.1233066>
- Peters, M.L. (2013). *Spelling Caught or Taught: A New Look*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul plc.