
Written corrective feedback with online tools in the Medicine classroom: *Bombay TV*

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to analyze the writing errors made by first-year undergraduate Medicine students in the English classroom at a Spanish university. Forty-nine subjects enrolled in the *English for Health Sciences* module were expected to subtitle short videos not only implementing medical vocabulary seen in previous lessons, but also using Open Educational Resources (OERs), more specifically *Bombay TV*. This online tool allows learners to practise and develop their writing skills in the target language as well as their autonomy and creativity. Results showed that the most frequently committed errors were, in order, punctuation, spelling, wrong verb choice, wrong word choice, pronouns, fragment, word order, articles, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, nouns, prepositions, capitalization and adjectives respectively. Moreover, the negative transfer of students' first language (L1) occasionally resulted in a lack of grammar and vocabulary accuracy that should be taken into account in order to enhance students' writing competence in the target language. A final questionnaire revealed that the use of new technologies in the foreign language classroom triggered students' motivation. Likewise, students are provided with corrective feedback, a practice used in the field of education. Given that OERs are key in the study, the focus will be on online feedback.

Keywords: *Bombay TV*, writing skills, Medicine studies, English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

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Resumen

El objetivo de este estudio es analizar los errores de expresión escrita cometidos por los alumnos de primer curso del grado de Medicina en la clase de inglés de una universidad española. Se pretendía que 49 estudiantes inscritos en la asignatura de *Inglés para Ciencias de la Salud* subtitularan vídeos de corta duración en los que no solo tenían que poner en práctica el vocabulario adquirido en sesiones previas, sino que también tenían que utilizar Recursos Educativos Abiertos (REA), en concreto *Bombay TV*. Esta herramienta online permite a los alumnos practicar y desarrollar sus habilidades escritas en la lengua meta así como su autonomía y creatividad. Los resultados muestran que los errores más cometidos son, por orden: artículos, tiempo verbal, concordancia sujeto-verbo, sustantivos, preposiciones, uso de mayúsculas y adjetivos respectivamente. Además, la transferencia negativa de la lengua materna de los estudiantes ocasionalmente desembocó en una falta de exactitud gramatical y léxica, la cual debería tenerse en cuenta para mejorar la competencia escrita en la lengua meta. Un cuestionario final reveló que el uso de las nuevas tecnologías en la clase de lengua extranjera aumentó la motivación de los alumnos. Asimismo, se proporcionará a los alumnos comentarios de corrección para que mejoren sus escritos. Dado que las REA son clave en este estudio, nos centraremos especialmente en los comentarios en línea.

Palabras clave: *Bombay TV*, expresión escrita, estudios en medicina, inglés como lengua extranjera.

Introduction

The spread and use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) as pedagogical tools has been recently acknowledged by several studies in the last years (Conole & Alevizou, 2010). OERs have proven to have an immense potential for teaching and learning due to the generation of new abilities in the classroom related to forms of communication or collaboration among students. As regards the teaching and learning of languages, it has been claimed that OERs are able to reduce the time needed to prepare classes (Wenk, 2010) as well as to reduce teachers' isolation by using dialogic and more learner-centered approaches (Mayes & Freitas, 2004), being therefore beneficial for both teachers and learners.

Moving towards Higher Education institutions, these have been urged to widening and spreading the use of OERs among the university community and more concretely among students. As a consequence, funding programmes have emerged for not only the use but also the creation of OERs as a way to promote them. As an example, the European policies published after the Bologna Declaration have enhanced the use of OERs in the last decade. OERs have been attributed many beneficial learning and teaching skills

for the university classroom, since their free and easy access have undoubtedly the potential of becoming universal and available to the whole learning and teaching community. However, some risks in the use of OERs have been noted as regards social exclusion. Not all teachers and students in general are fond of new technologies or can have free access to the use of OERs (e.g. fail to have Internet connection outside the educational institution). Thus, these people could be left behind and excluded from the classroom community.

The study carried out in this chapter is part of a broader project on the use of OERs in the university classroom for the teaching and learning of English as a Foreign Language in a specific disciplinary field, that one of Medicine. Previous analyses on the use of OERs in this context have been approached as regards the improvement of English pronunciation (Bellés-Fortuño & Bellés Calvera, 2017; Bellés-Calvera & Bellés-Fortuño (in press) with the use of online resources as for example *Voki*. Accordingly, aspects such as the EU language policies have been paramount in the project in an attempt to follow EU Higher Education premises of multilingual language learning and the inclusion of active employability assets in tertiary education curricula (Bellés-Fortuño & Ferrer-Alcantud, 2016).

The current paper presents the results obtained after introducing the use of some specific OERs for the learning of English Pronunciation to a group of first-year Medicine students enrolled in their *English for Health Sciences* module. The OERs introduced in the classroom were new for students; they had never used them before. Although a very positive response was hypothesized, the answers from the survey passed on students to measure their satisfaction with the sessions using OERs revealed that not all the students were prone to use OERs in the *English for Health Sciences* modules. Several activities were designed to be fulfilled with the use of some OERs such as the use of *Bombay TV*, this tool, although not specifically designed for language teaching and learning, has proven to be useful for that goal.

However, the primary focus of this study is not measuring students' motivation towards the use of OERs. Instead, we aim at detecting Medicine students' errors in their writing process following error analysis (Corder, 1981). The use of error analysis can be justified from two different views, first due to its pedagogical use; systematic detection of error can aid their eradication. On the other hand, error correction is part of the systematic study of the learner's language (Corder, 1981) where error analysis can be significant for teachers, students and researchers. Error analysis goes along the learner-centeredness concept of university curricula, concept that is also attributed to the use of OERs as pedagogical tools. It has been argued that an adequate understanding of the processes learners engage when learning a foreign language are crucial for the development of teaching materials as input (Zhang, 2011). However, for error analysis to benefit students' learning process we have to take into account the term 'interlanguage' (Selinker, 1972), that is, language is a continuum, on the one end we have the mother tongue (or any previously acquired language), and on the other the target language, in this case English. With this in mind we have also looked into mother tongue 'interferences' in the production of written errors.

Bombay TV

Bombay TV is a platform where learners can add subtitles to Bollywood films. This tool gives students the option to choose a segment of a film, write a dialogue, send the clip to their email and share it with the users they select. In other words, this resource fosters writing and conversational skills as it allows them to be creative and apply their knowledge in a practical context. This project offers a simple but appealing way of demonstrating the relevance of writing accurate texts in terms of coherence and cohesion. In fact, students also learn how they can interact in real settings so that they can communicate successfully in their workplace.

Method

In this section, a detailed description of the participants, the materials, and the procedure of the study will be provided to examine learners' outcomes in the target language. Likewise, the tools to be used in the study will be revised.

Participants

The subjects in the study were 49 first-year undergraduate Medicine students enrolled in the *English for Health Sciences* module, where English is taught as a foreign language. Within this educational setting, students are exposed to a number of medical texts, either written or spoken, which are key to develop their four skills successfully. The examined group was exposed to OERs, particularly *Bombay TV*, to foster their writing competence given that part of the final grade was devoted to the reading and production of articles and brochures. At this point, it should be pointed out that although all of them handed in the activities, only 43 students answered the final questionnaire under study.

Materials

Two different materials were designed to examine students' performance and opinions: an activity dealing with minimal pairs and medical terminology, and a final questionnaire to learn about students' feelings towards the use of OERs in the EFL classroom.

The activity was created to be fulfilled with *Bombay TV*, a popular site where students can choose a short Bollywood video where they produce their own original dialogues, thereby shaping their writing skills. Within this activity, students were given a number of minimal pairs seen in class together with a list of vocabulary related to some medical conditions (e.g. *broken leg, cough, bloody nose, cough, cold, knee pain, headache, fever, sneezing, and sore throat*). Hence, they selected the ones that let them create the most appropriate script.

The final survey was designed to determine not only if the learning experience was rewarding or not, but also if OERs (i.e. *Bombay TV*) met participants' expectations when it comes to their use in the teaching curriculum. This questionnaire involved a Likert scale, where students had to number from 1 to 5 their agreement with the following items: a) Using OERs to fulfil the activities has increased my motivation to communicate in English,

b) The activities done using OERs are not attractive and dynamic, c) I consider a waste of time learning with OERs. It slows down the learning process and should be optional, d) The implementation of OERs is aimed at developing the competencies established in the course syllable, and e) I am satisfied with this teaching proposal.

Procedure

To begin with, researchers provided participants with essential information about a wide range of OERs that may be helpful when learning foreign languages, namely *Voki*, *Bombay TV*, and YouTube among others. In other words, these subjects would deal with some new writing, oral and visual software. Once they were told about their *Bombay TV* assignment, students were able to handle the online tool, and sent researchers the corresponding links generated on the site.

After collecting their online writing, grammatical and lexical errors were identified and classified by the researchers: verb tense, subject-verb agreement, fragment, word order, punctuation, articles, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions, word choice and spelling. Then, the frequency of these errors resulting from students' L1 interference was considered.

Results and Discussion

In this section, the results obtained in the surveys as well as students' writing performance on the activity are discussed. Thus, a classification of students' errors and their beliefs on the implementation of OERs are discussed.

Activity

The analysis of 49 pieces of written texts led us to the identification of students' most common errors. The errors made by Medicine students differed on the use of grammar and lexis. Grammatical errors comprised verb tense, subject-verb agreement, fragments, word order and punctuation, whereas lexical errors involved articles, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions, word choice and spelling.

From these results it can be concluded that the greatest difficulties for the subjects lie on punctuation, spelling, verbs, fragments and word choice. What we understand by fragment errors has to do with unfinished utterances as well as with grammatically and lexically incorrect utterances as a whole. Notwithstanding, it is worth mentioning that both grammatical and lexical categories show similar trends in the sense that students commit nearly the same number of errors.

Table 1 below shows the most common grammatical errors committed by the participants of this study. Surprisingly, the most frequently-made error types correspond to punctuation (49%), which were followed by fragments (19%) and word order (16%) respectively. Unexpectedly, the number of errors decreased considerably when it comes to verb tense (9%), and subject-verb agreement (7%).

Table 1. Frequency of grammatical errors

	Frequency	Percentage	Examples
Grammatical Errors			
Verb Tense	4	9%	Ufff I suffer from a headache. I'm have been dancing a lot of time. What if Joseph will have a cold? Hug me so that both could get warm while your employee find the blanket.
Subject-verb agreement	3	7%	Hug me so that both could get warm while your employee find the blanket. Doctor, I need your medical opinion. Last week my friend falled off and I think has broken his leg. Doctor, this patient has lot of headaches, could come in?
Fragment	8	19%	Robert, I thought that I was going to break my... If you interced for me, I will cure your cough. You should have had more precaution. So polite. Thank you so much.
Word order	7	16%	Of course! Show me where is your father. I don't know what are you talking about!
Punctuation	21	49%	Hello Doctor Kuzrapali Sorry I don't have time at this moment, come back tomorrow, please. This morning I went to the doctor. He said to me, that I have a severe sore throat.
Total	43		

Regarding punctuation errors, punctuation marks were omitted or added, especially commas (,) and periods (.). It is true that Spanish and English punctuation marks differ to a great extent when talking about numbers, the serial comma or even quotation marks, but it does not mean that vocatives do not exist in these languages. As can be seen above, commas are omitted before someone's name or after discourse markers. Evidence may be found in *Sorry I don't have time at this moment, come back tomorrow, please*. On the contrary, a remarkable example is found in the utterance *This morning I went to the doctor. He said to me, that I have a severe sore throat*, where the placing of the comma

hinders its comprehension as it is not a subordinate clause. The impact of social networks such as Whatsapp, Facebook or Instagram in these new generations may explain their poor use of punctuation marks.

Unlike punctuation marks, fragment errors are made due to unfinished utterances as well as to a literal translation from participants' L1. Clear examples like *Robert, I thought that I was going to break my..., If you interceded for me, I will cure your cough, You should have had more precaution*, and *So polite* illustrate this phenomenon. On the one hand, students' writing performance may have been affected by the use of online tools, since they are not totally focused on the task. On the other hand, literal translations from Spanish into English reveal a low level of English or a limited knowledge of expressions employed when socializing. Thus, *If you intercede on my behalf, You should have been more careful*, and *This is very kind of you* would have been pragmatically correct.

Likewise, the influence of Spanish can be observed when using relative pronouns in subordinate clauses. The verbs in *Of course! Show me where is your father* and *I don't know what are you talking about!* are placed before the subject. This is quite common in Spanish, since they associate the relative pronouns *what*, *when* and *where* with the inversion typically found in interrogative structures. That being said, it is not surprising to find questions such as *What happened? It was an accident?* where English inversion is replaced by Spanish language rules.

Focusing now on verb tense errors and subject-verb agreement, it can be deduced that several students combined their knowledge in both languages, thus creating some confusion. Examples like *I'm have been dancing a lot of time*, *What if Joseph will have a cold?* and *I thought you was suffering just a headache!* show this intralingual interference. Apart from that, subjects are occasionally omitted as in students' mother tongue, so that utterances including *Last week my friend falled off and I think has broken his leg*, and *Doctor, this patient has lot of headaches, could come in?* can be recognized in their pieces of writing.

At a lexical level, it can be observed that the most salient error is that of spelling (25%). Interestingly, students failed to select the verbs (21%) and words (19%) that fit well within a given context. Similarly, pronouns (15%) are occasionally omitted or replaced by an article. As to articles (14%), either definite or indefinite, students were not able to notice when they should have been included within the dialogue. As for nouns (2%), their singular form tends to be used rather than their plural forms, whereas capitalization (4%), prepositions (4%) and adjectives (2%) are not properly employed due to students' mother tongue (See Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency of lexical errors

	Frequency	Percentage	Examples
Lexical errors			
Articles	4	8%	It is only matter of time that you will get well, very soon. It's my purpose to be mayor of this city.
Nouns	1	2%	Ladies and gentleman, I would like to have your attention for a moment.
Pronouns	7	15%	I told you that you had to take medication. I think I'm going to change the shirt.
Verbs	10	21%	You should have a sore throat. I'm abdominal pain.
Prepositions	2	4%	I have been talking with the doctor about your accident. Yesterday I was diagnosed of cancer, I'm dying.
Adjectives	1	2%	I can't think properly, I'm thirst.
Word choice	9	19%	Probably I will take a medical operation in one month. You are very exaggerated.
Spelling	12	25%	I'm not feling well today. Okay doctor, thank you very match. My nouse is bleeding. I can barely breathe.
Capitalization	2	4%	Welcome to the maths class. Luhassah, did you do your homework? Thank you sir.
Total	44		

Most spelling errors occurred when using incorrect letters, omitting letters or adding unnecessary letters. Therefore, even though the message conveys meaning in *I'm not feling well today*, an –e is missing in *feeling*. Another example, that of *Okay doctor, thank you very match*, suggests that students added incorrect letters in their spelling (e.g. match, and nouse) since words in Spanish are read as written. Then, the use of incorrect letters (e.g. bleeding) leads us to the conclusion that participants were confused by their background knowledge.

Regarding verb errors, utterances like *You should have a sore throat* and *I'm abdominal pain* show a wrong choice of the verbs. The modal verb *should* is employed when giving pieces of advice, whereas speakers who use the modal verb *must* are completely or almost certain about their deduction. On the contrary, the verb *to have* should have replaced the verb *to be* in the present tense. In line with this, participants' word choices can be explained by literal translation. This is the case of *Probably I will take a medical operation in one month* and *You are very exaggerated*, where students clearly refer to *surgery* and *drama queen*.

From time to time, pronoun errors can be observed. They tend to be omitted or replaced by a definite article, as in *I told you that you had to take medication* and *I think I'm going to change the shirt*. As for articles, students' performance is characterized by their

omission (e.g. *It is only matter of time that you will get well, very soon and It's my purpose to be mayor of this city*), strongly influenced by their society's native language.

As to capitalization, it can be explained that subjects or modules are not capitalized in Spanish (e.g. maths). In addition, one of the writers had an inadequate knowledge of English honorifics, given that this form of address must be capitalized (e.g. *sir*). With regard to prepositions, errors had to do with the selection of prepositions that follow those verbs in the Spanish language, as in *Yesterday I was diagnosed of cancer*. When it comes to nouns, a student failed to distinguish the plural form in *gentleman*, hence using the singular form. Finally, an adjective error was made when omitting the final -y (e.g. *I'm thirst*), which is used to create adjectives in the English language.

Taking all these aspects into account, a final survey allowed us to determine not only if the learning experience was rewarding or not, but also if OERs (i.e. *Bombay TV*) engaged participants in this new learning environment. Focusing on Q1: *I consider a waste of time learning with OERs. It slows down the learning process and should be optional*, 28 out of 43 disagree or totally disagree with this statement. Actually, over half of the participants think that OERs can be helpful in the learning process. Nonetheless, 15 subjects claimed that they somewhat agree or agree that online resources are not useful in academic settings. This is quite surprising considering that millennials have grown in a digital era. As to Q2: *The activities done using OERs are not attractive and dynamic*, 22 out of 43 students totally disagree or simply disagree with this item, whereas 16 out of 43 students may find some activities more appealing than others. The main reason has to do with our wider research, in which students have dealt with pronunciation and vocabulary activities. Astonishingly, 5 students highlighted that the activities done are not attractive and dynamic. Therefore, these results are related to students' answers in Q1.

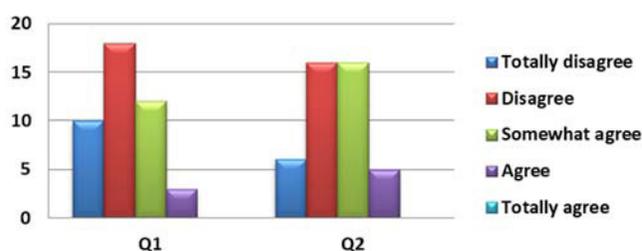


Figure 7. Student's Final Questionnaire (a): Total Results

As for Q3: *Using OERs to fulfil the activities has increased my motivation to communicate in English*, the answers of 32 participants were rather positive in contrast to the negative answers of 11 participants. Students' motivation can be perceived in the creation of original and funny scripts for the Bollywood videos available at *Bombay TV*. In addition, the fact that they have the opportunity to select their favourite clips, which are rather short, may encourage them to write on a daily basis as it also involves the use of new technologies. But, apart from the written competence, the speaking competence can be developed. Students can comment on the appropriateness of the video taking into account a number of elements, namely the characters, their movements, and the background, among others. When it comes to Q4: *I am able to manage my own language learning by*

using OERs, 13 students totally agree or simply agree that the implementation of these new technologies promote learners' autonomy. Most students (24) somewhat feel that they may need some guidance when dealing with tools that they have never used before. In fact, a range of elements can be found in *Bombay TV*, particularly the writing and sending emails options. On the contrary, it seems that 6 students would really need teachers' support and guidance since they consider that they cannot manage their own language learning. Regarding Q5: *The implementation of OERs is aimed at developing the competencies established in the course syllable*, 39 students agree or somewhat that they are provided with suitable tools and activities that allow them to develop their communicative competence in the target language. The fact that only 4 out of 43 participants do not agree with this statement may indicate that they do not know the requirements of the module.

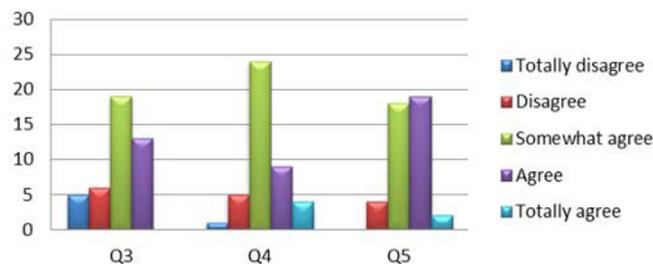


Figure 8. Student's Final Questionnaire (b): Total Results

Pedagogical implications

To this point, pedagogical implementations should be considered. According to Ellis (2012) one can differentiate a number of written corrective feedback strategies, namely direct feedback, indirect feedback, metalinguistic feedback, focused feedback, unfocused feedback, electronic feedback and reformulation.

Previous research on corrective feedback showed that students have a preference for direct feedback (Aridah, Atmowardoyo & Salija, 2017; Chandler, 2003). However, the number of errors seems to decrease when they are provided with indirect feedback. Apart from that, providing students with corrective feedback via email is meant to have a positive impact on students' writing skills (Yoke, Rajendran, Sain, Kamaludin, Nawi & Yusof, 2013; Li, 2000). Based on these studies, a model has been designed combining metalinguistic and online feedback.

When using OERs like *Bombay TV*, students can immediately send the teacher the link to the videos they have subtitled via email. The teacher will type the incorrect word or words with the type of error between brackets, thereby providing students with metalinguistic feedback. To do so, students will have access to a template with all the correction symbols that are necessary to identify the errors committed in their drafts easily.

Table 3. Correction symbols

Type of error	Writing correction symbols
Punctuation	p.
Spelling	sp.
Wrong verb choice	wvc
Wrong word choice	ww
Pronouns	pr
Fragment	fr
Word order	wo
Articles	art
Verb tense	v
Subject-verb agreement	s-v
Nouns	n
Prepositions	prep
Capitalization	cap
Adjectives	adj.
Not clear	?
Something missing	^

Once students revise their writing errors, a second draft should be sent to the teacher to check that corrective feedback helps learners to improve their communicative competence. Thus, the following criteria will be examined:

Table 4. Type of correction

Type of correction	Description
Correct change	The error is corrected by the student.
Incorrect change	A change is made but it is still incorrect.
No changes	No modifications are made.
Deleted piece of text	The student deletes the piece of text in which the errors are included rather than correcting them.
Substitution	The student substitutes the utterance in which the errors are found.

Conclusions

The online tool *Bombay TV* has been used to gather a number of dialogues written by university students taking their *English for Health Sciences* module. This site has been key to encourage students practice their writing ability in the target language.

The results have shown that in this type of dialogue-subtitling writing activity the most committed type of error is punctuation, followed by spelling and wrong verb choice. One may interpret that first year university students, and in this particular case, Medicine students have not been trained on the proper use of punctuation symbols in previous years at high school. Spanish and English codes have many differences in the way punctuation symbols are used, namely, use of commas and semi-colon or colon in combination with cohesive markers. Presumably more specific training on punctuation symbols should be needed for first year university students. First year Medicine students have also shown errors in spelling and wrong verb choice, more training on these aspects should then be included in the classroom syllabuses.

As to interlanguage errors, that is, errors committed by interferences from students' mother tongue, in this particular case and for the majority of students Spanish, these were recurrent in the students' dialogue writings, and some regular patterns of interlanguage interferences from Spanish into English were observed. Detecting and listing these interlanguage errors to generate classifications of identified wrong uses of literary translations or language correspondences in order to later explain them in class would definitely aid students in their FL learning process.

Further analysis with a larger group of students could shed light on the type of errors and the reason why they are produced. In fact, the use of *Bombay TV* and the high number of spelling errors encountered could be due to students' relaxed behaviour when using OERs on their own, the possibility of students identifying these OERs with less standardized means of learning and with less conformed norms as opposed to textbooks or paper writing is high.

As regards the use of *Bombay TV* and other computer technologies in the English for Health Sciences Module, OERs are meant to engage students in the learning process of the target language and so occurred with the activities proposed for the session. OERs allowed students to work autonomously and at their own path. As to the results from the final survey regarding the the use of OERs in the EFL classroom and more concretely the question: I consider a waste of time learning with OERs. It slows down the learning process and should be optional the grading given 4 in a scale from 1 to 5 in 23 occasions from a total of 43 students. This figure is quite elevated or at least higher than we expected. The inclusion and use of OERs in a session within the English for Health Sciences module was expected to be largely accepted by the students. We realized that the students used different devices other than the regular PC. Some used tablets, others laptops, and not all them used the same operative system or browser, which caused some problems when using some of the resources proposed. Still, a majority of the students surveyed seemed to like the inclusion of OERs in the EFL classroom since they allowed the students to work autonomously and at their own path.

All things considered, the findings obtained in this study based on error analysis can actually aid EFL teachers in the selection of their activities and syllabus contents for the EFL classroom and as a consequence improve students' FL writing process.

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