

Evaluating Capitalization Errors in Saudi Female students' EFL writing at Bisha University

Malika Anwar Siddiqui

College of Applied Medical Sciences (Females)
Al-Namas, Bisha University
Saudi Arabia

Abstract

English teaching – learning process in Saudi Arabia is often criticized for producing students with low proficiency. One of the most critical areas in which Saudi students demonstrate low proficiency is EFL composition which features low writing ability in content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. Capitalization in mechanics is a micro feature of English composition which demands using upper case and lower case in English letters according to the English language conventions. This study evaluates capitalization errors in Saudi female students' EFL writing. The study is conducted in the College of Applied Medical Sciences (for females), Bisha University at Al-Namas in Saudi Arabia. A mixed method of research design is used to collect the data from the real classroom of 20 Saudi female students in the form of assignments, classroom tests and examination copies. The study is supported by the observation of writing process of the students in the EFL classroom and interview of 10 students. Ellis's procedure (1994 cited in Troike, 2006) has been used to describe and evaluate the errors of capitalization. The result reveals that capitalization errors constitute a significant area of errors in Saudi students' writing. In the composition of 12000 words by 20 students, 983 errors are committed across the 10 categories of capitalization. The study suggests that curriculum of English language in Saudi Arabia should implement new pedagogical techniques in capitalization teaching to develop mastery in the principle rules of capitalization and understanding of orthographic-linguistic-cultural conventions of English language.

Keywords: capitalization errors, EFL writing, interlingual & intralingual errors, orthographic malformation, Saudi female students

Cite as: Siddiqui, M. A. (2015). Evaluating Capitalization Errors in Saudi Female students' EFL writing at Bisha University. Arab World English Journal, 8 (1).

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol6no1.19>