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## Orthographic Error Analysis: A Bird's-Eye View of Students' Spelling, Capitalization and Punctuation

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### Abstract:

The purpose of the study was to ascertain if there was any association between orthographic error and what is being written on particular topics. Thus, forty-nine ( $n=49$ ) learners, thirty-nine ( $n=39$  (80%) male) and ten ( $n=10$  (20%) female) from freshman students were involved. Indeed, the sample was drawn by using convenience sampling based on availability. On this account, the study encompassed correlations and descriptive statistics of which observation, text analysis, and diary were entrusted with regarding to data disposal. The findings, as a retrospective report, reveal that there is a positive relationship ( $r = 0.359$ , when  $p \leq 0.05$ ) between orthographic error, i.e., the inundated spelling error and number of words used at a time of classroom-based texts. Upon the findings, the study laid down its set of recommendations.

**Keywords:** Error, mistake, orthography

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. Background

John Lock, the well-known philosopher, was once said, 'All men are liable to error; and most men are, in many points, by passion or interest under temptation to it.' Many years have lapsed since then though orthographic errors are yet prevalent among students. In this immediate context, as Widdowson (1986) says, 'An error is taken as evidence of deficient competence in the language and calls for correction' (p.154). Indeed, here within the study takes an insight into the orthographic errors, i.e., Spelling, Capitalization, and Punctuation (henceforth SCP).

English spelling, from its conventional viewpoint, was standardized in the 17<sup>th</sup> century whereof its rules are yet unwavering. To give more account, 'English orthography,' says Andersen (2011, p. 15), 'has changed very little in over two hundred and fifty years; rules first formulated by Lowth have now become universal.' In effect, as Ringbom (2007) puts it, 'Spelling is a highly specific task related to problem solving: there is normally only one correct solution and anything that is not fully correct must be regarded as wrong' (p.89). Nevertheless, Brown (2000, p.275) warns this notion a careful reference, by saying, 'Knowing a language rule itself does not guarantee for any communication to occur.'

To date, as a commendable student text gets into the hands of the academics, so does a text that outpour myriad capitalization errors. Trask (2007) said, 'A given orthography consists of a particular version of a particular writing system (in the case of English, a version of the Roman alphabet employing both small letters and capital letters)' (p. 201). Nevertheless, there are ample of opportunities when non-standard works certainly overwhelm student text that deters the academics from deciphering intended meanings.

Punctuation marks are word arrivals to elucidate meanings. Indeed, Sundem (2006) reveals, 'Without proper punctuation, the sentence is difficult to read' (p.57). On the top of this, vibrant rules must be sustained in using punctuations; and therefore, Lou, Ehrman & Shekhtman (2005) assert, 'Punctuation is one writing convention, and while it seems like a simple thing, habits are hard to break. Even very advanced students often make mistakes in punctuation' (p.12). Taken as a whole, other studies (e.g., Henikel, 2011, p.158) do suggest the paramount importance of learner orthographic errors to ascertain and provide coping mechanisms.

To summarize and conclude linguists (e.g., James, 2013, p.130; Dave, 2010, p. 28; and, Trappes-Lomax & Ferguson, 2002, p.188) indicate that SCP errors encompass four different variables: errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of selection, and errors of ordering. 'Omission' is wherefore something omitted; whereby, 'addition' is the opposite. 'Selection' is when unnecessary element(s) is/are being selected and 'ordering' is about the disorderliness.

#### 1.2. Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, at a time when the role of writing skills is predominantly requisite in many instances, the unrestrained orthographic error is diminishing students' dream come true. This unceasing failure is, after all, becoming detrimental to the students and evoked an educational concern to the academics. As long as the problem is a threat to the overall instructions therefore three of the following lists seems to contribute: (1) the theoretical controversy over the accuracy and fluency; (2) the role misrepresentation among the academics; and (3) an absence of mastery over the nature of English

words, e.g., homophone, homonym, and so forth. The issues here-in-above have the increasingly puzzled EFL/ESL instructions.

The underlying theories (e.g., the dichotomy of accuracy vs. fluency) set forth ambiguities. As such theories are becoming a conundrum so is the dilemma for error correction. In this regard, therefore, the reluctance to error correction has long been witnessed. This could be one of the prevailing and premeditating factors to student orthographic error.

Lived experiences, most obviously, bestow credible evidences. This has a paramount importance to recognize the bit between theory and practice. On a certain occasion, a professor from another university said, 'May I inquire, just for fun? To date, we see students who write their name beginning with lower case, but finishing with uppercase, or upper cases pop-up from pillar to post. Who would tell us what else had gone wrong, gentlemen?' But, without awaiting verification she resumed his speech. Time and again, this common and plenteous eye-catching scenario, or problem (or whatever we call it) has long been repeatedly accounted by the academics. So, such lived experiences duly offer researchers to deem worthy of insight so that they can bring forth the hidden fact in plain sight.

Most importantly, the complexity as well as the failure of gaining mastery over the fact of orthography is inevitably precipitating error. Of this, for instance, the lack of the particular skills of some linguistic elements, i.e., homophone, homonym, and so forth are somewhat purporting and exacerbating the dubious behavior. Besides, the inattention of apt capitalization and punctuation mark is a well-recognized problem. Such fragility is, in effect, deep-rooted in the orthographic knowledge constraint. Thus, the puzzle doesn't require much of a fact check.

At last, the unusual magnitude of orthographic error from student text calls for tough and comprehensive measures which are out of the necessity to explain. Because, student lack of control over orthography inevitably holds out a far-reaching consequence. Therefore, it is impossible to ignore this eye-catching fact. Rather, it seems sound to bring it to a beam of light.

### 1.3. Objectives

The aim of the study is to identify relationships among students' words use and spelling error variables in text developments. Thus, particularly the study is to:

- Identify the association between words in a text and spelling error;
- Compare the mean value of capitalization error for male and female students;
- Compare the mean value of a punctuation error for male and female students;

### 1.4. Research Questions

The study answers the following plausible inquiries grounded in orthography:

- Is the association between words in a text and spelling error positive or negative?
- What is the mean value of capitalization error for male and female students?
- What else is the mean value of punctuation error for male and female students?

### 1.5. Hypotheses

The following are the hypotheses of the study:

- $H_0$ =There is no relationship between length of words used in a text and student spelling error when the alpha level  $p(\alpha) \leq 0.05$ .
- $H_1$ = There is a relationship between length of words used in a text and student spelling error when the alpha level  $p(\alpha) \leq 0.05$ .

### 1.6. Significances of the Study

Orthographic errors are the overriding concern even in this era of supper fast communication. In effect, the purpose of investigating the correlation is to ascertain a trustworthy association between length of words and the spelling error. On the basis of this, the following reasons are worth pointing out:

- It addresses the innermost secrets of EFL/ESL problems linked to SCP;
- It helps practitioners at least think of each SCP problems;
- It bridges the research gap;
- It tries to address some pedagogical dilemmas in the area;

### 1.7. Limitations

The major pitfalls of the study can be viewed in terms of three perspectives: time, resource and viewpoints. Students need ample time to unlock their potential for a given task. Besides, lack of resource was the bottleneck to the study. Above all, there were a series of different views over issues of error correction. For instance, (Mackey & Gass, 2012, p. 146) say that calculating accuracy by the number of errors provides only a rough result. On the whole, time, resource, and viewpoints accounted for the limitation of this study.

### 1.8. Delimitations

Presumably, the study was bound up with its nature and location. Accordingly, financial constraint was the major hindrance to widen its scope.

### 1.9. Operational Definitions

- Error - is an instance of language that is unintentionally deviant and is not self-correctible (James, 1998, p.78).
- Mistake - is an instance of language that is either intentionally or unintentionally deviant and self-correctible (James, 1998, p.78).
- Orthography- is a standardized system of writing a particular language, i.e., small letters and capital letters, a standardized system of spelling, a system of word-division, whitespaces between words, and a particular system of punctuation. (Trask, 2007, p. 201)

## 2. Literature Review

Contemporary studies reach out primal contributions relentlessly on how to capture the underlying errors attributed in the student text. In this sense, De Costa (2016), for instance, remarks that 'four forms of accuracy, closely related to standard English – discursive, lexical, grammatical, and orthographic accuracy' (p.94). The taxonomy of these orthographic errors (as regards to the, SCP) are named as *addition, omission, selection, and ordering*.

### 2.1. Spelling Error

In most studies (e.g., Ott, 2007, p. 27), spelling, problem is manifested at a lower grade level or adults as a result of dyslexia and indifference. On this same page Ott as well as (Cook & Ryan, 2016, p.13) also affirm that associated problems from lack of watching out emanate from carelessness, lack of education, and memory deficits.

English language has a rule based spelling system. Jackson (2005) asserts, 'Spelling is the most standardized feature of the English language. The spelling of English words has changed little since the eighteenth century' (p.110). Therefore, intuitively, speculations are possible about spelling error as far as student academic writing is concerned. If it be so, as Leki, Cumming & Silva (2008, p.180) affirms, spelling error is one of the most common L2 errors that frequently occur as a result of generalizations. Consequently, as Cook & Ryan (2016) touched the reality, 'Students will be marked down at examinations and when submitting applications for college or jobs if they make many spelling mistakes' (p.13).

### 2.2. Capitalization Error

No matter how unfathomable, capitalization conventions (e.g., the first word of every sentence, proper nouns, nationalities, and so forth) are; yet, they are a compelling necessity in every aspect of academic writing. However, as Hall & Azar (2010) say, 'Even advanced students don't always understand that correct punctuation and capitalization are necessary for a sentence to be grammatical. Often time, students think of these matters as extra or decorative rather than essential' (p.134). This reality is of fundamental to the interest of this study.

### 2.3. Punctuation Error

Punctuation marks are principal ingredient to orthography. Accordingly, 'Punctuation marks are,' says Juzwiak (2009) 'like little traffic signals for your readers, telling them when to pause, stop, notice where your own words stop and another's start, and so on' (p.A-28). On top of this, Sundem (2006) has stated that 'without proper punctuation, the sentence is difficult to read' (p.57). On the bases of error analysis, Hall & Azar (2010) have stated that 'even advanced students don't always understand that correct punctuation and capitalization are necessary for a sentence to be grammatical. Often students think of these matters as extra or decorative rather than essential' (p.134). Yet Delancer (2013, p.162) categorize them into two - internal and stops. The internals include *comma, semicolon, colon, apostrophe, hyphen, brackets, dashes*, and stops are *periods, question marks, quotation marks, and exclamation points*. They end or stop sentences.

### 2.4. SCP Error Taxonomy

#### 2.4.1. Error of Omission

This is referring to the missing of some linguistic element. Ellis (2003) says, 'Omission is deviations in usage that arise when learners leave out words or parts of words, e.g., omission of the article in 'He went into shop' (p. 138). However, this doesn't include clipping. Katamba (1994) for instance, says, 'Clipping is a word-formation where a long word is shortened to one or two syllables, e.g. *discotheque* → *disco*' (p.184). This could also be initial capital of sentences or capital letters in nouns, dropping alphabet(s) from a word, and so forth.

#### 2.4.2. Error of Addition

In contrast, 'Errors of addition,' said Trappes-Lomax & Ferguson (2002, P.188) 'are where some extraneous element is present.' Similarly, error of addition, as James (2013) says, 'The overuse of capitals; overinclusion of a comma between an antecedent and a restrictive relative clause' (p.131). Unnecessary doubling of letters or graphemes is also a prominent example. Kesselman-Turkel & Peterson (1983, p.32) affirm that one of the spelling error is the uncertainty about when to double a consonant.

#### 2.4.3. Error of Selection

This is generally occurred when wrong item has been chosen as a result of ambiguities during writing. For instance, James (2013, p. 131) pointed out the miss election of the colon instead of the comma after the salutation in letters as a good example. This kind of error in fact occurs when learners are unable to select the right linguistic element.

#### 2.4.4. Error of Ordering

This is, after all, about putting linguistic elements in their wrong order. As cited in Trappes-Lomax & Ferguson (2002), Coder (1982) said that 'errors of ordering' are where the linguistic elements are in the wrong order. In punctuation marks, as of central importance, James (2013), for example, indicated the disordering of closing inverted commas during text development. Therefore, this study impinges on the order of alphabets, capitalizations, and punctuations.

#### 2.5. Error Analysis

Correlational study was (and is) presumably exploratory. Henikel (2011, p.192), for instance, asserts that such kind of studies explores up-to-date developments. In effect, it is important to address sound empirical evidences on error analysis. Accordingly, Dave (2010) justly remarks that 'errors are inevitable part of learning a language or any other skill' (p.24). If so, having a clearly defined pedagogic principle is required to the problem.

Likewise, Richards & Rodgers (2014) say that 'theory does not dictate a particular set of teaching techniques and activities' (p 29). Clearly, Larsen-Freeman (2008, p. 27 – 62) also indicated some theoretically grounded techniques; for instance, under *Direct method*, the principle of self-correction facilitates language learning. The teacher then responds to student errors by employing various techniques, tries to get students to self-correct whenever possible, or under *The Silent way*, a teacher could locate the error for the student self-correction. Further, under *The Communicative Language Teaching*, errors are tolerated; therefore, fluency-based instruction should be reinforced later with accuracy-based activities.

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### 3.1. Study Area

The study was conducted at Arsi University; in essence, first year students who had been taking Communicative English Skills over the course of a semester were involved before the lockdown came into being.

#### 3.2. Research Design

The research design is mainly articulated as a means to achieve the research objectives; in essence, the duty is capturing the underlying errors notwithstanding to orthographic conventions. Hence, hereunder are three instruments: observation, text analysis, and diary.

##### 3.2.1. Observation

Classroom observation has been intensively used in the classroom during student group interaction so as to store data for triangulation. Due to the very nature of the course, the students undertake writing on their sessions. Mackey & Gass (2012) say, 'By observing students interacting about writing, the researcher can get some insight as to what students are focusing on' (p.149). Therefore, the data have been recorded on the spot to capture at a time of occurrence. This is believed to be helpful in improving the quality of the data. Accordingly, on participant observation has been enhancing the quality of classroom data whereby a dozen of texts has been drafted and rewritten.

##### 3.2.2. Text Analysis

The rationale for the text analysis was to access the required data from texts of students. Thus, thumbing through a large pile of papers was an issue of pressing importance to locate SCP errors. In this respect, such error variables were coded as 'O', 'A', 'S', and 'O' stood for omission, addition, selection, and ordering respectively. The average count of the four lesson texts was then recorded for each subject, and entered into a 5 - point Likert-scale i.e., 0 = no error; 1 = one error; 2 = two errors; 3 = three errors, and 4 = four errors. The came out frequency were tallied as per 100 words under each SCP.

The computation for the errors was done based on number of SCP errors. The topics the students wrote upon were as of the suggestion drawn by (Tomlinson, 2014, p.9), i.e., folklore, hopes/dreams, habits, current issues, success, art, history, and education as of their preference.

##### 3.2.3. Diary

This tool was used to crosscheck the trustworthiness of the data. By and large, the anecdotal record was being attributed from the classroom scenario. It was then written timely from what the very fresh memory had brought back in its true sense. For instance, if there were on board practice, some remarks and the whole of the matter would be solely incorporated into the pre-established SCP error variables. Therefore, the error drops were then captured and entered into these distinctive categories.

#### 3.3. Subjects of the Study

The convenience subjects were from fourth year undergraduate program attending the course entitled as Communicative English Skills. The name list was retrieved from the mark list. They were ninety ( $n= 49$ ) in number, i.e., forty nine ( $n= 39$ , male) and ten ( $n= 10$ , female). All of them were taken as an available sample for a sampling frame. As far as their age was concerned, they were between 20& 23.

### 3.4. Sampling Technique

The population of which the sample to be drawn was well-articulated since students were pondering over time-sensitive course. Thus, convenience sampling was come into being; for this reason, all of them were identified as a sampling frame in the notion manageability concerns. In effect, student mark list was truly in need to idealize age and gender variables.

### 3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis procedure was rightly like this: first of all, the required data had to be accessed with help of the instruments. Then the frequency counting for every SCP variable of interest was marked. Thereafter, the length of a number words used in the text was also counted under each SCP. Accordingly, the error count was entered into a 5-point Likert-scale set for SCP, i.e., under omission, addition, selection, and ordering. Finally, the analysis was enacted and abetted as of the viewpoints of teaching principles and procedures suggested by scholars (e.g., Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Celcie-Murcia, M. Brinton, & Ann, 2014; Brown, 2000)

## 4. Results and Discussions

As is evident from the students' writing, below are the results and discussions of the study.

### 4.1. Results

The results of the study are analyzed in terms of its objectives as follows: gender, age, and orthographic elements, i.e., SCP.

#### 4.1.1. Gender Analysis

In Table 1 below, it could be seen that still there was a huge gender disparity between the nominal variables, i.e., male and female students in the sampling frame.

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	39	79.6	79.6	79.6
	Female	10	20.4	20.4	100
	Total	49	100	100	

Table 1: Gender Frequency Table

In brief, Table 1 denotes the number of students (male,  $n = 39$  (79.6%) and female,  $n = 10$  (20.4%)). Since there is no missing value as the valid percent (79.6%) is equal to the actual percent(79.6%).

#### 4.1.2. Age Analysis

It can be inferred from Table 2 that the statistical age of the population is spread in accordance with gender.

		Group Statistics				
		Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Age	Male	39	21.13	1.08	0.173	
	Female	10	20.5	0.85	0.269	

Table 2: Age of Students

These statistical figures are as follows: mean age, male, ( $M = 21.13$ years) and female, ( $M = 20.50$  years); the Std. Deviation, male, ( $SD = 1.08$ ) and female ( $SD = 0.85$ ). Moreover, below is the Std. error mean (male,  $SEM = 0.17$ ), and (female,  $SEM = 0.26$ ).

#### 4.1.3. Orthographic Error Analysis

##### 4.1.3.1. Spelling Error

This is the adherence of error to spelling in particular. Thus, it has been under ceaseless and thoroughgoing scrutiny to preclude scrappy data. To elucidate the point, students use heavy cross out in place of strikethrough to rule out erroneous words. Perhaps, this could be as a result of irresolution or indecision on spelling. From a total of 4-lessons, for instance, about sixty-seven ( $n = 67$ ) lexes was heavily crossed out and substituted though eight ( $n = 8$ ) of them yet misspelt.

The presumptions around the academia need to be proven to trace data outlets. And, if so, what some of them have said help to deduce about students' spelling difficulties. In this digital age, when smartphones are in the palm classwork, homework, and assignment are handed over with multiple spelling errors. Therefore, the spelling error variables to this particular subject relentlessly recorded under each heading as follows: *letters omitted* (e.g., pan for plan, degree for degree, -s from count nouns, etc.); *letters added* (e.g., graduate for graduate; October for October, -s on sheep etc.); *letters wrongly selected* (e.g., there for their, collage for college), and *letters wrongly ordered* (e.g., number for number, criteria for criteria).

Below is a table that indicates the computation of Mean (M) and Standard deviation (SD):

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Omission	Male	39	2.38	0.877	0.14
	Female	10	3	0.667	0.211
Addition	Male	39	2.72	0.686	0.11
	Female	10	3.3	0.483	0.153
Selection	Male	39	2.74	1.044	0.167
	Female	10	3.5	0.707	0.224
Ordering	Male	39	2.92	0.957	0.153
	Female	10	3.6	0.516	0.163

Table 3: Spelling Error Mean Over Four Lessons

The above table compares the mean value of group statistics for male and female students; as is indicated, the mean is different on each spelling error variables. It comprehensively shows the domineering position to the either side. Accordingly, the results of gender → spelling analyses are the following: *omission* (mean, male, ( $M = 2.38$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.00$ ); *addition* (mean, male, ( $M = 2.72$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.30$ ); *selection* (mean, male, ( $M = 2.74$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.50$ ); *ordering* (mean, male, ( $M = 2.92$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.60$ )).

What do these statistical figures reveal language learning? In effect, the means are not equivalent in the error categories. If it be so, this leads to the conclusion that error ratings for males are less than for females when  $p \leq 0.05$ . Having this evidence, it can be concluded that there are variations between male and female students in their linguistic production as far as EFL/ESL spelling are concerned.

#### 4.1.3.1.1. Correlations

Testing the Null hypothesis was an issue of pressing importance as of early referent or presupposed. In effect, the degree of relationship of the two continuous variables, i.e., spelling error and average number of words was indicated as follows:

Correlations			
		Spelling Error	Ave Number
Spelling Error	Pearson Correlation	1	.359*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.011
	N	49	49
Ave Number	Pearson Correlation	.359*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.011	
	N	49	49

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Correlation Table

As could be witnessed in Table 4 above, what counts is the correlation become positive ( $r = 0.359$ , when  $p \leq 0.05$ ) and  $p(\alpha) = 0.01$ . And if so, what is the fate of Null-hypothesis? As a rejection criterion, the p-value ( $\alpha$ ) was set at  $p \leq 0.05$ ; accordingly, the computation of p-value is still below 0.05, i.e., 0.01. As far as positiverelationship ( $r = 0.359$ ) is with inaction between the two variables therefore the *Null-hypothesis* ( $H_0$ ) is rejected. Given this evidence, the implication is as the amount of words increase, so do errors ensue.

#### 4.1.3.2. Capitalization Error

This was the second variable in the underlying orthographic data analysis. Capital letters like E, F, H, W, and M are more frequently erroneous by the students, i.e., higher case when lower case is needed or vice versa. Below are therefore samples of the captured errors: *Omitted*: (e.g., *ethiopia* for *Ethiopia*); *Added*: (e.g., *Food* for *food*, *FutuRe* for *future*); *Selection*: (e.g., proper nouns, acronyms & abbreviations), and *Ordering* (e.g., oromia Region, arsi University, regional Exam).

To stay on the objectives of the study, hence the capitalization errors were then securitized and entered on a5-point Likert-scale. Below is therefore a table that indicates the computation of Mean (M) as per the overriding objectives of the study.

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CapOmission	Male	39	2.92	1.085	.174
	Female	10	3.30	.823	.260
CapAddition	Male	39	3.23	.842	.135
	Female	10	3.70	.949	.300
CapSelection	Male	39	3.05	.944	.151
	Female	10	2.80	.919	.291
CapOrdering	Male	39	3.41	.993	.159
	Female	10	3.90	.568	.180

Table 5: Comparing Capitalizations Mean Report

As can be seen from the Table 5, the average (mean) for gender → capitalization analyses are the following: *omission* (mean, male, ( $M = 2.92$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.30$ ); *addition* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.23$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.70$ ); *selection* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.05$ ) and female, ( $M = 2.80$ ), and *ordering* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.41$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.90$ ).

These figures show that female students more likely omit capitalizations than male students. Similarly, they also add and disorder capitalizations unnecessarily while male students have shown selection problem which is greater than females

#### 4.1.3.3. Punctuation Error

The tallies made in error of punctuation soon became incremental and characterized the said variables as follows: *Omission*: (e.g., comma is omitted many times, i.e., Finally for Finally,); *Addition*: (e.g., apostrophe is misplaced, i.e., brother's for brothers,); *Selection*: (e.g., comma instead of full stop), and *Ordering*: (e.g., single before double inverted commas and comma before semicolon when they used words such as 'therefore,' 'however,' and 'that is').

Then, the descriptive statics for each was comprehensively computed to indicate values of the Mean as per the overriding objectives of the study.

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Punc Omission	Male	39	3.13	1.218	.195
	Female	10	3.00	1.247	.394
Punc Addition	Male	39	3.03	1.224	.196
	Female	10	2.90	1.101	.348
Punc Selection	Male	39	1.87	.801	.128
	Female	10	2.30	.949	.300
Punc Ordering	Male	39	2.23	.667	.107
	Female	10	2.00	.816	.258

Table 6: Comparison of Mean and Std. Deviation

Accordingly, the mean of gender → punctuation analyses are the following: *omission* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.13$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.00$ ); *addition* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.03$ ) and female, ( $M = 2.90$ ); *selection* (mean, male, ( $M = 1.87$ ) and female, ( $M = 2.30$ ), and *ordering* (mean, male, ( $M = 2.23$ ) and female, ( $M = 2.00$ );

As hereinbefore mentioned, these figures were generally computed for a series of punctuation errors as per the standards. Accordingly, as the statistical figures in the table indicate the mean scores of males on omission, addition, and ordering have risen above the score values of females. By contrast, the score for selection shows females committed significant errors than males.

## 4.2. Discussions

From the title of the study, it can be deduced that orthographic errors are prevalent in SCP. As has been indicated, the source of the problem is multidimensional; for instance, misconceptions, negligence, role dilemma, phonological mediation etc. Errors of omission, addition, selection, and ordering are subsumed under the headings of SCP. Spelling errors are pertaining to either content or functional words, and there is a positive relationship between the amount of words written and spelling errors being evidenced. Further, capitalization errors are apparent in student text as an unkempt and rife mix of higher and lower cases. Another mystery is the punctuation marks. Apt use of full stop, comma, semicolon, inverted commas, and so forth are rudimentary challenges to students. In a nutshell, SCP errors inevitably interplay in the course of academic writing.

## 5. Summary, Findings and Conclusions

### 5.1. Summary

To sum up the overall thematic aspect of the study, it is worth recalling the saying of John Lock. He said, 'All men are liable to error,' and so are learners. This favors language planners and teachers to get insight on what sort of resilient

principles help to supersede the upsurge of orthographic errors. James (2013) says, 'One of the purposes of doing Error Analysis is to identify the principles which should guide effective error correction' (p. 235).

In view of these facts, 'One way to improve students' writing, then,' Shon (2018) said, 'is to teach them the common errors they are apt to make during the writing process' (p.16). On similar ground, Riddel (2010) says, 'Correction, in short, is a complex part of the teacher's role' (p.193). In effect, care is essential to avoid linking unintended account to student's linguistic production.

Further, computers are wonderful aids to correct orthographic errors though not all the times. For instance, Allwright & Hanks (2009, p.50) say that computer technology has brought the lexical approach; in effect, learners get the access of trying to solve a communication problem in particular to the academic writing; however, the idea seem to encounter some constraints. One, computers do not be trusted all the times. Two, computers are not handy every time. Three, computers are situational bound like power and its orientations. Therefore, now it is high time to unveil some of the findings in all of the three elements of orthography.

### 5.2. Main Findings

As far as its objectives are concerned, the study summarizes the following major findings:

- There is a positive correlation ( $r = 0.359$ , when  $p \leq 0.05$ ) between words used and student spelling error;
- Gender → capitalization errors: *omission* (mean, male, ( $M = 2.92$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.30$ ); *addition* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.23$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.70$ ); *selection* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.05$ ) and female, ( $M = 2.80$ ), and *ordering* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.41$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.90$ );
- Gender → punctuation errors: *omission* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.13$ ) and female, ( $M = 3.00$ ); *addition* (mean, male, ( $M = 3.03$ ) and female, ( $M = 2.90$ ); *selection* (mean, male, ( $M = 1.87$ ) and female, ( $M = 2.30$ ), and *ordering* (mean, male, ( $M = 2.23$ ) and female, ( $M = 2.00$ );
- As empirical evidences advocate, error fossilization can be also observed at adult stage, is linked to short-term memory and the inability to keep one's mind on;
- Some students seem to be negligent to set of values being held by SCP;

### 5.3. Conclusions

Underlying the above analysis, the study has made the following well-grounded and substantiated conclusions:

- Orthographic error in all its variety could be a knit up of realities that emanate from misconceptions and inattentions, ambivalence, phonological mediation, etc.
- Orthographic problems have detrimental effect to students' academic achievement. Thus, needless to say who unable to remain level shouldn't be hard pressed to the predestined intents. Some excel some level best; but, some remain behind.
- The L<sub>2</sub> script or graphic symbol or alphabet which is similar to the L<sub>1</sub> can't be a good reason for orthographic errors to occur; rather, it gives strategic support to students (Long & Doughty, 2009, p.242).
- Language is a complex phenomenon that should be viewed from the view point of various disciplines like linguistics, literature, psychology, anthropology, and sociology. Thus, error treatment should be in line with the guiding theoretical principles, e.g., the principles of good practice, self-regulated learning, laws of effect, exercise and readiness, and so forth (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p.2; Snow & W. Evans, 2013, p. 8 - 10 & Dave, 2010, pp.12 - 13).
- Students who are accurate in their SCP are presumably more proficient and successful in their academy.
- Brown (2000, p.275) warns that knowing a language rule by itself does not secure learning via communication.

### 5.4. Recommendations

There are plenty of ideas to in actuate; however, the area needs:

- Further investigation that mitigates the current problem;
- More student encouragement in order to build self-efficacy in the area;
- Reinforcement on most frequently misspelt words, e.g., accommodation, and words with same pronunciation but different spelling, e.g., hair & hare (Vince & Sunderland, 2003, p.172).
- Recognition of errors as natural phenomena in learning (e.g., Larsen-Freeman, 2008, p.67&p.132).
- Attention should be accorded to identify common learner errors, i.e., The Silent way principles (Larsen-Freeman, 2008, p. 67), and 'Don't correct every error!' (Tomlinson, 2014, p.12)
- Extended exercise on word families instead of just single words therefore they get an understanding of derivational suffixes (Richards, 2000, p.65);
- Help students not to avoid error, but help them to build up a usable system (Wills, 2004, pp.92 - 93);
- Colleges and universities change strategies of their student preparations if the coming generation can't cope with the academic demand of the time. The fear is therefore the firms do not seem to prepare teachers for the teaching of writing whereof the problem lies within writing in every discipline (Smagorinsky, 2006, p.74). Thus, it seems language planners' sense of rectitude to think of it;



## 6. Abbreviations & Acronyms

CUP	= Cambridge University Press
EFL/ESL	= English as a Foreign Language, or English as a Second Language
L <sub>1</sub>	= First language
L <sub>2</sub>	= Second language
OUP	= Oxford University Press
SCP	= Spelling, Capitalization & Punctuation marks

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