

**THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

---

**LO THI NHUNG**

**A STUDY ON COMMON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN  
PARAGRAPH WRITING OF NON - ENGLISH MAJOR  
STUDENTS AT HOA BINH TEACHER'S TRAINING  
COLLEGE**

**(Nghiên cứu những lỗi ngữ pháp phổ biến trong viết đoạn văn của  
sinh viên không chuyên Anh tại trường CĐSP Hòa Bình)**

**M.A THESIS**

**Field: English Linguistics**

**Code: 8220201**

**THAI NGUYEN - 2019**

**THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

---

**LO THI NHUNG**

**A STUDY ON COMMON GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN  
PARAGRAPH WRITING OF NON – ENGLISH MAJOR  
STUDENTS AT HOA BINH TEACHER’S TRAINING  
COLLEGE**

**(Nghiên cứu những lỗi ngữ pháp phổ biến trong viết đoạn văn của  
sinh viên không chuyên Anh tại trường CĐSP Hòa Bình)**

**M.A THESIS  
APPLICATION ORIENTATION**

**Field: English Linguistics**

**Code: 8220201**

**Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hoang Tuyet Minh**

**THAI NGUYEN – 2019**

## **DECLARATION**

*I certify my authorship of the study report entitled*

“Common Grammatical Errors in Paragraph Writing of non - English major students at Hoa Binh teachers’ training college ”

*In fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts*

*Hoa Binh, June 18<sup>th</sup> 2019*

**Trainee**

**Lo Thi Nhung**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to a number of people for helping me to make this M.A thesis possible. First and foremost, my deepest gratitude goes to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hoang Tuyet Minh, my supervisor, who supported and encouraged me generously throughout this study. Without her excellent academic guidance and support, my thesis would not have been completed.

I would like to sincerely thank the anonymous participants who contributed data to this study. Without their outstanding cooperation, this thesis would not have been completed.

My appreciation is also extended to a number of staff members of Department of Foreign Languages at Hoa Binh Teacher's Training College for their assistance in statistical issues and for their assistance in editing work.

I would like to thank my family, especially my parents and my husband for their constant source of love, support and encouragement in times of difficulty and frustration.

Finally, I would like to thank my readers for their interests and comments on this thesis.

While I am deeply indebted to all these people for their help to the completion of this thesis, I myself remain responsible for any inadequacies that are found in this work.

Lo Thi Nhung

## ABSTRACT

This paper studies common grammatical errors in paragraph writing committed by non- English major students at Hoa Binh teachers' training college and the causes of these errors. To achieve the desired aims of current study, the author combined both qualitative and quantitative methods, including the instrument namely students' writing analysis. The participants in the research were fifty non - English major students of two K26A and K26B primary education classes of primary Department at Hoa Binh teachers' training college.

Research results show that non- English major students often commit errors in verb tenses and forms, subject – verb agreement, prepositions, and plurality. Furthermore, the main causes of these errors are mother tongue interference, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules and false concepts hypothesized; in which interference of native language and overgeneralization are the most common ones. In order to overcome these errors, it is suggested that teachers should help students practice writing and correct their writings effectively by suitable and flexible techniques.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	ii
ABSTRACT .....	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	viii
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES .....	ix
<b>PART A: INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
1. Rationale of the study.....	1
2. Aims of the study .....	2
3. Research questions .....	2
4. Scope of the study .....	2
5. Design of the research.....	2
<b>PART B: DEVELOPMENT</b> .....	4
<b>CHAPTER I: LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	4
1.1. An overview of grammar .....	4
1.1.1. Definitions of grammar .....	4
1.1.2. Roles of grammar in foreign language teaching .....	4
1.2. An overview of writing .....	5
1.3. An overview of paragraph.....	6
1.3.1. Definitions of paragraph .....	6
1.3.2. Structure of a paragraph .....	6
1.4. An overview of errors in foreign language teaching.....	7
1.4.1. Definitions of errors .....	7
1.4.2. Errors versus mistakes.....	8
1.4.3. Sources of errors .....	9
1.5. Error analysis .....	12
1.5.1. Definitions of EA .....	12
1.5.2. Significance of EA .....	13

1.5.3. The procedure of error analysis .....	14
1.5.4. Types of grammar errors in ESL writing.....	16
1.6. Previous studies.....	22
1.7. Summary .....	23
<b>CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>24</b>
2.1. Participants.....	24
2.2. Methods of the study.....	24
2.3. Data collection instrument .....	24
2.4. Data collection procedure .....	25
2.5. Data analysis .....	25
2.5.1. Collection of sample .....	26
2.5.2. Identification of errors.....	26
2.5.3. Classification of errors .....	26
2.5.4. Explanation of errors.....	27
2.5.5. Evaluation of errors.....	28
2.6. Summary .....	28
<b>CHAPTER III: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>29</b>
3.1. Findings.....	29
3.2. Discussion .....	31
3.2.1. The grammatical errors in students' writing samples .....	32
3.2.2. The common grammatical errors committed by non - English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college in paragraph writing. ....	39
3.2.3. The causes of errors made by non - English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college in paragraph writing.....	39
3.3. Summary .....	43
<b>PART C: CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>44</b>
1. Summary of the study .....	44
2. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further study.....	45
3. Recommendations .....	46
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>51</b>

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ESL	: English as a Second Language
EFL	: English as a Foreign Language
EA	: Error Analysis
L1	: The First Language
L2	: The Second Language



## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1.1. The distinction between error and mistake .....	9
Table 1.2. Description of error categories.....	16
Table 2.1. Error marking symbols .....	26
Table 2. 2. Error classification .....	27
Table 3.1. Number and percentage of grammatical errors in paragraph writing .....	29
Table 3.2. Frequency of each grammatical error type in descending order.....	30
Figure 3.1. Percentage of grammatical errors in paragraph writing .....	29
Figure 3.2. Frequency of each grammatical error type in descending order .....	31

## **PART A: INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Rationale of the study**

Nowadays, English is the most popular foreign language taught in Vietnam. It helps Vietnam closer to other countries in the world and is the key to access the latest achievements in science and technology. Therefore, learning English is essential for Vietnamese to satisfy their needs in modern society. Furthermore, in the process of learning foreign language, the learners' primary goal is to improve their communicative competence. In order to obtain this, it is compulsory for them to be good at four skills in English: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Among these, writing is considered a very important proficiency which helps people to communicate with each other through messages. Hornby (2003, as cited in Murtadha, 2010) explains that writing is a process of expressing ideas down on paper and is a means to transform thoughts into words to communicate information clearly. Besides, writing makes a great contribution to enhance other skills in language, improve learners' logical way of thinking as well. It is undeniable that writing plays the utmost important role in learning English.

To evaluate learners' writing proficiency, teachers often examine their written papers. This is one of the most effective ways mentioned in a number of studies. For instance, Muammar Rifqi (2016) implemented a study on the analysis of grammatical errors in the writing samples at English Education Department of Islamic Education; Abeywickrama (2010) conducted the investigation on errors in English writing of Sinlaha speaking undergraduates. In Vietnam, it has also been taken a lot of notice of analysis of students' writing. For instance, Le Thuy Trang (2014) conducted a study on the errors analysis of Pre-Intermediate EFL Students' Writings at Leecam Language; Hoang Thi Hong Hai (2003) studied grammatical and textual errors in paragraphs by second year students at English Department - College of Foreign languages - Vietnam National University. Besides, many other researches on this field have been carried out. These studies have been implemented on different learning contexts as well as different learners.

In the process of teaching as an English lecturer at Hoa Binh teacher's training college for six years, the author finds that most of non-English major students often make grammatical errors in writing paragraphs. A number of techniques have been proposed in order to improve students' writing skill. Nevertheless, students have often had little concern to common errors in their writing. They do not know why they commit errors and how to prevent and reduce these errors. Hence, with the goal of solving the problem above, the researcher would like to conduct a study which is written in the thesis entitled "**common grammatical errors in paragraph writing of non - English major students at Hoa Binh Teacher's Training College**".

## **2. Aims of the study**

The aim of the study is to help the non - English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college overcome the common grammatical errors in writing English paragraphs.

## **3. Research questions**

To reach the aim mentioned above, the research questions are put forward as below:

+ What are the common grammatical errors committed by non – English major students in writing English paragraph?

+ What are the major causes of committing these errors made by non – English major students in writing English paragraph?

## **4. Scope of the study**

The study focuses on investigating grammatical errors which non – English students at Hoa Binh teachers' training college often commit in writing short paragraphs. However, the researcher does not cover all types of errors; she only analyzes some most common errors under the study of students' writing. Afterwards, the researcher proposes some suggestions which help to improve teaching and learning writing skill.

## **5. Design of the research**

The study consists of three parts, organized as follows:

### **Part A: Introduction**

This part gives information about the topic of the research, the reason for choosing this topic, the aims, research questions, scope, significance, and structure of the study.

## **Part B: Development**

### **Chapter I: Literature Review**

Various perspectives on grammar, paragraph writing, errors, error analysis (EA) are discussed in order to provide a theoretical background of the study.

### **Chapter II: Methodology**

This chapter mentions context and participants of the study, research instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis methods.

### **Chapter III: Findings and Discussions**

The data collected will be analyzed in order to give answers to the research questions.

## **Part C: Conclusion**

This part deals with summary of the study. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research and some recommendations are also presented here.

## **PART B: DEVELOPMENT**

### **CHAPTER I: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter reviews the theories relevant to the topic under investigation in the study, namely writing, paragraph, grammar, grammatical errors, errors and mistakes, sources of errors and error analysis. In this chapter, the researcher cited a lot of notions relating to writing, paragraph, grammar, errors, sources of errors as well as the error analysis. Based on the theoretical background, the researcher was convenient in conducting the study. The content of this chapter was summarized in the following:

#### **1.1. An overview of grammar**

##### **1.1.1. Definitions of grammar**

For learners starting to learn a new language, it is essential that they learn the basic grammatical rules of the target language. To have a good understanding about grammar, there are some definitions of grammar that can be quoted from experts. Wilcox (2004) states that grammar cannot be separated from language. It lives in language. Grammar arranges the way to construct meaningful sentences so that people can enjoy the language. In other words, Ur (1990, p. 4) states that grammar as “the way language manipulates and combine words or bits of words in order to form longer units of meanings” whereas Salkie (1995, p. 9) points that “grammar deals mainly with the structures of individual sentences.

In short, grammar is basically about how words combine to form sentences. It is regarded as sets of rules and examples dealing with the syntax and word structures of a language. In other words, it is defined as the set of rules for constructing words, phrases and sentences in a particular language. Essentially, grammar is one of the most important things in a language because the language will be less meaningful without grammar.

##### **1.1.2. Roles of grammar in foreign language teaching**

Grammar plays an important role in language teaching. Ur (1990, p. 4) states that “a knowledge of grammatical rules is essential for the master of language”.

Furthermore, According to Palmer (1971, p. 10) “it is grammar that makes language so essentially a human characteristics”. A learner cannot use words unless he knows how to put them together.

Nowadays, although communicative language teaching is commonly used, grammar still has a very important role. Richards (1985) asserts that there is no actual empirical evidence that proves communicative language teaching classrooms produces better language learners than traditional language classrooms do. Moreover, Canale (1981) insists that grammatical competence is one component within communicative competence. In addition, it is undoubtable that people who learn a foreign language without any formal grammar instruction during the basic language teaching stage can never achieve high proficiency in the target language.

In short, it is undeniable that grammar plays an indispensable role in the process of mastering the language. In teaching and learning a language, it is essential if advanced proficiency is desired and a high level of literacy is required.

## **1.2. An overview of writing**

There are a lot of concepts about writing which are defined in a variety of ways by different researchers. Therefore, it is very difficult to choose which is the most exact and trustworthy. Nunan (2003) states that writing is a series of the processes of converting ideas into good and clear statements in paragraphs. Meanwhile, Flower (1984) asserts that writing is simply the act of expressing what we think or saying what we mean. Furthermore, Lannon states that writing is “a process of deliberate decision”. At a high level, writing is defined as a complex process which involves a number of separate skills. Hedge (1988, p.1) states that “... effective writing requires a number of things: a high degree of organization in the development of idea and information; a high degree of accuracy so that there is no ambiguity of meaning; the use of complex grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and a careful choice of vocabulary, grammatical pattern, and sentence structure...” Hedge (2000) regards the process of writing as thinking and discovery. Furthermore, writing is considered a productive and taught language skill which is “difficult to acquire” (Tribble, 1996, p. 3). The essence of writing is choice and writing is considered as the means of

communication in a way that is “profound, or funny, or provocative, or highly persuasive” (Veit, Gould & Clifford, 2001).

From the explanations above, we can find that writing is a productive and complex skill. It is an art of communication with certain groups of audience. It requires the ability to communicate in target language and to produce text in order to express oneself efficiently; therefore, it is obvious that writing requires conscious effort and practice.

### **1.3. An overview of paragraph**

#### **1.3.1. Definitions of paragraph**

A paragraph is defined in some different ways. For some people, a paragraph is simply the product of indenting on the right margin. In another view, “paragraphing is indicated by a skipped line and a new sentence beginning at the left hand margin” (Robert & Wilson, 1980, p.52). Essentially, these definitions of paragraph tend to focus on punctuation. Meanwhile, Rooks (1988, p.4) states “a paragraph is a group of sentences which logically develops one subject”. According to Al- Hamash and Younis (1985, p.175), “A paragraph is a group of sentences concerned with one idea.” In other words, Oshima and Hague (1999, p.17) further indicated that “A paragraph is basic unit of organization in writing in which a group of some related sentences develop one main idea”.

In conclusion, a paragraph can be defined as a group of sentences that develops one main idea.

#### **1.3.2. Structure of a paragraph**

A paragraph is divided into three main parts including topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentence. Topic sentence is the part which considered the most important in the paragraph because “it tells the reader what the topic of the paragraph is” Oshima & Hogue (1996, p.104). In other words, it indicates to the readers what they are going to read as well as what the paragraph is about. Supporting sentences support the idea stated in the topic sentence. Giving facts, reasons, examples, statistics, and quotes are ways in which supporting sentences use to explain the topic sentence. Concluding sentence is the final part of the paragraph.

According to (Oshima & Hogue, 1996, p. 36), it “signals the end of the paragraph and leaves the readers with important points to remember”. A good concluding sentence should restate the main idea in the topic sentence and include writer’s comments or opinions about the topic.

In short, paragraph structure is to write some interrelated sentences on a same topic which is convenient to understand the entire write up at a time. Paragraphs play an essential role in literature. It gives a silent break to the readers to recall each idea, concept or event before going forward to another. However, the topic sentence is the main idea of each paragraph. Other supporting sentences are used to make the topic sentence clear and understandable.

#### **1.4. An overview of errors in foreign language teaching**

##### **1.4.1. Definitions of errors**

There is no doubt that in the process of learning language, especially a foreign language, people frequently make errors. It is a widely accepted fact that even the most intelligent, conscientious and motivated students make errors when learning a language. Regarding the definition of error, the experts’ opinions are varied. According to Richards (1989), the term “error” is identified as a faulty use of a linguistic item which shows incomplete learning. Brown (2007, p.258) describes an error as “... noticeable derivation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflects the competence of the learner” and “... reveals a portion of learners’ competence in the target language”. Thus, an error in this context is defined as an instance of language that deviates from standard of English grammar. To help the learners acquire the target language, it is essential to provide the learners the proper input. Learners need to be aware of common errors followed by their correction. In addition, Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) define errors as the flawed side of learner speech or writing which deviates from some selected norms of mature language performance. They further discuss that errors may be distinguished based on the cause. The errors that are caused by factors such as fatigue and inattention are performance errors, and those caused by lack of knowledge of the language rules are called competence errors.



Errors are defined by many linguists; however, the term “error” here is understood basing on Richards (1989) and Brown (2007). In short, it is the faulty use of target the language and it reveals learners’ incomplete competence in the target language.

#### **1.4.2. Errors versus mistakes**

Corder (1979, p. 168) states “an error is lack of competence and mistake is performance deviant”. Also, Brown (2007, p. 257) proposes that “a mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a “slip”, in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly”. Next Ellis (1997, p.17) states “errors reflect gaps in a learners’ knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. Mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance, they occur because the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows”. Corder (1967, 1974), James (1998) and Brown (2007) reveal that a criterion that helps us to draw a distinction between errors and mistakes is the ability to self-correct. These researchers state that a mistake can be self-corrected, but an error cannot. According to Hunbbard et al (1984) errors are caused by a lack of language while mistakes are made accidentally due to “lapses of memory, confusion or slips of tongue”. He also states that learners can correct themselves their mistakes but cannot correct their errors by themselves. In addition, Corder (1974) distinguishes between “systematic errors” and “non-systematic errors” which are called “mistakes”. Therefore, learners can avoid as well as correct them if they pay attention to mistakes. On the contrary, errors are systematic and caused by learners’ lack of competence in target language. It is difficult for learners to correct their errors. According Brown (2000) and Corder (1981), the distinction between mistake and error can be summarized in the table below.

**Table 1.1. The distinction between error and mistake**

<b>Mistake</b>	<b>Error</b>
Related to the students' quality performance.	Related to the students' deficient competence.
Can be self-corrected when the students pay attention.	Cannot be self-corrected because the students do not know the correct use of the target language rules.
Inconsistent deviation.	Consistent deviation.
Caused by some factors such as fatigue, lack of attention and motivation, carelessness, etc.	Caused by learners who have not mastered the target language rules yet.
Reflected the students' temporary impediment or imperfection when utilizing the target language.	Reflected the students' understanding or competency in the target language

In short, it can be concluded that mistakes are often non-systematic and are "... made by lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness or other aspects of performance" (Richards et al, 1985, p. 6). Therefore, learners can avoid as well as correct them if they pay attention to mistakes. On the contrary, errors are systematic and caused by learners' lack of competence in target language. It is difficult for learners to correct their errors.

### **1.4.3. Sources of errors**

A lot of sources of errors have been introduced by some theorists. According to Norrish, J. (1992), he reported that some causes of errors were carelessness, first language interference, translation, overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules but Richards (1971) cites four major sources of intralingual errors: overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts hypothesized. Brown (2007) states four sources of errors: interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, context of learning, and communication strategies. Interference transfer is the negative influence of the mother tongue of the learner. Intralingual

transfer is the negative of items within the target language. Context of learning overlaps both types of transfer.

In short, errors can be caused by many different causes. From the authors' theory above and from the experience, the researcher sees that a number of reasons for how learners go wrong are mother tongue language interference, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules and failed concepts hypothesized. In order to answer the second research question about the major causes of students' errors, the explanation of these causes will be illustrated in more details as follows:

#### **1.4.3.1. Mother tongue interference**

Mother tongue interference is one of the major causes of errors made by language learners. Norrish (1983, p.22) states that mother tongue interference "... was commonly believed until fairly recently that learning a language was a matter of habit formation". Beside forms, meanings and cultural aspects can also be transferred.

Languages differ in many aspects, and the most significant difference is the way a shared meaning is realized. Two languages employ different devices to express the same meaning. It is this distance that may give rise to errors because learners have tendency to transfer the realization devices of their native language into the foreign language. For example, Vietnamese students often produce sentences as "He very loves his family" instead of "He loves his family very much". It is common knowledge that at a certain stage of learning, FL learners are required to produce the new language. They are forced to perform things even their lack of competency in the language. This pressure leads learners to rely on their first language to fulfill the tasks. Undoubtedly, differences between L1 and L2 affect the process of learning a target language. It is the primary source of mother tongue interference.

#### **1.4.3.2. Overgeneralization**

Another possible cause of errors to be mentioned is overgeneralization. According to Jacobovits (1969, p.55), overgeneralization is "... the application of

previous available strategies in new situations”. More specifically, students apply their past learning experience to produce deviant structures in the target language. For example, having been taught to form plural nouns by adding the suffix “s” to singular nouns, students extend this application even to irregular nouns and produce such deviated forms as “He has two wives” or “There are three wolfs in the picture” Richards (1971) regards this type of error as instances of structure blending. Students automatically apply rules wherein they are not allowed. For instance:

“He will tells the truth.” instead of “He will tell the truth.”

“He is drives carefully.” instead of “He drives carefully.”

Overgeneralization is also linked with redundancy reduction. This occurs when students find that the accuracy of some grammatical aspects does not affect the meaning. This often happens in descriptive writing in which students often use simple present tense instead of simple past tense although actions have already happened in the past. For example: “Last year I visit Ho Chi Minh city”

In short, overgeneralization is regarded as one of the major causes of errors. It is the result of learners’ processing and making hypotheses about the language.

#### **1.4.3.3. Ignorance of rule restriction**

This type of error involves “... the application of rules to contexts where they do not apply” (Richards, 1974). He mentions two sources for rule restriction errors: analogy (the creation of deviant structures from previous experience of English), and the rote of learning of rules. The example for analogy is that students, encountering a particular preposition with one type of verb, will attempt to apply the same preposition with similar verbs by analogy. For example, students have been learnt: “He said to his parents that thing”, students tend to produce “He told to his parents about that” instead of “He told his parents about that”. Besides, the rote of learning of rules also leads to ignorance of rule restriction. For instance, students are taught to use to-infinitive in the structure of the verbs such as “ask”, “get”, “order”, and they assume that the structure of the verb “let” should be “let + O + to- V” as in the sentence “He let her to go out”.

#### **1.4.3.4. Incomplete application of rules**

This kind of error reveals the degree of rule development required to produce acceptable sentences. It is typically linked to analogy. One of the most common difficulties is the use of questions in classroom. Responses to questions require grammatical rules. For example:

Teacher: “What did your father tell you?”

Student: “He **tell** me about his work” (He **told** me about his work.)

#### **1.4.3.5. False concepts hypothesized**

This type of error is derived from inaccurate comprehension of distinction in the target language. According to Richards (1974), poor presentation or presentation based on the contrastive approach should account for the confusion between “come” and “go” and the use of “was” and “is” as past and present marker respectively. A number of students tend to produce “She is goes to the cinema” or “It was rained”. In addition, instead of saying “Let’s go home now”, they would say “Let’s come home now.” Another case is the use of “very”, “too” and “so”. For instance:

“They are very tired to do this work.”

(They are too tired to do this work.)

(They are so tired that they can not do this work.)

### **1.5. Error analysis**

#### **1.5.1. Definitions of EA**

For decades, EA has received a great deal of interest from a number of scholars in the field of second language acquisition. The following are the definitions of EA given by some of the scholars.

Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) state that EA is the method used to analyze errors made by EFL and ESL learners when they learn a language. Not only can it help reveal the strategies used by learners to learn a language, but also it assists teachers as well as other relevant people in knowing what difficulties learners encounter in order to improve their teaching. James (1998) proposes that EA is the analysis of learners’ errors conducted by comparing what the learners have learned with what they lack. It also deals with giving an explanation of the erro

rs in order to accurately reduce them. Another definition of EA given by Crystal (1999) is the study of language learners' language forms which deviate from those of the target language.

According to Corder (1974 cited in Mungungu, 2010), EA has two objectives. One is the theoretical objective which concerns with what and how learners learn language. The other is the practical one which deals with how to help learners learn a language by making use of the knowledge they have already had.

Another scholar, Hinnon (2014) also confirms that EA is beneficial after her long period of study of literature related to EA. She mentions that EA can let teachers prepare accurate and precise teachings which match their students' need.

In Brown's idea (2007), error analysis focuses on finding and grouping the errors for the importance of the language teaching in the class. The meaning of error analysis is that students committed some errors and those ones are able to be observed, analyzed, and classified to explain something about system operating within the students. The goal of finding and grouping errors is to get feedback for the organization of the teaching of the language elements.

In short, EA is the study of language forms deviating from the standard of the target language which occurs during learners' language learning. The analysis of errors helps reveal the types and sources of errors which can lead to more accurate and less time – consuming way to reduce errors made by learners. In other words, by analyzing the students' errors, the teacher will be able to develop effective strategies in the class and determine the suitable methods or techniques to help students improve writing skill, easily repair their own errors as well.

### **1.5.2. Significance of EA**

Many educators and theorists in the field of errors analysis have focused on the importance of second language learners' errors. Hourani (2008) states that errors are significant in three different aspects: to the language teachers, to the researchers and to the learners. Firstly, students' errors have immediate practical applications for foreign language teachers. Analyses of students' errors will reveal to the teachers how far the students have progresses towards the teacher's goals and what remains for

them to learn. Secondly, EA gives the researchers evidence of how language is learned or acquired, and what strategies or procedures the learners are employing in their discovery of the language. Thirdly, EA is indispensable to the learners themselves because making of errors is regarded as a device used by the learners to develop their language competency. It is also the way which helps learners test their hypotheses about the language they are learning.

Corder (1974, cited in Khansir, 2012, p.1029) asserts that “the study of errors is part of the investigation of the process of language learning”. EA provides insights into the nature of language and to the process of language teaching and learning. The results of EA may be used to draw conclusions about how a second or foreign language can be more effectively taught and learned or how current teaching methods can be improved. According to Sharma (1980) “Error analysis can thus provide a strong support to remedial teaching”. He also affirms that it can reveal both successes and failures of the teaching program.

Sercombe (2000, cited in Durus, 2009) explains that error analysis serves three purposes: to determine the level of language proficiency the learners have reached, to obtain information about common difficulties in language learning, and to investigate how people learn language. Besides, Candling (2001) considers error analysis as the “monitoring and analysis of learning language”.

In conclusion, language teaching and learning are the process of trial and error. The error analysis study examines learners’ errors in order to state their hypotheses and locate their profession in learning. By analyzing errors, teachers can gain some insights into future course design and teaching methods. In addition, error analysis gives researchers evidence of how language is learnt and how learners learn the target language.

### **1.5.3. The procedure of error analysis**

The procedure for error analysis has been discussed in a lot of different ideas by educators and theorists. Theo Van Els, et al., Hodder & Stoughton (1983) states that there are some procedures in EA including:

- Identification of errors: In this step, teachers recognize the students' errors from the task given by the teachers.

- Description of errors: This step begins when the identification stage has taken place. The description of students' errors involves the classification of kinds of errors made by the students.

- Explanation of errors: This step attempts to explain how and why the students' errors occur.

- Evaluation of errors: In this step, the teacher gives evaluation from the task done by the students depends on the task that the teacher will be giving to the students.

- Correction of errors: The teacher checks the errors and then gives the correct one. It is done to make the students realize with their errors in order to prevent the students make the same errors later.

According to Corder (1967), the procedure of EA includes collection of sample language, identification of errors, description of errors, and explanation of errors. In his later research, Corder (1974) again elaborate five stages in error analysis including:

- Collection of sample language: The researcher needs to collect a sample of student writing to provide the error analysis data. In collecting the sample, the researcher may control the data by making specific sample.

- Identification of errors: In this step, the researcher identifies students' errors from the task given.

- Classification of errors identified: This step classifies errors and then explains the sources of those errors.

- Explanation of errors: It includes determining their sources to find out why they were made.

- Evaluation of errors: This is the supplementary step in error analysis. It shows the different errors with a view to decide which ones should receive instruction.

In short, basing on the detail explanation of the procedure of EA above, it can be summed up that actually the procedure of EA has the same stages to conduct.



Firstly, the researcher collects the data. Next the data is identified to find the errors made by students. Thirdly, the researcher continues to classify errors and then she/he explains the sources of those errors. Evaluation of errors is the last stage after the errors are counted to get the total of errors made by students. Therefore, in order to reach the results for the research questions, the researcher would like to choose the procedure of EA which proposed by Corder (1974).

#### **1.5.4. Types of grammar errors in ESL writing.**

Grammar is regarded as a whole system and structure of a language. It consists of syntax, morphology, and sometimes also phonology and semantics. As stated above, grammar is basically defined as the set of rules for constructing words, phrases and sentences in a particular language. Based on this definition of grammar, “grammatical errors” in this study are the errors in terms of breaking the set of rules dealing with syntax and word structures of a language. In addition, Hsu (2013), asserts that grammatical errors thus means inaccurate form, semantics meanings, and use. There are a lot of classification of grammatical errors proposed by educators and theorists.

Ferris and Robert (2001) introduced the five categories of most frequent grammatical errors described in the following:

**Table 1.2. Description of error categories**

<b>Verbs errors</b>	All errors in verb tense or form including relevance subject-verb agreement errors.
<b>Noun ending errors</b>	Plural or possessive ending incorrect, omitted, or unnecessary; including relevance subject-verb agreement errors.
<b>Article errors</b>	Article or other determiners incorrect, omitted or unnecessary
<b>Wrong word</b>	All specific errors in word choice or word form including prepositions, spelling and pronoun errors.
<b>Sentence structure</b>	Errors in sentence/clause boundaries (run-on, fragments, comma splice), word order, omitted word or phrases, unnecessary words or phrases, other unidiomatic sentence construction.

James (1998) classified grammatical errors into 9 categories namely prepositions, articles, singular/plural, adjectives, irregular verbs, tenses, concord, passive/active, and possessive case whereas Pham Dang Binh (2013, p. 121-150) states that there are 8 major kinds of grammatical errors including preposition errors, word order, sentence structure, expression, nouns, tenses, modal verbs and adverbs. In another study by Hengwichitkul (2006), grammatical errors were classified as subject verb agreement, tenses, parts of speech, participial phrases, relative clauses, passive voice, parallel structure, punctuation, run-ons and fragments. Otchi (2005) mentioned five main errors categories: verb errors, noun ending errors, article errors, wrong word, and sentence structure. Chen (2006) produced the classification including errors in the use of nouns, articles, pronouns (incorrect case form, missing possessives), verbs (tense, subject- verb agreement, auxiliary, verb omitted), prepositions (preposition omitted, wrong preposition, unnecessary preposition), and conjunctions.

In order to achieve the aims of this study, basing on the way of classifying common errors of Corder (1974); Richards (1974); Selinker (1972), Richards & Sampson (1974), in the present research, the researcher limited the classification of the grammatical errors into the categories including: *passive voice, verb tense and form, subject verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality and pronoun.*

#### **1.5.4.1. Passive voice**

Azar and Hagen (2009) explain that passive is a reverse of active sentence. The object in active verb becomes the subject in passive verb. It is important to remember that the verbs which are used in passive voice are transitive verbs or the verbs which can be followed by object. The main form of passive voice is: be + past participle. For example:

Active: John invited Mary to his birthday party.

Passive: Mary was invited by John to his birthday party.

Beside it is different from active, Alexander (1998) adds that passive has its own uses in English. Generally, it is used in three ways as follows:

- When someone does not want to take responsibility for something, for example: “the problem will be solved soon”.

- When someone does not focus on who, but what is happening, for example: “our car was broken”.

- When someone wants to avoid vague subject, such as one, someone, and they, etc. For example: “jeans repaired”

#### **1.5.4.2. Verb Tense and Form**

Tense is important because people use it to signal when the activities happen. Guntari (2011) says that the proper use of tenses makes it possible for the speakers of English to recognize whether an action or an event occurs at the time at, during, or over the time denoted by a verb change. Nugroho (2011) says that there are 16 tenses in English, but generally divided into 12 kinds. In this study, the researcher found four tenses that are frequently used by the students including simple present tense, simple past tense, present perfect tense, and past perfect tense. So the researcher will only focus on discussing these fundamental types of tenses which found in students’ writing samples.

##### **a. Simple present tense**

According to Azar and Hagen (2009), simple present tense is generally used to express habits and facts. In simple present tense, the base form of the verb is used for all subjects except for the third person singular subject. The verb form after the subject needs to add s/es at the end of the word. The common time markers in simple present tense are: always, often, usually, every day, every week, once a week, twice a month, etc. For examples:

- He often plays volleyball every afternoon.
- The sun rises in the east.

##### **b. Simple past tense**

Azar & Hagen (2009) says that the simple past is used to talk about activities or situations that began and ended in the past. It can also express habits and duration in the past. Most simple past verbs are formed by adding -ed to a verb, and some

verbs have irregular past forms. The time markers are yesterday, last night, two hours ago, a year ago, etc. For example:

- He played basketball yesterday.
- I played hide and seek when I was a child.

#### c. Present Perfect Tense

Azzar (2009) declares that the present perfect expresses an activity or situations that occurred (or did not occur) before now, at some unspecified time in the past. For example: “Jim has already eaten lunch.”

Jim’s lunch occurred before the present time. The time in activity is not important or unknown. For the speaker, the only important information is that Jim’s lunch occurred in the past, sometime before now.

#### d. Past Perfect Tense

Past Perfect Tense expresses completed actions before a different past actions. As in Present Perfect Tense, the verb form used in this tense is past participle form. For example:

- The class had already begun when we arrived.
- We had owned our house for ten years before we sold it.

Eastwood (2002) categorizes verbs into five forms. They are as follows:

- Base form: it is used in imperative sentences, present tense, and infinitive (play).
- ‘-s’ form: it is used in present tense with third person singular subject (plays).
- Past form: It is used in past tense (played).
- ‘-ing’ form: it is used in gerund and active participle sentences (playing).
- Past participle form: it is used in perfect sentences and passive voice (played).

#### **1.5.4.3. Subject-Verb Agreement**

According to Watson (2006), in a proper sentence in English, the subjects and verbs must agree. The agreement in sentences is related to number of the subject. It means if the subject in a sentence is in singular, the verb must also be in singular form and vice versa. For example:

- The student goes to school.
- The students go to school.

Watson noted some rules which can be followed by learners to avoid errors in subject verb agreement. Firstly, the verb is always plural when the subject of a sentence is joined by “and”. For example: “You and I are students”. Secondly, the verb is always singular when we find two singular subjects which are joined by ‘either...or’ and ‘neither...nor’. For example: “Either Monday or Tuesday is fine for me.” Lastly, if sentences have two subjects which one subject is singular and the other one is plural, the closest subject to the verb determines either the verb is singular or plural. For example: “Neither the tables nor the chair is expensive.”

#### 1.5.4.4. Word order

Word order means the sequence of the words that we use in a sentence. Alexander (1998) notes that word order can influence the meaning of a sentence. To produce a good sentence, he proposed of basic word order of an English sentence as follows: **Subject + Verb + Object + Adverb**

For example: I bought a hat yesterday.

A time reference can also be put at the beginning of a sentence. For example:

- Yesterday I bought a hat.

Alexander added that there are four forms of sentence. They are:

- A statement: “The shops close/do not close at 7 tonight”.

- A question: “Do the shops close at 7 tonight?”

- A command: “Shut the door” or “do not shut the door”.

- An exclamation: “What a slow train this is”.

According to Köhlmyr (2003:197), word order is the syntactic arrangements of words in a sentence, clause, or phrase. He states that the adjective’s position is more problematic, sometimes causing difficulties in deciding whether the placement is correct or not. Errors of word order are wrong order of adjectives, wrong order of other elements in sentences. For example:

- I have heard things bad about the trip. => I have heard bad things about the trip.

- We more enjoyed and had good time with family. => We enjoyed more and had good time with family.

#### **1.5.4.5. Prepositions**

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and other words in a sentence. In other words, a preposition is a connective word that shows the relationships between the nouns following it and one of the basic sentence elements S, V, O, C. It usually “indicates the relationship such as position, place, direction, time, manner, agent, possession, and condition between their objects and other parts of the sentence.” (Wishon and Burks, 1980, p.288). For example:

- He helped us in our lessons.
- Many people die of smoking

Stobbe (2008) also explains that a preposition could be a word or group of words to show a relationship in a sentence. We put a preposition after the noun or pronoun of a sentence. For example: He sits at the chair. Based on the functions, he points out three types of preposition:

- Preposition of time: in, on, at, after, during, etc.
- Preposition of place and position: in, on, at, among, inside, outside, etc.
- Preposition of movement: towards, out of, etc.

#### **1.5.4.6. Articles**

There are two types of article; definite article (the) and indefinite article (a/an). Indefinite article is used for unspecific things or to introduce a person or things at the first time. ‘A’ and ‘an’ have the same meaning. They are used before a singular countable noun. ‘A’ is used in front of consonant sounds (a glass, a chair, a bag) and ‘an’ is used before vowel sounds (an umbrella, an hour, an eye). Rather, definite article is used to refer specific things, something that is known, or something which is explained before. It can be combined with singular or plural countable nouns (the book/the books) and also with uncountable nouns which are always singular (the furniture) (Alexander, 1998).

#### **1.5.4.7. Plurality**

A noun is defined as a word that is used to name any person, animal, thing, idea, state, or quality (Russell, 1993). Plurality refers to the nouns of sentences which

are in plural form. In plural form, a noun is usually added by morpheme ‘-s’ (friends) or ‘-es’ (matches).

Besides, there are also many exceptional nouns which do not need additional ‘-s/-es’ in constructing the plural form, such as for mouse (mice), person (people), sheep (sheep), and fish (fish) (Azar & Hagen, 2006).

#### **1.5.4.8. Pronouns**

Alexander (1998) explains that pronoun is used to replace a noun, either as a subject or object. Generally, there are three forms of pronoun. They are subject pronoun, object pronoun, and possessive pronoun.

Stobbe (2008) describes that a personal pronoun is used to replace words for people, things, and places which serve as subject in a sentence including I, you, we, they, he, she, and it. An object pronoun aims to replace object words in a sentence. They are: me, you, us, them, him, her, and it. For possessive pronoun, it is used to show possession. They are: mine, yours, ours, theirs, his, hers, and its.

Sometimes, we use an unspecific or unnamed pronoun in a sentence. The pronoun is used for person, thing, and place in general. It is used in singular or plural pronoun. For singular pronoun, we can use the words each, somebody, something, or anything, etc. Thus, for plural pronoun we can use both, several, few, or many, etc.

#### **1.6. Previous studies**

As mentioned in the first part of the research, there were a lot of studies of errors carried out by researchers in many countries. Researchers like Corder (1967), Richards (1974), Dulay and Burt (1974), and Norrish (1983) emphasized the importance of errors in theory and practice of teaching and learning a foreign language. Corder (1967) stated that analyzing errors and their sources were helpful in different ways. First, they help language teachers to determine how much progress a learner has made toward the target language, as a result, the teachers would find where they need to help and what sort of help they need. Second, they provide evidence for researchers of the second language learning process. In other words, the researchers discover what strategies foreign language learners use in learning and achieving a language. What is more, errors can be good feedback to the learners for

self- adjustment. In fact that, errors searched in those studies come from learners other than Vietnamese and may be characteristic of those learners. The causes may be common but the types of error may be distinctive and must be pointed out together with their causes. Despite common errors believed to exist in learners of various language backgrounds. Etherton (1977) still holds the view that learners of different mother tongues “make different types of mistakes”. This is why this study should be conducted to find out what types of errors are derived from the Vietnamese students and what their causes are.

### **1.7. Summary**

This chapter provided the worth theoretical background such as, overview of writing, paragraph, grammar, errors in foreign language teaching, definitions of errors, the distinction between errors and mistakes, sources of errors studied by a lot of theorists and educators which played the important meaning in the research of the next chapters. Especially, the researcher had the detailed description of 8 types of grammatical errors limited in the research including *passive voice, verb tense and form, subject verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality and pronoun* and the theory of the sources of errors as well. Basing on the theoretical background, the researcher could find out common grammatical errors and their sources of errors through analyzing students’ writing samples in the following sections.



## CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with all the matters related to methodology applied to get the final findings of the study, namely participants, data collection method, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

### 2.1. Participants

The participants are 50 non – English major students who are from 2 K26A and K26B primary education classes at Hoa Binh teacher’s training college. Their age varies from 19 to 22. They are minority ethnic people who are from remote areas in Hoa Binh province. All of them have learned English as a compulsory subject at high school for at least 3 years and have taken part in a 75 – period English course in term 1 at Hoa Binh teacher’s training college, therefore they all know how to write a paragraph and their English is at the level of pre-intermediate. However, their proficiency in English is not fluent; hence, they intend to make errors in writing. They are willing and enthusiastic to take part in this study.

### 2.2. Methods of the study

In the process of doing this study, the researcher used a mixture of methods which included both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative was used in describing and analyzing grammatical errors in students’ writing samples. Quantitative was used in counting and calculating the percentage of common errors.

The researcher implemented the analysis of the writing of students by using statistic in form of percentage and document analysis. The common grammatical errors were the outcomes obtained from the students’ writing. The number of errors committed was taken into consideration.

### 2.3. Data collection instrument

The type of data collection instrument which the researcher used in this study was document analysis. This method is “considered a research technique that provides objective, systematic and qualitative data” (Verma and Mallick, 1999). By using document analysis, the researcher was able to summarize students’ typical errors as well as make inferences from the data collected. The researcher asked students to write paragraphs by choosing one of 5 topics as follow:

- + The benefits of learning English.
- + An important event you are unforgettable.
- + The danger of smoking.
- + A neighbor you like.
- + A recent trip/journey you have had.

The reasons for choosing these topics were that they were quite interesting and appropriate for students at pre-intermediate level and what is more, these were familiar ones having in the learning content which students had just learned in the first term at school. In addition, the participants had choice in selecting their preferred topic, then wrote their paragraph on the paper at least 100 words with in maximum 60 minutes. They were allowed to use dictionary and wrote everything about the topic they chose because this was not an exam and the focus of this study was to find grammatical errors, not the content of the topic or the kind of paragraph they used. By the way, their real ability of writing was revealed and their grammatical errors occurred naturally.

#### **2.4. Data collection procedure**

To begin, students were asked to write paragraphs based on their choice of topics above in 60 minutes. Following this task, 50 sample writings were collected by the researcher for the purpose of analyzing.

#### **2.5. Data analysis**

After collecting data, the researcher analyzed them to give some conclusions. To fulfill the aims of achieving, the researcher used both qualitative and quantitative approach. The qualitative approach was used in describing and analyzing grammatical errors in students' writing samples. The quantitative approach was applied in counting and calculating the percentage common errors. The researcher analyzed the grammatical errors in students' writing by the rules Corder's (1974) model of EA which distinguished five steps in conducting error analysis in the following order:

- Collecting sample
- Identifying errors

- Classifying errors
- Explaining errors
- Evaluating errors

### **2.5.1. Collection of sample**

Sample which was collected in this step was the writings from the participants. It was the source of data that was used to analyze.

### **2.5.2. Identification of errors**

In this step, students' writings were given to two teachers of English in English Department at Hoa Binh teacher's training college. These teachers marked the errors through a comparison between the sentences written in sample and the sentences are supposed to be in good grammatical pattern in the same context.

These teachers used the correction symbols in the following table to mark the errors:

**Table 2.1. Error marking symbols**

(According to Klassen 1991, Bates et al 1993, Igram and King 1996)

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>Pv</b>	Passive voice
<b>Vt</b>	Verb tense
<b>Vf</b>	Verb form
<b>Agr</b>	Subject - verb agreement
<b>Wo</b>	Word order
<b>Prep</b>	Preposition
<b>Art</b>	Article
<b>Pl</b>	Plurality
<b>Pro</b>	Pronoun

### **2.5.3. Classification of errors**

In order to achieve the aims of this study, basing on the way of classifying common errors of Corder (1974); Richards (1974); Selinker (1972), Richards & Sampson (1974), in the present research, the researcher limited the classification

of the grammatical errors into the categories including: *passive voice, verb tense and form, subject verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality and pronouns.*

The researcher classified the errors into following categories.

**Table 2. 2. Error classification**

Group 1: passive voice errors	- Wrong use of passive voice.
Group 2: verb tense and form errors	- Verb tenses. - Verb form errors (gerunds, infinitives, participles, wrong form of verbs).
Group 3: subject verb agreement errors	- Wrong agreement between subject and verb.
Group 4: word order errors	- Wrong order of adjectives. - Wrong order of other elements in sentences.
Group 5: prepositional errors	- Wrong/omitted/unnecessary preposition.
Group 6: article errors	- Wrong/ unnecessary/omitted article.
Group 7: plurality errors	- Wrong use of singular and plural noun.
Group 8: pronoun errors	-Wrong/ unnecessary/omitted pronoun.

#### **2.5.4. Explanation of errors**

After identifying and classifying errors, the researcher continued calculating frequency of errors which were made by non- English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training College. With using the formula  $P = \frac{n1}{\sum N} \cdot 100\%$ , the researcher calculated the frequency of each error as well as identified the most common errors made by the students.

In which:

P: percentage of each error

n1: total of the given errors

$\sum N$ : total of the whole errors

### **2.5.5. Evaluation of errors**

After having calculated and arranged the errors by the frequency, the results were showed in form of tables and charts. After the presentation of data in tabulating was completed, the conclusion was written in the analysis in the form of a brief description.

### **2.6. Summary**

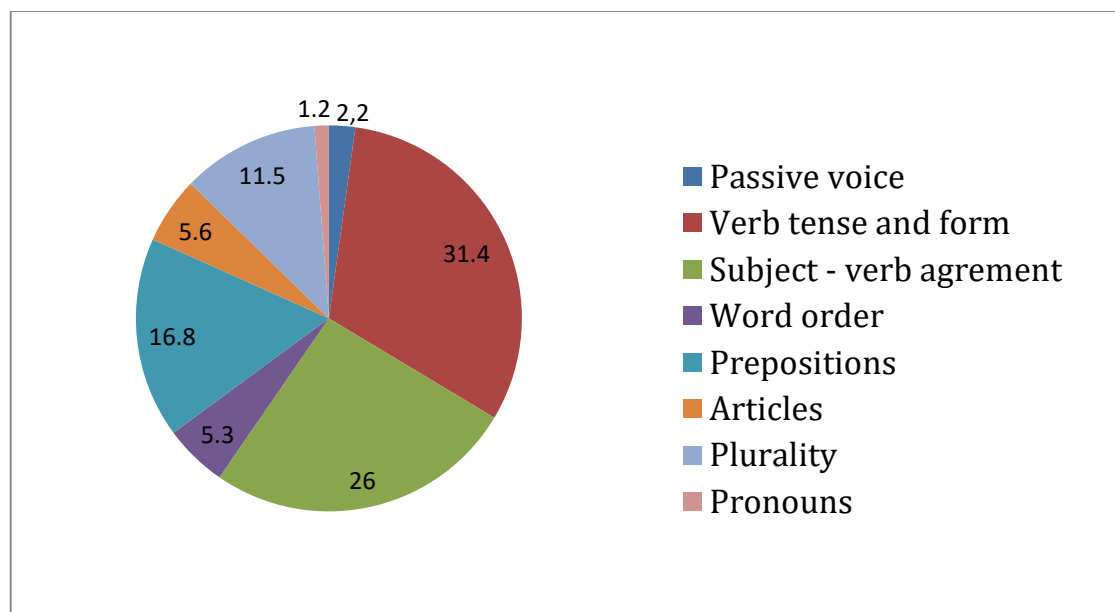
The chapter presented the description of research methodology. It covered participants, data collection method, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, and data analysis. Obviously, the content of this chapter satisfied all questions including how many participants there were, how to collect data, what data collection instruments were used, how the procedure of collecting data happened and how to analyze data. The researcher used the research methodology to conduct data analysis and found out the research result in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER III: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The methodology of conducting this current study was mentioned in the previous chapter. In this section, through the analysis of errors identified in the sample writings which are collected from 50 non – English major students of 2 K26A and K26B primary education classes at Hoa Binh teacher’s training college, the researcher will present the findings and discussion . Furthermore, basing on analyzing data collected from the writings, the causes of these errors will also be found out.

### 3.1. Findings

As previously mentioned, the aim of the research is to find out common grammatical errors which non-English Major students at Hoa Binh teacher’s training college often commit. This is also the content of the first research question “What are the common grammatical errors committed by non - English major students in writing paragraphs?” To answer this question, the researcher implemented the interpretation of the quantitative data collected from analyzing students’ writings. The result of analysis has shown that the students made various types of grammatical errors with a total of 322 errors which categorized into 8 types including passive voice, verb tense and form, subject - verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality and pronouns. The results are represented in the following.



**Figure 3.1.** Percentage of grammatical errors in paragraph writing

**Table 3.1.** Number and percentage of grammatical errors in paragraph writing

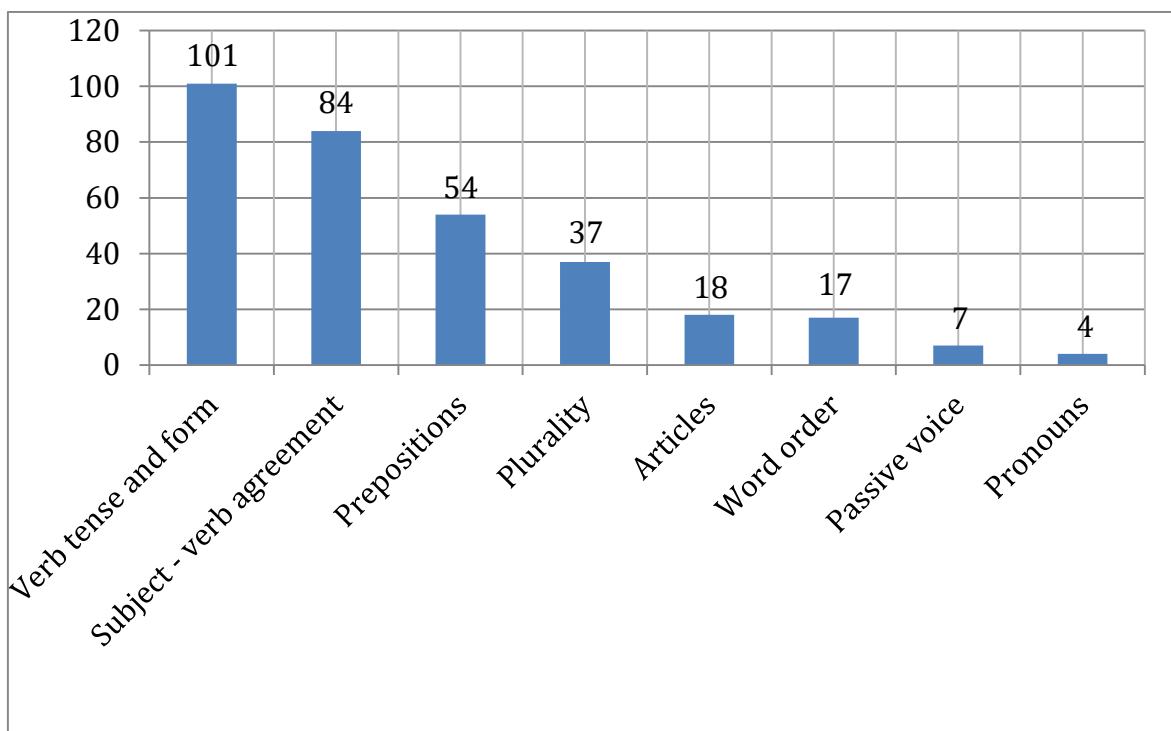
<b>Types of errors</b>	<b>The number of errors</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Passive voice	7	2.2
Verb tense and form	101	31.4
Subject verb agreement	84	26
Word order	17	5.3
Prepositions	54	16.8
Articles	18	5.6
Plurality	37	11.5
Pronouns	4	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1 show number and percentage of each category of errors committed by the participants in their paragraph writings. In this study, 7 places of passive voice errors (2.2%), 101 places of verb tense and form errors (31.4 %), 84 places of subject-verb agreement errors (26%), 17 places of word order errors (5.3 %), 54 places of preposition errors (16.8 %), 18 places of article errors (5.6 %), 37 plurality errors (11.5 %), 4 pronoun errors (1.2).

According to the result of students' analyzed free- writings, a total of 322 errors were ranked from the most frequent to the least in the following table and figure.

**Table 3.2. Frequency of each grammatical error type in descending order**

<b>Types of errors</b>	<b>The number of errors</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Verb tense and form	101	31.4
Subject verb agreement	84	26
Prepositions	54	16.8
Plurality	37	11.5
Articles	18	5.6
Word order	17	5.3
Passive voice	7	2.2
Pronouns	4	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100</b>



**Figure 3.2. Frequency of each grammatical error type in descending order**

Table 3.2 and Figure 3.2 show the types of grammatical errors in descending order. The top four common errors make up the high frequency namely verb tense and form, subject agreement, prepositions, plurality. Firstly, verb tense and form error is the most common one with 101 errors making up 31.4%. The second is S-V agreement error, which accounting for 26% with 84 errors. The third is preposition error making up 16.8% with 54 errors in total. The fourth is plurality error accounting for 11.5% with 37 errors in total. The less common types of errors are article, word order, passive voice and pronoun. Article and word order errors respectively account for 5.6% and 5.3% with 18 and 17 errors in total. The least common ones are passive voice and pronoun errors respectively occupying 2.2% and 1% with 7 and 4 errors in total.

### 3.2. Discussion

As stated above, in order to achieve the aims of this study, basing on the way of classifying some authors' common errors, the researcher limited the classification of the grammatical errors into the categories including: *passive voice, verb tense and form, subject verb agreement, word order, prepositions,*



*articles, plurality and pronoun.* These types of errors and their sources will be discussed carefully as followed

### **3.2.1. The grammatical errors in students' writing samples**

#### **3.2.1.1. Passive voice**

After analyzing grammatical errors in the students' paragraph writing, the researcher found some sentences created by using passive voice. The result showed that students had some confusion in using. The percentage of passive voice errors which were found was 2.2 % with 7 errors in total.

Some of the examples of errors in the use of passive voice are as follow:

(1) Smoking can be caused many serious diseases. (can cause) ...

In this example, the student misused between active voice and passive voice. The reason of this might be due to the less experience of students in English which leads to overgeneralization of the rule (Richard, 1974). As suggested by Azar and Hagen (2009), the sentence should be:

(1) Smoking can cause many serious diseases.

Some other examples found in the writings are:

(2) English should learn as a compulsory subject. (should be learned)

(3) It can say that smoking is bad. (can be said)

(4) I have been studied English for seven years. (have studied)

(5) I was started loving it when I was a primary student.

The general form of passive voice is “**Subject + to be + past participle**”. In sentences (2) and (3) the students did not add “be” before the verb and they also used verb forms incorrectly where those verbs should be in “past participle” form, whereas in sentences (4) and (5), “been” and “was” were used unnecessarily.

#### **3.2.1.2. Verb tense and form**

This study shows that the students performed many errors in the category of verb tense and form. Through analyzing students' sample writings, this category made up 31.4% with the total 101 errors. It was the most frequent error category compared with others. The use of verb tense in the writings showed that the students might get the difficulty in using the tense and the form of verbs. In using verbs, there

are some rules to be obeyed by a writer, such as the form of the verb in the sentence whether it is in base or past form and it depends on the tense of the sentence (Stobbe, 2008).

In this study, the researcher found some cases of errors in using verbs and tense forms. Some of the errors are illustrated as follows:

(6) While I **am did not understand** well about it,...

The sentence number (6) is an example of tense and form error in a category of addition. According to Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982), as cited by Zheng & Park (2013), an addition happens by the presence of an item which must not be appeared in a good or well-formed sentence. In the sentence the student added “am” before did. As explained by Savage, Bitterlin, & Price, (2010), a negative verbal form in a sentence should be **S + did not + V-infinitive**, so the sentence should be:

(6) While I did not understand well about it,...

Still in the verb errors, the researcher also found other cases. It is as follows:

(7) These steps useful and important in ....

(8) His voice gentle and friendly.

Examples number (7) and (8) are nominal sentences. It means that the predicate of the sentences are not verbs but to be. In those examples, the students did not put “to be” which were required in front of adjective in the sentences. Those examples are categorized as an omission. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982), as cited by Zheng & Park (2013), argued that omission is an inverse of addition. An omission happens when a writer forgets to put some elements in a sentence.

Other examples of the errors:

(9) I cried because I really **feel** sad.

(10) I asked my father, but he did not tell me who that woman **is**.

In sentence (9) ,(10), the students sometimes feel confused in understanding the concepts of tense and aspect usage in English, so they often make this kind of errors. They seem to consider simple present is the most convenient means in their writings.

Still in cases of verb tense, the researcher also found some errors in constructing sentences under Present Perfect Tense. For example:

(11) **Have** ever **visit** Sam Son beach?

(12) I **has studied** English for ten years.

(13) When we were seven years old, we **have studied** English.

For example number (11), the student tried to write a question in present perfect tense. In using a perfect tense, the verb must be in past participle form; however in the sentence the student used a base form (V1) of the verb. In term of examples (12), the student tried to write the statement in present perfect. But when writing the sentence, he/she failed to write it in the correct pattern. Another case was found as in example number (13). In the sentence, the student wrote a present perfect sentence with a specific time. In grammatical rule, in using a present perfect tense, the sentence should not have a specific time (Alexander, 1998). So then when there is a specific time in the sentence, example (13) should be written in Past Tense.

In terms of errors in verb forms, the students make errors by using infinitives and gerunds which go after the preceding verb in a sentence. They cannot accurately determine where to put infinitives and where to put gerunds. The rules of infinitives and gerunds are rather complicated for the verb forms of student because they depend on the preceding verb. Students have to learn by heart the verbs followed by infinitives if they want to use correct verb forms. However, memorizing so many verbs in English is challenging. Here are some examples of errors in verb forms took from students' writing samples.

(14) When the party started, I forget **coming**.

(15) I felt lonely and wanted **cry** when I missed my mother.

(16) I was worried about **to start** an independent life.

(17) Everyone should **learning** English.

### 3.2.1.3. Subject -Verb Agreement

In a correct sentence, the verb must agree with the subject. In line with this, a writer also must be able to identify the subject whether it is in singular or plural form and produce the correct form of the verb (Watson, 2006). In other words, agreement

between subject and verb is influenced by the number of subject. In order to produce the correct sentence structure, the verb must agree with the subject. Therefore, students have to be able to identify the subject whether it is singular or plural. Having no understanding in this part of grammar could lead a writer to make errors in making the agreement between subject and verb. In this study, for subject-verb agreement category, the researcher found 84 errors made by the students or accounted for 26% of the total number of errors. Some typical errors taken from students' writings are:

(18) Learning English well **help** me make a lot foreign friends.

(19) English **help** us be able to find a good job.

(20) Speaking English well **allow** me to communicate effectively.

(21) Everyone **have** a reason to study English.

For those sentences, the students made errors in making the agreement between subject and verb. The students wrote the wrong agreement for third person subject. Subject "Learning English", "English" and "Speaking English well" in the sentences are singular subjects, then the students should put -s at the verbs "help" and "allow". In sentence (21), the student also failed to make agreement between verb and subject. The student used "have" instead of "has" for the singular subject.

#### **3.2.1.4. Word Order**

In grammar, word order is a part of grammar which tells about how to make a well-organized sentence. Failing in recognizing the correct structure of sentences has caused the students to make errors in word order rules (Alexander, 1998). In this study, the researcher found 17 errors for word order. It is accounted for 5.3% of the whole errors. The following are the examples of this category:

(22) Smoking is **a habit bad**.

(23) I have heard **things bad** about the trip.

(24) How **we can** stop smoking?

Examples (22), (23) show that the students misused word order when producing the sentence which the adjective follows the noun while in English the adjective precedes the noun. In example (24), the student's overgeneralization in

forming the right question in English has made him to commit such an error due to the incomprehensibility of the question word order.

### 3.2.1.5. Prepositions

Basing on Figure 3.2, it is clearly that preposition error is one of the common one which students committed which is only after verb tense and form and subject – verb agreement error. It accounts for 16.8% of the total number of errors, which were 54 errors. It showed the students were also weak in the use of prepositions.

Some errors made by students in this area are as below:

#### \* **Wrong prepositions**

(25) Diseases can be caused **of** smoking.

(26) Many people die **from** smoking.

(27) We can speak, listen, and write **by** English.

(28) He helped us **to** our lessons.

For example (25), (26), (27) and (28), the students put inappropriate prepositions. The prepositions within the sentences should be replaced by “by” and “of”, “in” and “in” respectively.

#### \* **Omitted prepositions**

(29) .... To help smokers quit smoking, **go a walk**....

(30) **9 p. m.**, my mother didn't see me.

(31) I can **go** many places.

(32) I stayed there **two weeks**.

In examples (29), (30), (31) and (32), the students did omission errors. The student forgot to put the required preposition.

#### \* **Unnecessary prepositions**

(33) My older sister and I went **to** there.

(34) I stayed **at** there a few days.

(35) **In** My favorite friend is Anna Tran.

(36) On that day, after finishing **at** school, I did not ...

In example (33), (34), (35) and (36), the students did an addition error. They used unnecessary prepositions which should be omitted from the sentences.

### 3.2.1.6. Articles

One of the most difficult structural elements for EFL learners is the English article system. To produce a good sentence, a writer needs to recognize the use of definite article, indefinite article, or not to use article at all (Alexander, 1998). If it is not well-understood, it will guide a writer to make errors in using article. In this study, 18 errors or 5.6 % of the total rate of errors were found in the writings related to the use of article. The examples of this error are explained as bellow:

#### \* **Wrong articles**

(37) If you smoke cigarettes, it cost you **a** expensive money.

(38) She is **a** interesting person.

(39) I want to get my master's degree in **the** foreign country.

In above sentences, the students used the articles incorrectly, where article “a” in sentence (37), (38) should be replaced by “an” and “the” in (39) should be replaced by “a”.

#### \* **Unnecessary articles**

(40) **The** smoking is a bad habit.

(41) I have **a** two close friends, namely Mary and Anna.

(42) If you do this, your story about going to school can be **a** long.

In example (40), the student added “the” before the gerund where it is not necessary. Besides, there is also the redundant in using article “a” in the sentence (41) and (42).

#### \* **Omitted articles**

(43) ...**one of major problems**... .

(44) Smoking is one of **bad habit**.....

(45) She is **friendly person**.

In example (43), (44) and (45), the students made errors due to the absence of article “the” in front of “major” and “bad”, “a” in front of “friendly”.

### 3.2.1.7. Plurality

In terms of plurality, the researcher counted 37 errors which accounted for 11.5 % in total. It made plurality being the fourth frequent error in the writings. Some examples made by the students in their writings are:

(46) There are some **reason** that I like him.

(47) In this trip, we were around twenty **person** from one family.

(48) Smoking can cause many **disease** like cancer...

(49) They should do some **hobby**.

(50) One day, one of my **friend** asked me to help her....

In above sentences, the student used singular form of the noun instead of the plural one. It means that they forgot to add (s) to nouns. Obviously, students may not realize that determiners such as some and many require plural nouns and due to the lack of training or incomprehensibility of the rule such errors may occur.

Still in the plurality errors, the researcher also found other cases. It is as follows:

(51) Many **child** are smoking now.

(52) ...with all **this advices** ....

Students confused between regular and irregular plural nouns. They tend to keep the irregular plural as singular when it is plural. They also incline to add (s) to uncountable as in example (52).

### 3.2.1.8. Pronouns

In this study, the researcher only found 4 errors in this category. It was 1.2 % of the total number of errors. Some examples of the errors are as elaborated below:

(53) The day I got the result of passing the university exam is an important event in my life and I will never forget **them**.

(54) What make the trips become interesting are we enjoy **it** ...

(55) Two of **theirs** similarities are ...

In example (53), the student misused the pronoun “them” to refer to “the result of passing the university exam” which was used at the beginning of the sentence which should be replaced by “it”. For example (54), the student did not put the pronoun “them” at the second sentence which refers to “the trips”. In example (55),

the pronoun that should be used in the sentence is possessive adjective (their), but the student used possessive pronoun (theirs).

### **3.2.2. The common grammatical errors committed by non - English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college in paragraph writing.**

The main purpose of this research is to find out the common grammatical errors in students' paragraph writings. As mentioned before, the writings which were analyzed were the paragraph writings of non - English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college and the researcher limited eight types of grammatical errors, namely passive voice, verb tense and form, subject-verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality, and pronouns. Based on the result of the research, it can be summed up that non – English major students made many grammatical errors in their paragraph writings. After analyzing the grammatical errors, the researcher counted the data and found 322 total number of errors. The most common category of grammatical error was verb tense and form with 101 errors in total which took 31,4% of the overall errors. The other common grammar errors which were included in this study were subject – verb agreement with 84 errors accounting for 26% in total, prepositions with 54 errors making up 16,8 % in total, and 37 errors or 9% in the part of plurality.

Although the students had been taught about grammar before, they might be still confused in using grammar especially in the use of verb tense and form, subject – verb agreement, prepositions, and also plurality. The number of errors which they committed in these types of grammar suggests that the students need to do more work on those crucial grammatical concepts.

### **3.2.3. The causes of errors made by non - English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college in paragraph writing.**

In order to obtain the second research question “What are the major causes of common written grammatical errors committed by non - English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college?”, the researcher would like to analyze the major causes from written errors made by non - English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college basing on the theoretical background presented in chapter



I about the sources of errors. As stated in “Literature Review”, five major sources of errors are mother tongue interference, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and failed concept hypothesized. Below are detailed discussion and justification of each cause.

### 3.2.3.1. Mother tongue interference

It is the fact that learners are often affected by their mother tongue in the process of learning a new language. As stated in chapter I, mother tongue interference is due to the fact that learners carry the characteristics of their native language, Vietnamese, into the target language, English. They tend to apply the grammatical rules of the native language into the target one. Moreover, the translation is mostly word-by-word, which leads to wrong verb forms, and wrong use of prepositions in a sentence...

In students’ writings, a large number of errors committed by students are caused by the interference of mother tongue. For examples:

(56) Smoking is **a habit bad**.

(Smoking is a bad habit.)

(57) I have heard **things bad** about the trip.

(I have heard bad things about the trip.)

These sentences are produced by translating word-by-word from Vietnamese to English. Students apply their knowledge of Vietnamese into the process of writing. In above examples, the word order is incorrect. In Vietnamese, an adjective stands after a noun in a noun phrase; in contrast English adjectives go before nouns in noun phrases.

A large portion of verb form is also caused by the interference of mother tongue. For instance:

(58) I felt lonely and wanted **cry** when I was homesick.

(59) Basing on my English, I knew many things such as **sing** English songs and **read** English stories.”

In Vietnam, there is no concept of “- inf” or “gerund”. Words are just put together; however, when learning English, learners have to pay attention to the use

of infinitives and gerund so as to produce correct sentences. The sentences can be rewritten as follows:

- I felt lonely and I wanted to cry when I was homesick.

- Basing on my English, I knew many things such as singing English songs and reading English stories.

In addition, the wrong use of prepositions is another in this situation. For examples:

(60) English is very important **with** me.

(61) We can speak, listen, and write **by** English.

(62) Also, we can communicate and talk **with** them about everything.

### 3.2.3.2. Overgeneralization

As stated in chapter I, overgeneralization is students' production of deviant structures in the target language basing on their past learning experience. Overgeneralization appearing in errors related to noun number and subject-verb agreement. In particular, students overgeneralized the rule that every expression of quality which is used to denote the concept of 'plurality' will be followed by a plural noun. For example:

(63) **Everyone have** a lot of ways reason to study English.

(64) **Everybody use** it as a language communication.

In above examples, the students misused "everybody", "everything" as plural nouns.

Moreover, overgeneralization also concerns about verb tenses as well as verb forms. Here are some illustrated examples:

(66) I **thinked** more mature, more clearly.

(67) That morning, I **geted** up earlier than usual.

(68) My mother **didn't told** me anything about that man.

(69) Many people **didn't smoked**.

Having been taught to create past form of verbs by adding the suffix 'ed' to verbs, students extend this application even to irregular verbs and produce such deviated forms as "thinked" in (66) and "geted" in (67). Besides, after learning the

structure of past simple tense, they tend to put past tense verb in negative past tense sentences like “she didn’t told me” in (68). In sentence (69), the students overgeneralized the use of past tense in negative form, instead of adding verb-infinitive after “didn’t”, he transferred the past meaning by adding “ed”.

In addition, overgeneralization is also associated with redundancy reduction. It is the case in which students use simple present tense instead of past tense although actions happened in the past. For examples:

(71) I cried because I really **feel** scared.

(72) This **is** the first time I had to leave her.

### **3.2.3.3. Ignorance of rule restrictions**

As mentioned in the theoretical background, the ignorance of rule restrictions including analogy and the rote of learning of rules is seen in errors relating to the structure of verbs and preposition usage. Students often ignored the restriction of contexts where in rules were applied leading to producing a deviant form or structure.

The ignorance of rule restrictions also results from students’ analogy which can be found in their wrong use of prepositions. For instance, students have been taught “I said to my parents that secret” or “I spoke to my parents that secret”. Students produced the sentence (73) I **told to** my father about that secret instead of I told my parents about that secret.

Another example as the following situation: students have been taught: “advice somebody to do something”, “ask somebody to do something”, they assumed the structure “let somebody to do something” as the following examples:

(74) I let my friends to study English well.

(75) My parents let me to stand there to wait them.

### **3.2.3.4. Incomplete application of rules**

As mentioned in chapter I, incomplete application of rules deals with students’ ability to apply rules into contexts. Although they have been taught the language rules many times, they fail to apply them. This cause is connected with verb forms and

verb tenses. Students often have problems with the past and present tenses and the use of infinitives and gerunds. For instance:

(76) I asked my sister, but she **didn't told** me who he **is**.

(77) I was worried about **to start** a new life far from the home.

(78) There will be a good opportunity **to learning English**.

### **3.2.3.5. False concepts hypothesized**

A false concept hypothesized derives from incorrect comprehension of distinction in the target language. A typical problem in students' writings is the use of 'is, are' as the present marker. Here are some illustrated examples from students' paragraphs:

(79) In life, we **are have** a lot of memorable events which we can not forget.

(80) We **are learn** to books and to the people around.

In short, the research problem in the second research question being mentioned in the first part was solved after the researcher had an analysis the major causes of students' grammatical errors above. The analysis has provided further insights into the five main causes of written errors including mother tongue interference, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules and false concepts hypothesized.

### **3.3. Summary**

The researcher discussed about the analysis of data which were gained from the document analysis. The documents which were analyzed were students' writing. After analyzing the data, students' most common grammatical errors including verb tense and form, subject – verb agreement, prepositions, and also plurality were revealed. Data collected from the writing are also analyzed to find out the causes of errors.

## PART C: CONCLUSION

In this part, the main findings of the study will be concluded. In addition, limitations, suggestions and recommendations of the study are also revealed.

### 1. Summary of the study

The aim of the study is investigating the common grammatical errors made by the non – English major students at Hoa Binh teacher’s training college. The study satisfied two research questions mentioned in the first part.

Firstly, after analyzing students’ writings, the most frequent grammatical errors types committed by students were revealed. Among eight types of errors including passive voice, verb tense and form, subject - verb agreement, word order, prepositions, articles, plurality and pronouns, the researcher found that the greatest numbers of errors belonged to four groups namely, verb tenses and forms, subject – verb agreement, prepositions, and plurality. Verb errors included simple present tense errors, simple past tense errors, present perfect tense errors and past perfect tense errors. Verb form errors consisted of gerund and infinitive errors. Subject – verb agreement errors are the wrong agreement between subject and verb. Preposition errors are all the errors related to wrong usage of prepositions, omitting, and adding unnecessary prepositions. Plurality errors are errors in singular and plural nouns. Through the total of number of overall errors of students, it can help the researcher to understand student’s overall performance as well as through the specific errors students made, the researcher classified students’ difficulties in learning English language.

Secondly, the main causes of these errors are mother tongue interference, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules and false concepts hypothesized. Among them the interference of native language and overgeneralization are the prevailing causes.

In conclusion, it is impossible for learners to make no mistakes in the process of learning a second language. In fact, investigating the errors learners frequently make is essential to teachers and learners in teaching and learning a new language.

EA can help teachers to identify specific types and causes of errors in writing. Besides, it can help teachers to predict errors in certain contexts; therefore, teachers can choose appropriate teaching methods to improve students' writing skill. As a result, students make fewer mistakes and enhance their writing ability.

## **2. Limitations of the study and suggestions for further study**

### **2.1. Limitations of the study**

Although the noticeable study results were revealed, it has certain restrictions due to the shortage of time, lack of reference materials and the limited knowledge of the researcher.

Firstly, the number of non – English major students in the primary Education Department participating in the research is only fifty. Therefore, it will be hard to determine whether the situation is similar when study is conducted with larger number of students. As a consequence, the result of the study may be less convincing.

Secondly, each student only has one writing; therefore it lead to be impossible to assert the outstanding writing problems. Besides, the other researchers who conduct similar studies with the larger number participants and with more writing tasks can increase the possibility of generalization.

Thirdly, the researcher could not conduct the study on the same students at different periods of their learning process.

### **2.2. Suggestions for further studies**

It is obvious that the findings of research are useful; however, it is essential to conduct the investigation of errors in the future under the following domains:

Firstly, making errors is unavoidable in learning a language and each teacher has own ways of correction; therefore, errors and error correction are always new subjects for studies.

Secondly, the participants of the research are 50 students of primary Education Department at Hoa Binh teacher's training College. It would be clearer if we study errors made by the same students who are major in other fields such as Pre - school Education, Maths, Chemistry, Physical, etc...

Thirdly, the researcher could not study the errors made by the same students in their different periods of their learning process. As a result, it would be more interesting to see their errors in their different periods of their learning process. Besides, the study was done in a limited time; therefore, it could not cover all types of errors in our language skills. As a consequence, further researches could be done on reading, speaking or listening as well.

### **3. Recommendations**

According to the theoretical background presented in literature review and main findings, the researcher would like to propose some recommendations which hope to benefit teachers as well as other possible researchers. Basing on the result of study, it is an undeniable fact that non – English major students at Hoa Binh teacher's training college are also weak in grammar, they often face a lot of problems in writing as well as in learning grammar rules. In order to achieve effectiveness in teaching and learning writing, the following points should be paid attention to:

Firstly, every student needs to be raised awareness of the importance of writing skill as well as grammar in writing in learning English. Therefore, it is essential for students to be taught basic grammar carefully before practicing writing.

Secondly, after analyzing students' writing errors, the researcher found that the influence of mother tongue is the main cause among ones leading to students' errors. So, it is very necessary to help students recognize the differences between English and Vietnamese in thinking and writing. This can help them avoid language inference and reduce this kind of errors.

Thirdly, students' writing error correction must be carried out frequently. The flexible and effective use of different techniques of correction as peer-correction and teacher-correction should be practiced in teaching writing. An undeniable fact is that the peer - correction would encourage students to think critically and be aware of the errors they should avoid. In addition, it would create a cooperative environment in classrooms. Peer correction can be in form of pair work, group work or whole class correction. Besides, when correcting students' errors, teachers need not to be an over-corrector. They can apply the following ways to deal with errors. Firstly, it is pointless

to try to mark all the errors. Teachers should decide in advance what kinds of errors they will deal with. Secondly, it is important for teachers to analyze errors carefully and to provide explanation in detail as well as correction. Finally, teachers should bear in mind that certain errors require different techniques to correct.

In brief, knowledge of EA is helpful for language performance. It also helps to improve the process of teaching and learning writing. It is hoped that the results of this thesis can provide some help not only for students in learning writing skill but also for teachers in teaching writing skill.

## **REFERENCES**



- Abeywickrama, R. (2010). An Analysis of Errors in English Writing of Sinhala Speaking Undergraduates. *Abaramuwa University Journal*, 9 (1), 97-114.
- Abushihab, I. (2014). An analysis of grammatical errors in writing made by Turkish learners of English as a foreign language. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 6(4), 213-223.
- Alexander, L. G. (1998). *Longman English grammar practice: For intermediate student*. New York: Longman.
- Azar, B. S., & Hagen, S. A. (2006). *Basic English grammar*. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Azar, B. S., & Hagen, S. A. (2009). *Understanding and using English grammar*. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Brown, H. D. (2003). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. New York: Longman.
- Byrne, D. (1988). *Teaching writing skill. Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers*. Longman: London.
- Candling, R.B. (2001). *Vocabulary and Language Teaching*. New York: Longman Inc.
- Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Corder, S. (1967). *The significance of learners' errors*. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, pp. 161-70.
- Corder, S. (1974). *Error Analysis - The Edinburgh Course in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: OUP.
- Corder, S. (1979). *Error Analysis and Interlanguage*. Oxford: OUP.
- Cunning, W. (1987). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Crystal, D. (1990). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of English Language*. NY: Cambridge University Press.

- Darus, S. (2009). Error Analysis of Written English Essays of Secondary Students in Malaysia: A Case Study. *European of Social Science*, 8 (3).
- Dulay, B. (1974). *Natural Sequences in Child Second Language Acquisition*. *Language Learning*, 24 (1): 37-53.
- Dulay, H. C. et. al. (1982). *Language Two*. Oxford: OUP.
- Eastwood, J. (2002). *Oxford guide to English grammar*. New York: Oxford University.
- Ferris, D. R. (2001). *Treatment of Error in Second Language Student Writing*. Ann Arbor. University of Michigan Press.
- Flower, W. S. (1984). *Progressive Writing Skills*. Nelson.
- Heydari, P. (2012). Error Analysis: Sources of L2 Learners' Errors. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2 (8), 1583-1589.
- Hourani, T. M. (2008). *An analysis of the common grammatical errors in the English writing made by 3rd secondary male students in the eastern coast of the UAE (Doctoral dissertation)*. British University. Dubai.
- Hsu, C. H. (2013). *Revisiting causes of grammatical errors for esl teachers*. *Educational Research*, 4(6), 513-516.
- Hubbard, P. et. al. (1993). *A Training Course for TEFL*. Oxford: OUP.
- James, C. (1998). *Errors in Language Learning and Use*. Addison Wesley Longman Limited.
- James, C. (2001). *Errors in Language Learning and Use*. England: Longman.
- Khansir, A. A. (2012). Error Analysis and Second Language Acquisition. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 2 (5), 1027-1032.
- Klassen, J. (1991). "Using Student Errors for Teaching". *FORUM*, Vol. XXIX. No.1, Jan.
- Klassen, J. (1991), Bates et al. (1993), Igram & King. (1996), introduced by Le Thanh Tam & Le Ngoc Phuong Anh (2004). *Writing Academic English, 3rd edition*.
- Norish, J. (1992). *Language learners on their errors*. London: Macmillan Press. Phạm Đăng Bình (2013), *Lý thuyết phân tích lỗi nhìn dưới góc độ giao thoa ngôn*

*ngữ - văn hóa. Một số ứng dụng trong việc dạy và học tiếng nước ngoài.*  
NXB Khoa Học Xã Hội.

- Richards, J. C. (1970). *A non-contrastive approach to error analysis*. London: Longman.
- Richard, J. C. ed. (1989). *Error Analysis - Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. London: Longman.
- Sercombe, P. G. (2000). *Strategizing Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century*. Proceedings of the International Conference on Teaching and Learning. Faculty of Education: University Kebangsaan Malayisa, Bangi.
- Stobbe, G. (2008). *Just enough English grammar*. New York: The McGraw Hill Companies.
- Watson, R. W. (2006). *A guide to critical writing, grammar, and style*. Georgia, Jackson: Smarr.

## APPENDIX

### TYPICAL ERRORS COLLECTED FROM STUDENTS' WRITINGS

Error sentences	Types of errors
Smoking <b>can cause</b> many serious diseases.	Pv
English <b>should learn</b> as a compulsory subject.	Pv
I <b>have been studied</b> English for seven years.	Pv
It <b>can say</b> that smoking is bad.	Pv
I <b>was started</b> loving it when I was a primary student	Pv
While I did not understand well about it,....	Vt
These steps useful and important in ....	Vt
His voice gentle and friendly.	Vt
I cried because I really <b>feel</b> sad.	Vt
I asked my father, but he did not tell me who that woman <b>is</b> .	Vt
<b>Have</b> ever <b>visit</b> Sam Son beach?	Vt
I <b>has studied</b> English for ten years.	Vt
When we were seven years old, we <b>have studied</b> English.	Vt
When I visited my relatives in Thanh Hoa, I was very surprising because they warmly <b>welcome</b> me.	Vt
That is the most interesting event in my life I <b>have</b> .	Vt
When I want to meet my family, I <b>went</b> home.	Vt
It is the time when I was nine years old.	Vt
After that having a man who is at the age of fifty-nine, he <b>take</b> to the poor man a bowl of noodles.	vt vt
When we were children, we <b>had studied</b> English.	Vt
If you <b>speaking</b> English, you won't need to rely on translation or subtitles anymore to enjoy your favorite films.	Vt
I am so happy when my dream came true.	Vt
I <b>had smile</b> very much.	Vt

I was proud of my brother because he is great.	Vt
They were happy because the <b>have made</b> a part of my dream.	Vt
When the party started, I forget <b>coming</b> .	Vf
I felt lonely and wanted <b>cry</b> when I missed my mother.	Vf
I was worried about <b>to start</b> an independent life.	Vf
Everyone should <b>learning</b> English.	Vf
After <b>finish</b> two important exam, my class decided to celebrate...	Vf
I'm a student <b>live</b> far from home.	Vf
You will have more opportunities to <b>having</b> a job when you learn English well.	Vf
Learning English help me <b>can converse</b> with foreigner.	Vf
Have many reasons why I choose <b>learn</b> English.	Vf
When <b>learn</b> English well, I can communicate with foreign people.	Vf
I choose <b>learn</b> English.	Vf
I like <b>learn</b> English and <b>speak</b> good English.	Vf
...although <b>learn</b> English hard.	Vf
When <b>travel</b> to a lot of places.	Vf
I must <b>to learn</b> English.	Vf
I must <b>to study</b> English well.	Vf
English is used <b>to communicating</b> to foreign people.	Vf
I know that <b>tell lie</b> is not good.	Vf
<b>My father teach</b> us work good matter.	Agr
<b>Smokers has to</b> spend on amount of money.	Agr
<b>My mother help</b> me understand about the life.	Agr
Learning English well <b>help</b> me make a lot foreign friends.	Agr
English <b>help</b> us be able to find a good job.	Agr
Speaking English well <b>allow</b> me to communicate effectively.	Agr
Everyone <b>have</b> a reason to study English.	Agr
Smoking is <b>a habit bad</b> .	wo

I have heard <b>things bad</b> about the trip.	Wo
How <b>we can</b> stop smoking?	Wo
After working <b>hard a day</b> , we were all tired.	Wo
I like English and I want to <b>speak good English</b> .	Wo
I can visit <b>country different</b> .	Wo
He lives <b>a family poor</b> .	Wo
Diseases can be caused <b>of</b> smoking.	Prep
Many people die <b>from</b> smoking.	Prep
We can speak, listen, and write <b>by</b> English.	Prep
He helped us <b>to</b> our lessons.	Prep
.... To help smokers quit smoking, <b>go a walk</b> ....	Prep
<b>9 p. m</b> , my mother didn't see me.	Prep
I can <b>go</b> many places.	Prep
I stayed there <b>two weeks</b> .	Prep
My older sister and I went <b>to</b> there.	Prep
I stayed <b>at</b> there a few days.	Prep
<b>In</b> My favorite friend is Anna Tran.	Prep
On that day, after finishing <b>at</b> school, I did not ...	Prep
I can go many places.	Prep
English is important <b>with</b> me.	Prep
I stayed at hospital one week.	Prep
If you smoke cigarettes, it cost you <b>a</b> expensive money.	Art
She is <b>a</b> interesting person.	Art
I want to get my master's degree in <b>the</b> foreign country.	Art
<b>The</b> smoking is a bad habit.	Art
I have <b>a</b> two close friends, namely Mary and Anna.	Art
If you do this, your story about going to school can be <b>a</b> long.	Art
... <b>one of major problems</b> ....	Art
Smoking is one of <b>bad habit</b> .....	Art

She is <b>friendly person</b> .	Art
When I live in^ hostel, I feel a few comfortable.	Art
After a hour of sitting on the bus, finally we arrived art	Art
There are some <b>reason</b> that I like him.	Pl
In this trip, we were around twenty <b>person</b> from one family.	Pl
Smoking can cause many <b>disease</b> like cancer...	Pl
They should do some <b>hobby</b> .	Pl
One day, one of my <b>friend</b> asked me to help her....	Pl
Many <b>child</b> are smoking now.	Pl
One of the bad <b>habit</b> I have is sleeping late.	Pl
...with all <b>this advices</b> ....	Pl
There are four <b>peoples</b> in my family.	Pl
I have many chances to improve my knowledge in every <b>fields</b> .	Pl
After finish two important <b>exam</b> , my class decided to celebrate...	Pl
The day I got the result of passing the university exam is an important event in my life and I will never forget <b>them</b> .	Pro
What make the trips become interesting are we enjoy <b>it</b> ...	Pro
Two of <b>theirs</b> similarities are ...	Pro
A country wants to develop <b>it</b> economy. It must use English fluently	Pro
She told the wallet is <b>her</b> .	Pro

