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Using Computer Software as a tool of Error Analysis: Giving EFL Teachers and Learners a much-needed Impetus

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Among educational technological tools, there is much discussion about using computers in detecting and correcting learner errors in English as a foreign language (EFL, henceforth) setting. Computer-aided error analysis can be a potent tool in classrooms in Saudi Arabia where the average student-teacher ratio is as lopsided as 40:1. Inevitably, the teaching-learning environment is not conducive to much of the behind-the-scenes teaching part such as correction work. Computer error analysis (CEA, henceforward) is a much-needed impetus for teachers to find errors and enhance their teaching methodology by devoting greater time and attention to real time learner interaction. This paper provides a theoretical framework for using computer software in error analysis with EFL writing output. It discusses the types of writing errors, which occur in EFL classrooms and how these writing errors could be detected and removed with the help of computer software. It examines and compares the error detection in manually processed learners' academic writing with a small sample of twelve scripts from the second year Academic Writing students of English at Qassim University. It provides a ready database of freely available online error analysis tools from which EFL teachers at KSA may select the most viable, suited to their learners and their output. Finally, the study discusses briefly the pedagogical implications and puts forth some supportive recommendations that may allow for inclusion of computers in EFL classrooms in a bigger way than the current practice.

Key words: *Computer aided analysis (CEA), error analysis, analysis of writing samples, EFL, Writing essays.*

Introduction

Learners unavoidably make various types of mistakes in the process of acquiring a foreign language as in EFL classrooms. All errors need not be seen as a nuisance as they can even be significant for teachers and learners in the following ways: they give the instructors data about **how much** the students have learnt, for researchers they provide facts of **how** language was learnt

and they serve as devices by which the student finds the principles of the objective language. Mistakes, misinterpretations, and errors structure a significant part of virtual learning skills in EFL classrooms. Therefore, to ensure a smooth and efficient teaching and learning process in places of learning, researchers try to develop and use as many methodologies and strategies to find and analyse errors as possible. So far, the trend is to relegate the field of error detection to manual form with the teacher spending precious time and resource that may well be diverted to better learner use. Besides, error detection has some flaws as human error therein is unavoidable. Thereby it negatively impacts reliability of correction in the learning process. Since error analysis improves teachers' teaching skills and helps students to learn better and acquire correct linguistic skills, use of computer software in the process is likely to boost overall performance of teachers too in the EFL classrooms. In the last few years, the approach of corpus-based research with respect to interlanguage and language mistakes has been gaining prominence due to popularization of use of computers in linguistic programs. In other words, use of computers in detection and correction process of errors can prove to be a boon for teachers ensuring flawless teaching in EFL classrooms.

It is normal that EFL learners experience more challenges in writing in English as a second/unknown language as composing is a challenging task, and English and L1 (Arabic in this case) etymological and orthographic frameworks fundamentally vary (Al-Ahdal & Al-Ma'amari, 2015). So, while writing essays and paragraphs learners unknowingly or due to lack of fundamental knowledge of English, commit different kinds of errors. Writing tasks such as essays and reports submitted by these learners are replete with errors and are often seen as a time-consuming, monotonous and herculean burden by the teachers. However, we know that the analysis of errors plays an important role in the acquisition of foreign languages such as showing ways in which mother tongue interferes in the process of its learning. Here, using software for the purpose can be a shot in the arm, giving teachers and learners a much-needed impetus.

Review of Literature on Error Analysis

Corder and his contemporaries first developed the field of error analysis (EA) in EFL in 1970. EA is a linguistic methodology to highlight mistakes committed by students in their writing samples. It includes a correlation between the errors in the target language (TL) and within the target language itself. Granger (2003: 466) depicts traditional EA as "out of favour" and "going down in history as a fuzzy, unscientific and unreliable approach to the language of learners." An investigation led by Rod Ellis in 2008 (Zhang, 2010) concentrated on second language acquisition and examined the significance of mistake examination and recommended it as a technique for eradicating errors in L1. As indicated by the statistics published in the third release of The Official Guide to the TOEFL Exam (2009), the normal TOEFL rating for Saudi Arabia is 57 out of 120, the second lowest in the Middle East and one of the world's least normal TOEFL scores. Saudi EFL learners have been shown to be of low performers in English as a foreign language (EFL) in many studies (Al-Khairy, 2013a; Alrabai, 2014a; Alrahaili, 2013; Alrashidi & Phan, 2015; Rahman & Alhaisoni, 2013). Despite the tremendous efforts made by the Saudi government to

improve English teaching and learning in the EFL classrooms, learners' English abilities stay unsuitable and far beneath desirable (Alhawsawi, 2013; Rajab, 2013). Javid & Umer (2014, p. 165) quotes Fageeh (2011) who argues that, when studying a foreign language, students are mostly dependent on writing as an "integral language learning ability." Therefore, it is not possible to understate the importance of writing as it is regarded as a cognitive tool that helps to build a language. Error analysis on the other hand, benefits educators in three different ways: first, it helps them correct learners' mistakes; second, it helps improve their teaching methodology; and third, it helps them focus on those areas that need reinforcement (Al-haysoni, 2012). In pursuit of learning a foreign language especially where the target and native languages belong to different language families, students face hindrances in writing, in particular in capitalisation, punctuation, use of language, timing, preposition, spelling, etc. Khan (2011) raised the same issues by mentioning that EFL students face multiple problems in phoneme clusters, spellings, grammar, errors due to L1 impedance, structure, duplication of subjects, duplication of preposition, tenses, articles, appropriate vocabulary, misuse of prefixes and suffixes etc. Error extraction requires manual labour in the traditional methodology of EA, and this prevents the teachers from properly investigating gigantic information as it is time consuming and labour intensive. But error analysis using computer software gives teachers a new path to find errors and after removal they can repeat their teaching activities in order to better understand the language development. Hameed (2016) explores spelling mistakes found in the written composition of second and third standard high school students in the UAE. The examination shows that the spelling mistakes of the students arose from lack of motivation, poor guidance and inadequate training. First language of students affects target language learning (Baustani, 2019). In KSA, many studies with learners' writing samples found that most students used ways to pass language tests, i.e., adopt adequate methods to improve or acquire writing skills to see them through the examinations, and even memorize the written answer(s)/paragraph(s) (Abbai, 2011; Sawalmeh, 2013; Mohammad, 2016; Alrabai, 2016; Ahmed, 2016; Nuruzzaman, 2018).

Studies on CEA Methodology

CEA's approach is another way to address student error testing, hoping to give a fresh momentum to EA work (Dagneaux et al., 1998). The term, Computer Aided Error Analysis or Error Analysis based on learner corpora was first coined by Dagneaux. In reality, Díaz-Negrillo and Fernández-Domínguez (2006: 84) state that "CEA finds its roots in EA's methodology". Botley and Dillah (2007) consider CEA to be a" new flavour of EA "and a new paradigm in EA's research field. Error evaluation work for EFL classrooms is still significant and is enhanced with the use of CEA approaches. CEA is one such analytical tool that has acquired the procedures, resources and overall rigor necessary for development of corpus linguistics in a rigorous analysis of foreign dialect mistakes. It can be used to create full lists of specific types of errors, count and arrange them in different ways, and display them in their scope. It is a ground-breaking method that will help KSA's EFL instructors produce a new generation of teaching tools that, being more "learner-conscious," cannot neglect to be increasingly effective (Alhujaylan, 2016; Mushtaq, 2019).

CEA Tools on the shelf

CEA is an artificial intelligence (AI) proofreading method which is helpful to teachers in identifying and removing writing errors and is increasingly being used by language teachers the world over. We discuss here fifteen of the most popular and largely freely available tools.

- **Grammarly:** One of the most extensively used syntax checkers, utilised by a huge number of individuals is Grammarly. It offers online word processor free of charge and Free Chrome, Safari, and Firefox browser extensions that fix more than 150 types of errors like grammar, punctuation, word structure, writing style, logical spelling, and sentence structure, flagging errors as soon as the content is entered.
- **ProWritingAid:** This tool is a grammar checker. In addition to the fact that it helps users in writing grammatically correct, totally error free sentences, it recommends a huge number of style upgrades to assist in enhancing readability. This tool can investigate text writing to eliminate any irregularities, vague wording, repetitiveness, passive voice, sentences that are too complex, and much more. ProWritingAid does this by producing 25 reports: style of composition, structure of language, overused words, platitudes and redundancies, pronouncements, advances, consistency, understandability, unclear and theoretical words, similar sounding word usage, homonyms, corporate wording, abbreviations, complex words and plagiarism. There are three available versions of ProWritingAid.
- **WhiteSmoke:** WhiteSmoke can produce a report that will analyse and score a composition in addition to checking material for errors. Rating is measured in six distinct classes: structure of sentences, expressions, phrases, tone, span, and repetition. In addition to the fact that it corrects content, it offers tips for writing text upgrades.
- **Ginger Online:** Ginger has many useful features and possibilities, for instance, it helps users in detecting errors and improving their writing flaws, especially if English is their second language. There are three versions available for Ginger: Free, Basic and premium.
- **LanguageTool:** Since LanguageTool can detect and correct grammatical mistakes in different languages, it stands out from the competition. Though this tool does not provide loads of features, even the available features work well. This tool is claimed to have the ability to correct grammatical errors that no other system can detect.
- **GradeProof:** GradeProof is an advanced artificial intelligence proofreading tool. On account of AI, one's writing makes the tool smarter. The more we write, the better it can provide smart suggestions for enhancing the writing. This programme corrects grammar errors, spelling errors, and suggests rephrasing sentences. It comes again in two versions: free and premium one.
- **Hemingway:** The code can correct errors and determine the ability to write. It additionally offers a readability rating, for example the content's degree of clarity. The higher the score for readability, the easier it is to read and understand. So it is one of best CEA tools for teachers not just to find and correct mistakes in writing text provided by students but also in scoring the level of clarity of the text. Hemingway comes in two versions-Free online versions and a desktop tool. One of Hemingway's additional features is that it additionally counts the number of adverbs in the content. It also tallies passive voice constructions and proposes what number one should

utilise, in light of the article's highlights. But it has its own weakness: it does not test or fix grammatical errors.

- **Reverso:** This is an ease to use error analysis tool. It encourages one to accomplish a decent degree of composing capability by redressing even the most awkward errors quickly and efficiently. It gives various applicable revisions and users are recommended to choose one of them as indicated by the setting of composition.
- **PaperRater:** PaperRater is a good option for speedy grammar checking. It takes only a few seconds to edit text once it is typed. It utilises AI and information science innovation to dive deep into the sentence and linguistic structure to empower constant content examination. This cloud-based sentence structure checker can be utilised without the requirement for clients to sign-up or download anything. This app also checks for punctuation errors, wrong spelling, word usage, sentence length, passive voice, and even for plagiarism. It also has a different Vocabulary Builder device that recommends words that improve the sentences.
- **Online Correction.com:** This tool can undertake grammar checking, detect stylistic issues, and identify spelling mistakes. While it just works with English, it can look at different varieties, such as British English, New Zealand English, Australian English, South African English, and American English.
- **Spell Check Plus:** This is a teacher as well as learner friendly tool as it not only checks the errors in several stages, it also gives learners reasons behind their writing mistakes and prevents them from committing the same errors again. This tool can identify a wide range of common and hard-to-detect writing mistakes. These include errors in capitalisation, punctuation, spelling, word usage, generally confused words, words with similar pronunciation, as well as the most common mistakes of EFL learners.
- **Virtual Writing Tutor:** This tool is designed especially for EFL teaching. It helps users check punctuation, spelling, and grammar, self-examine target structure usage, improve English pronunciation proficiency, calculate word count, enhance word selection, and assess paraphrasing.
- **Slick Write:** This is also a speedy checker but for long writing text should be divided into smaller units to take advantage of the quick editing results.
- **AutoCrit:** It helps in getting rid of common errors in writing styles. Other functionalities include eliminating excessive use of adverbs, removing unnecessary filler words and phrases and clichés, and removing redundancies.
- **After the Deadline:** AI and natural language processing technology is used in this tool for checking grammar, writing style, and spelling and to offer relevant suggestions.

Advantages of CEA

In early, 1990s emergence of computer learner corpora (CLC) empowered teachers to carry out computer-aided error analysis (CEA). It was created to conquer a large portion of the downsides of customary EA. Its pros were the following:

Systematic examination: In CEA approach, a systematic examination of learners' mistakes can be undertaken. Traditional EA techniques come up short on an orderly investigation of the mistakes as errors are analysed manually, and human errors owing to the peculiarly monotonous task are likely to creep in. Computer-based database can be utilised by educators to arrange and separate the sort of general mistakes for instance those that occur on account of the first language's impact. A computer can investigate the particular errors that learners made and can respond in a variety of ways as opposed to the typical educator, which can encourage the learners for self-correction and help them comprehend the standard or the right usage.

- *Storage capacity*: CEA approach provides an upper hand in storing and processing of large amount of data about different aspects of learners' language output. Compare this to the traditional system of paper storage which appears not only cumbersome but is also closed to access in the long run.
- *Compatible and time flexible:* Since CEA is computer-based so teacher may use the approach anywhere and anytime. Such analysed writing work may also be sent back to the learners for them to assess their mistakes.
- *Immediate and detailed feedback:* In case of immediate results required teacher may give a detailed and immediate feedback to learners.
- *Analyses of large amount of data*: Using CEA, a larger amount of information or a long, written output can be analysed to generate more significant results in language learning research.
- *Empirical error analyses:* Using CEA methods, errors in the written language of learners can be studied in a progressively quantitative and scientific manner by examining the real patterns of use, using a concordance system and statistically plotting the results.
- *Guided and repetitive practice:* Within certain constraints that programmers establish, students have the freedom of expression, such as grammar, vocabulary, etc. They can repeat the process as many times as they want to master the course they want.
- *Ease of use:* CEA seamlessly integrates into workflow with ease of use and teachers need no or negligible training in the use of it. The installation process also applies to ease of use.

Limitations of CEA

In spite of various advantages CEA has some drawbacks too. These are:

- *Lack of trained teachers*: Teachers and students need basic mechanical information before applying computer technology to teaching and learning in a foreign or second language. Therefore, only those familiar with computer technology can gain from this approach (Roblyer, 2003).
- *Imperfect current CEA programs:* At present, various computer aided error analysis software mainly deal with grammatical and punctuation errors, so their functions are still limited. A CEA tool should ideally be able to detect and correct all kinds of errors occurring during the learning process. It should not only be able to evaluate and correct the input data but should give appropriate results for users to improve their skill at writing. A good CEA ought to have the

option to analyse a wide range of written errors with pronunciation, syntax, or use and then choose between a range of options intelligently.

- *Accessibility:* Because school computers or language labs can only be accessed within restricted hours, CEA services only support teachers with residence computers or private notebooks.
- *CEA Cost:* Though various CEA software are online available with no cost; good CEA tools are paid services which may not be affordable to all teachers. Further CEA checker tools offering free unrestricted use are provided with limited access to functionality and may not be useful for point by point writing samples evaluation.
- *Handling unexpected errors:* Since computers still lack artificial intelligence perfectly comparable to the human mind, many software cannot deal with learners' unexpected linguistic flaws or innovative constructions as seen in poetic output.
- *Changing situations:* The learning situation faced by foreign language students is diverse and constantly changing, and computers with AI support may not be able to detect all sorts of situations. Since it is still a piece of software, so user may encounter inconvenience utilising it, or it might begin acting strangely and even stop working totally.

Methodology

The researcher randomly selected twelve 300-400 words academic writing samples from previously manually corrected scripts (N=38). The average word count came to 1130. Prior to manual correction, the concerned EFL teacher was requested to record the time spent on correction of each report. Since these were originally handwritten reports (on the curricular topic 'Taking a global look at climate change'), the researcher first tabulated the errors marked manually on a rubric which we prepared after consultation with five EFL teachers on the kinds of errors they encountered in academic writings of their learners. The rubric is presented below in Table 1 along with the error results.

Table 1:

Report	Grammar	Punctuation	Missing word	Spelling	Contextually wrong word	Detection of unique word(s)	Time taken (in minutes)
1	11	12	7	19	8	4	35
2	9	13	3	18	4	0	28
3	13	10	9	18	5	1	30
4	14	11	6	19	7	0	25
5	16	15	2	21	8	0	35
6	11	13	5	15	6	1	25
7	15	13	3	11	3	1	34
8	12	11	8	14	6	0	30
9	14	12	4	11	7	2	28
10	11	12	1	12	5	0	25
11	16	14	4	10	6	0	30
12	10	6	3	9	2	3	20

In the next stage, volunteers were requested to prepare Word documents of each of the twelve essays and these were run through Grammarly, the most widely used free tool with a user base of almost 7 million daily active users. Outcomes are tabulated in Table 2, which shows the comparison between manual (M) and Grammarly (G) error correction outcomes.

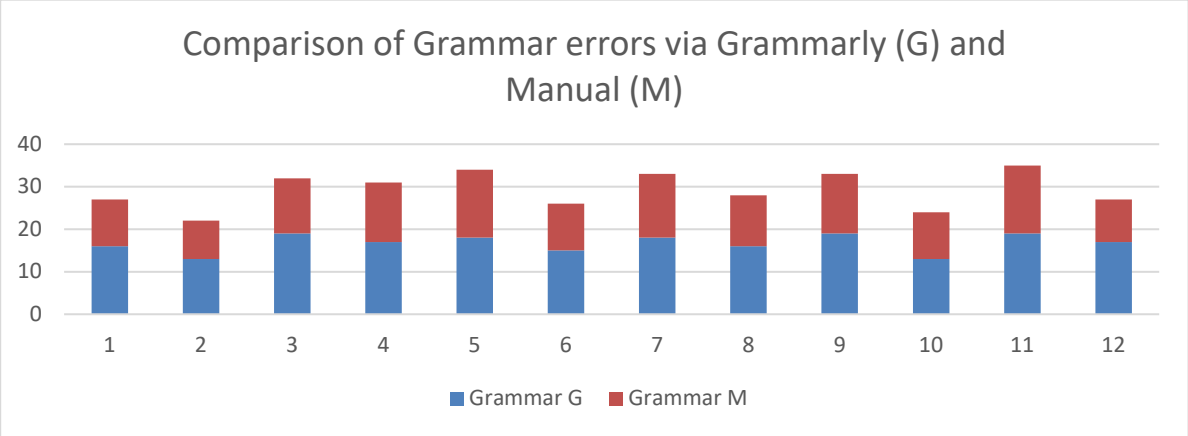
Table 2:

Report	Grammar		Punctuation		Missing word		Spelling		Contextually wrong word		Detection of unique word(s)		Time taken (in minutes)	
	G	M	G	M	G	M	G	M	G	M	G	M	G	M
1	16	11	21	12	14	7	26	19	14	8	4	4	13	35
2	13	9	19	13	9	3	31	18	9	4	3	0	10	28
3	19	13	18	10	15	9	29	18	8	5	2	1	12	30
4	17	14	17	11	9	6	24	19	11	7	0	0	12	25
5	18	16	22	15	10	2	30	21	15	8	1	0	11	35
6	15	11	21	13	14	5	19	15	11	6	2	1	13	25
7	18	15	19	13	11	3	21	11	14	3	1	1	12	34
8	16	12	18	11	16	8	18	14	9	6	3	0	12	30
9	19	14	15	12	9	4	20	11	10	7	2	2	13	28
10	13	11	17	12	11	1	17	12	9	5	2	0	11	25
11	19	16	20	14	8	4	16	10	11	6	0	0	13	30
12	17	10	14	6	13	3	16	9	7	2	5	3	11	20

Analysis of Data

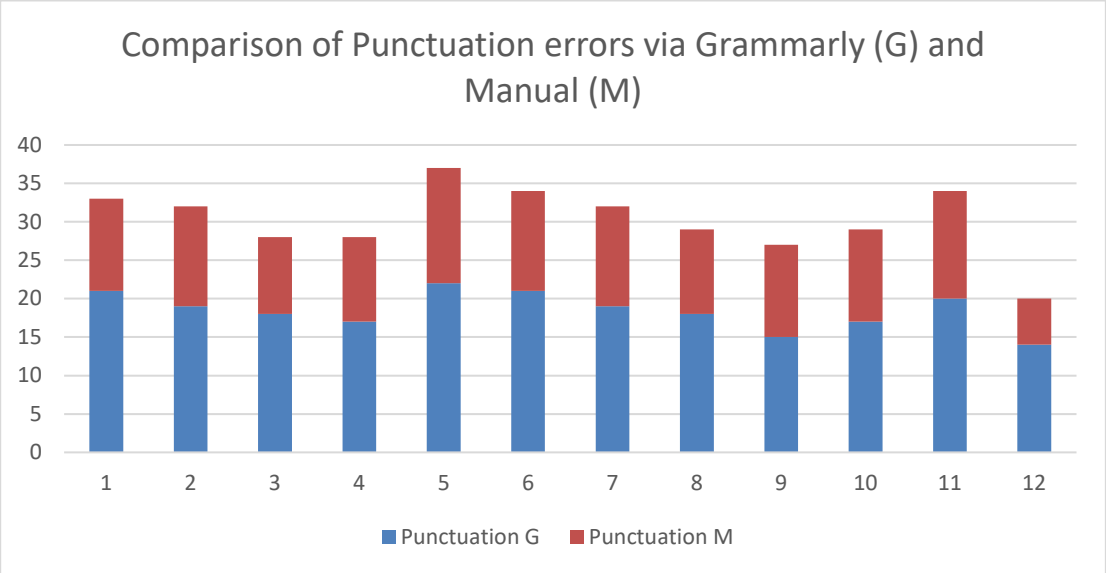
Comparison of error detection outcomes with Grammarly (G) and manual (M) show that the former found errors that were missed out in the manual process. Take for instance, grammatical errors which include errors in subject-verb agreement, degrees of comparison, tense and aspect, and wrong or excessive use of modifiers. In this category, where the average frequency of occurrence of errors was 12.66 in manual processing, it rose to 16.66 when the same scripts were run through Grammarly. This comparison is diagrammatically demonstrated in Figure 1. We understand that proficiency in a language hinges on a clear grasp and even better application of grammatical functions.

Figure 1



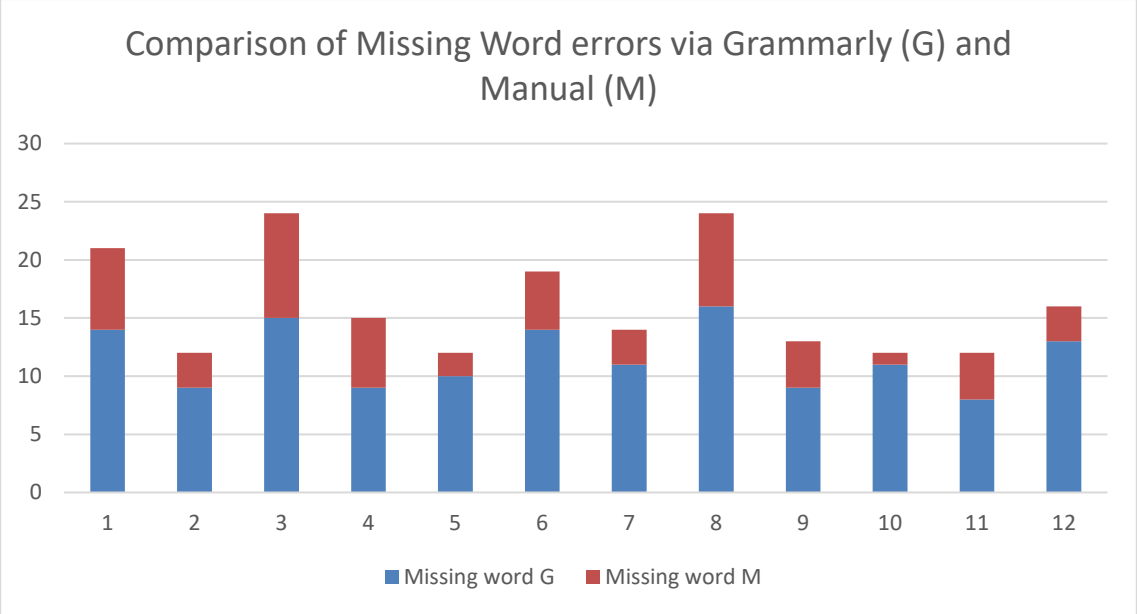
Similar differences and greater efficiency of the software tool are demonstrated in marking of punctuation errors which showed an average frequency of 11.83 per script encase of manual correction, when the process was repeated with the automatic tool, the readings came to 18.41. Punctuation, it may be noted here is a particular challenge when the languages involved are written in different directions. Although pre-modern Arabic did not have any system of punctuation, it came to be in the language especially with the onset of bilingualism with languages from other families such as English. Further, whereas Arabic uses some of the punctuation from English, such as the interrogative marker (?), in Arabic its direction is reversed for obvious reasons to (؟). However, certain other borrowed symbols like the quotation marks **are not reversed** likewise. Such and other exceptions to the rule lead to much confusion and errors in the output of the EFL learners. However, software tools detect these errors more efficiently and we present the comparison in case of errors in punctuation marks as detected manually versus via the tool in Figure 2.

Figure 2



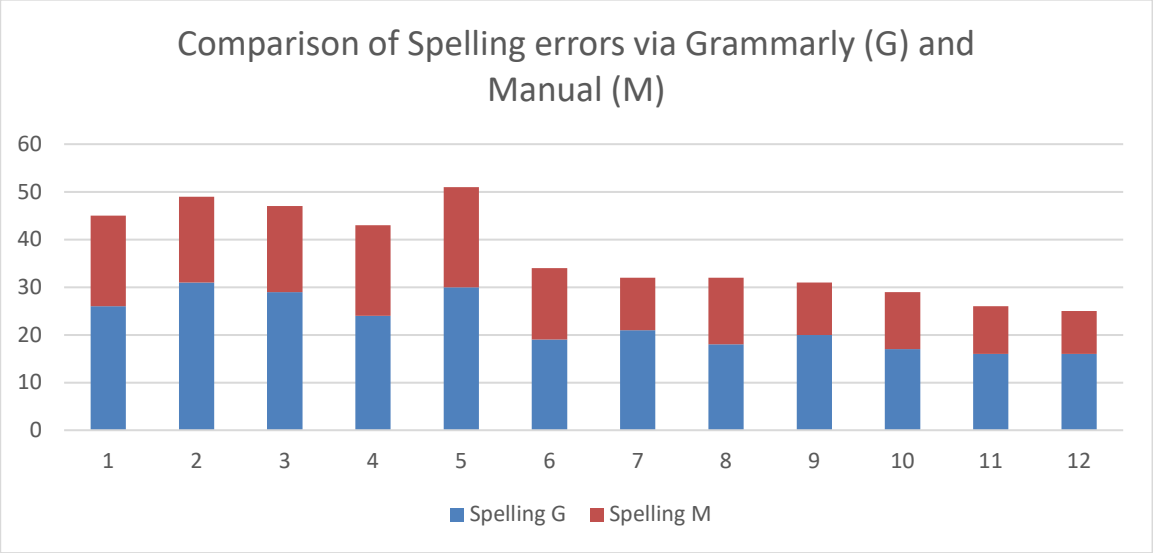
Arabic, like other Semitic languages, is highly inflectional whereas English is not, causing EFL learners to omit words in English as much of the information in Arabic is loaded in the word itself. When we compare results for error detection on this count between manual and computer processing, the latter outdoes the former, making a case for opting for software tools in feedback on written output. The average detected frequency for such errors with manual processing stood at 4.58, the error detection with software came to 11.58 which is a significantly better score. Readability is a feature adversely affected with missing words in a text and if this can be tackled efficiently, learner output is likely to reflect better readability. Figure 3 below depicts these results.

Figure 3



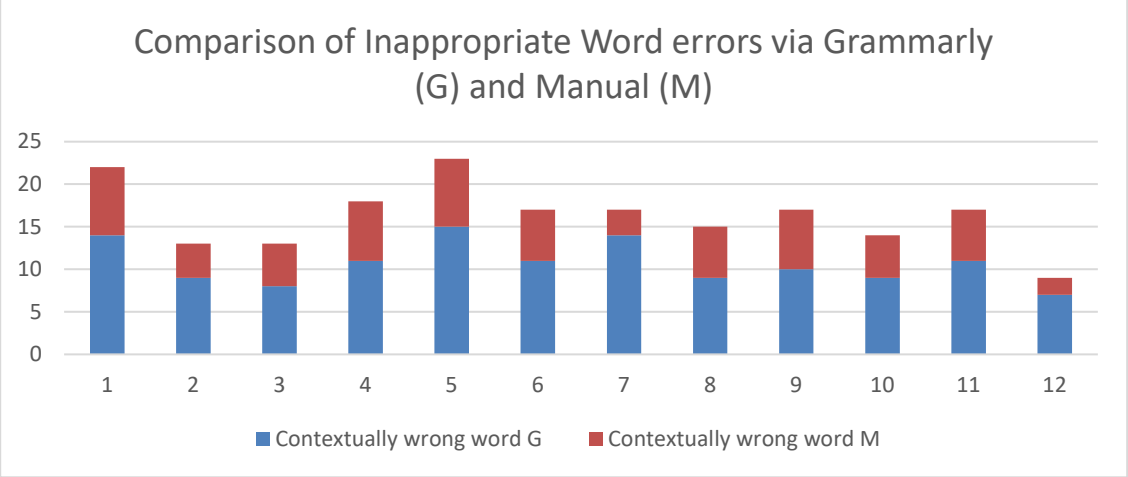
With detection of spelling too, computer software proved more efficient than manual processing, where manual outcomes showed an average frequency of 14.75, the average came to 21.41 via the computer-based tool. With a background in a fully phonetic language ie Arabic, the loose or absent phoneticism of English is difficult for the Arab EFL learner to comprehend. The current practice, therefore, is to learn the English spelling which these learners do, but as soon as they set themselves to writing tasks, the spelling escapes them as they revert to writing the phonetic or (close to it) spelling as is their practice in the mother tongue. The results are represented below in Figure 4.

Figure 4



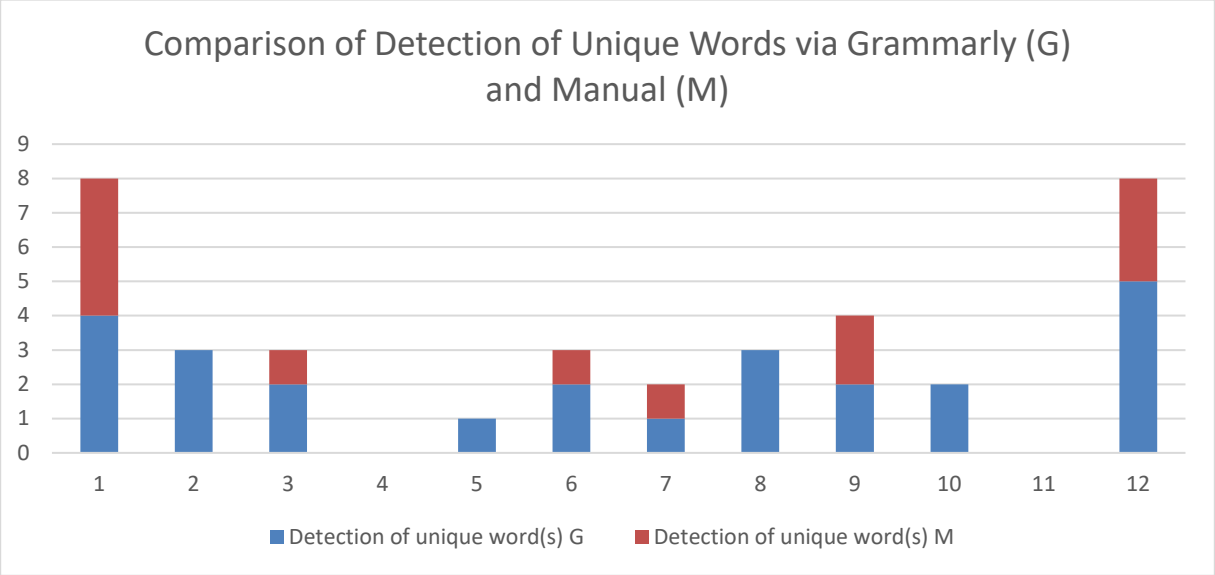
Poor proficiency and an approach based upon translation or rote learning, contextuality of language is often lost on the Saudi EFL learners. Manual processing of the submissions showed a frequency of 5.58 which is way below that reflected by machine led vetting at 10.66. Figure 5 below shows the comparison of error detection of these in manual and machine processing.

Figure 5



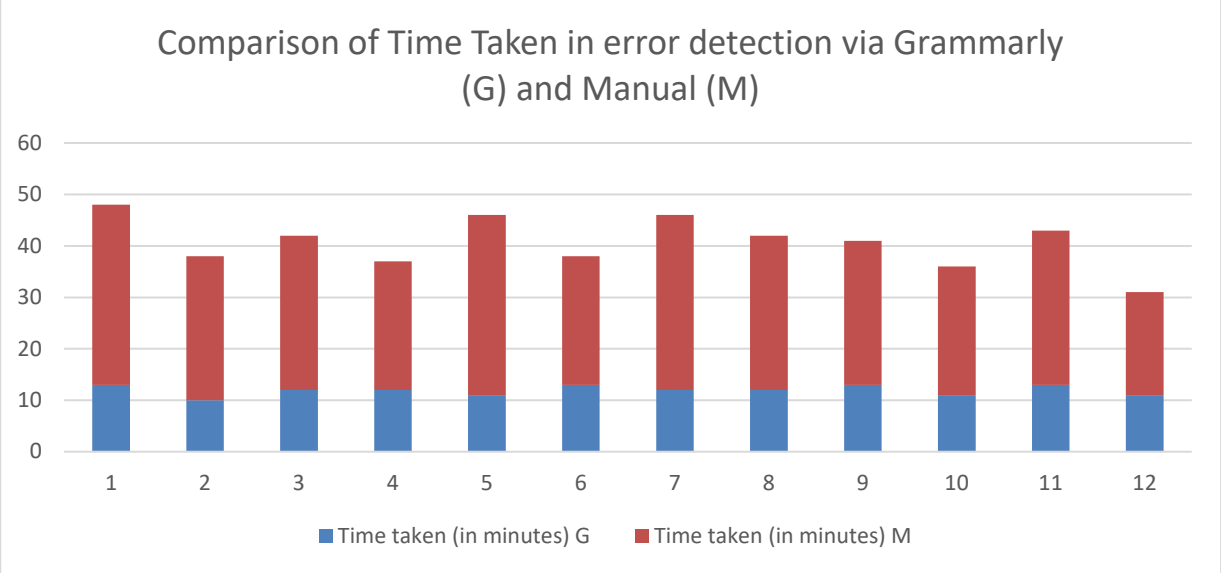
One area of error detection in case of foreign language learners where manual processing may be assumed to be better than computer software is in the detection of unique words (as may be culture specific) and not treating them as errors, for example, indigenous names. These are almost comparable with computer software not once 'not-recognising' a unique word. While the manual processing reading came to an average of 1 word, the software did better at 2.08 as it could recognize words across several languages and contexts such as anagrams. These comparisons are shown in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6



Of all the factors that evidence the greater efficiency of computer-based software as opposed to manual processing in error detection, the most remarkable outcomes are those related to the amount of time spent. Not taking into consideration the time spent in converting the manuscripts to Word files, a factor which may be encountered in the future by requesting the learners to submit only Word files, the average time spent on one submission when done manually, is 28.75 minutes (a university teacher in Saudi Arabia typically teaches eighty to one hundred and twenty students), whereas the machine spent 11.91 minutes on an average on one submission. These results are shown in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7



Significance of the Study

With advances in the application of newer technologies in learning and teaching, it becomes necessary to make a good use of technological tools in promoting the EFL teaching and learning processes (Al-Ahdal & Shariq, 2019). The purpose of this study is to offer techniques and suggest viable error analysis tools to EFL teachers for improving students' writing skills. The study is likely to create awareness of the characteristics and use of the computer software in error analysis in written English Current research, unlike in the early 1990s when the value of technology was still being challenged, research is currently focused around the most ideal approach to incorporate innovation into language guidance to make instruction and adaptation progressively compelling (Hassan et al., 2019).

Relevance of the study to the global EFL Context

The significance of this paper lies in its attempt to shed light on factors that contribute to the learners' writing errors and their weak writing performance, and in finding how teachers can give better feedback with the aid of computers. Committing errors in English language, specifically while producing lengthy essays is common among writers but surprisingly, it is not usual for language teachers to help the learners find and eradicate these errors in writing. The present investigation will prove to be valuable for teachers, policy makers, administrators, and institutions of learning. It will assist them with working on recognized difficulties and obstructions and offer them some handy ideas to deal with the issues and them streamline their EFL pedagogy by making it more focused on students and practical in nature. Such a methodology will guarantee that learners can procure key aptitudes related with writing skills in a more capable way that can be utilised in real-world scenarios across the globe. The errors of students, especially those committed in writing, are distinguished as they deeply worry of teachers, linguists and syllabus

designers (Darus & Ching, 2009). With the boom of discovering mistakes and correction with the help of computer software, EFL instructors and language scientists are starting to see the benefits of integrating these tools into the teachers' toolkits. Indeed, they are as likely to become as indispensable as the chalk and board in EFL classrooms.

This study is most likely to benefit pedagogical philosophies in learning institutions by changing certain notions. First, committing errors is an ordinary procedure of language improvement, so the mistakes of learners are an extraordinary wellspring of development in teaching and learning. Second, teachers could get benefitted by comparing different kinds of available online free or paid software in detection and correction of errors in writing essays or other written output submitted by learners. They can choose the best fitted computer software for their error analysis purpose and save their time and cost in EFL classrooms and apply them to the greater benefit of the process of teaching-learning. Teachers may give better feedback with full details by examining and correcting texts using these tools. Without a doubt, they will reduce the teachers' burden and add value to the learning process.

Conclusions and pedagogical implications

Manual academic writing correction is clearly a time consuming and tedious task especially where teachers are assigned large classes of less than proficient writers. It can be said with some certainty that the time which teachers can better utilise in improvement of their skill and knowledge for the benefit of the learners goes poorly utilised. Not only this, teachers usually catch up on the feedback part during the after hours, further adding to the prevalent stress in their jobs. This starts a vicious cycle as work pressures and never-ending feedback needs affect their productivity negatively and errors in learners' writing go unnoticed.

Since teachers should be able to provide constructive input in a non-threatening manner for better results in EFL classrooms, it is only a matter of time before the CEA tools enter the language learning arena. However, selection of software will need much care and analysis keeping the specific learning situation and learner proficiency level in mind. A detailed discussion with teachers should be carried out to understand the challenges they face while using computer software in error analysis and their active and keen participation must be sought. In other words, appropriate software could be decided depending upon matching the needs, interests and level of students. Teachers should also 'dig deep' in order to understand the interests and challenges facing in analysing writing skills of students in KSA EFL classrooms.

Lack of motivation for fear of poor performance prevails among Arab students and the fear of shame vis-à-vis the teacher is deeply felt. This and similar factors can be set aside with the role of the teacher becoming more defined as a 'guide' than a 'judge' of their capabilities as these problems are even more accentuated in compulsory English composition courses with L1 non-native Arabic English speakers. Therefore, teachers should have a motivational approach in EFL classrooms so that students commit fewer errors in their written output, are more present in the

learning process, and are less deterred by errors they are likely to make. The current reality is not without its challenges, and the future is not without bright hope.

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