

Analysing Language Errors in Final Examination Papers in Universiti Teknologi MARA

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ABSTRACT

Studies on errors in examination papers have been scarce. Perhaps, this is due to the assumption that examination papers would have gone through a stringent series of editing and proofreading before they can be approved. However, the occurrence of language related errors such as lexical and syntactical errors in some of the final examination papers in Universiti Teknologi MARA has shown that such assumption is wide off the mark. The analysis of the present study shows that language errors were found extensively in the final examination papers examined. From the total of 916 papers from 22 faculties, 465 were found to contain language errors ranging from punctuation to sentence structure. The findings of this study have raised some legitimate concerns for the quality improvement of the final examination papers in UiTM. Some recommendations are put forward that require concerted efforts from the test setters themselves and the university's examination unit in ensuring that examination papers are free from language errors.

Keywords: examination papers, error analysis, language errors, quality improvement

Introduction

Studies on language errors have been replete, ranging from analysis on errors in students' written work to the errors in public documents such as brochures, articles and advertisements. Studies on errors in examination papers have been scarce. Perhaps, this is due to the assumption that examination papers would have gone through a stringent series of editing and proofreading process before they can be approved.

In Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), the preparation or setting of examination papers has to go through certain steps, procedures and measures. One of them is the vetting process which should include editing and proofreading (Bahagian Hal Ehwal Peperiksaan, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 2007). However, the occurrence of language related errors such as lexical and syntactical errors in some of the final examination papers has shown that such assumption is wide off the mark. The continual occurrence of the errors seems to suggest that the quality of the papers from the language aspect has been overlooked. The papers may have gone through a rigorous vetting process; however, such process may have focused only on the content of the questions. The process may not include proper language editing and proofreading.

This has motivated the present study to be carried out as the researchers feel that this problem should be highlighted so that stringent measures can be taken in order to ensure that the papers are free from errors. This is because the occurrence of errors can affect the credibility of the examination process itself, not to mention the university as a whole. In addition, the candidates' performance can be affected to a certain extent by these errors. They may interpret the questions differently, thus, giving inappropriate or wrong answers.

This paper aims to identify and analyse the language errors that occur in the final examination papers and also to find out whether the papers have been thoroughly edited and proofread which may have significant implications on the whole process of preparing the papers.

Error Analysis: An Overview

Errors refer to a systematic deviation from a selected norm or set of norms (Dulay et al., 1982). In this study, the selected norms are the standard English and educated Malaysian English. The terms 'mistake' and 'error' are often used interchangeably. However, there is a clear difference between the two. Norrish (1983, p.8 in Rosli and Edwin, 1989) states errors as 'a systematic deviation when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong'. He claims that second language learners commit errors because they have not learnt the correct forms. Mistakes, on the other hand, are 'inconsistent deviation' (Norrish, 1983, p.8 in Rosli & Edwin 1989). They occur when a learner has been taught a certain correct form but uses the form and its deviation inconsistently. Corder (1981) adds that mistakes are 'errors of performance' which are not systematic.



Error analysis is a type of linguistic analysis that focuses on the errors learners make. In the present study, learners refer to the test setters who are second language speakers of English. It consists of a comparison between the errors made in the target language (which is English) and the target language itself. The present study uses the acceptable rules of Standard English grammar as a framework in identifying and analyzing the errors. However, the existing rules of grammar are quite numerous and it is beyond the capabilities of the writers to group each error according to the specific rule it violates. The following table illustrates the errors that have been grouped into eight broad categories:

Table 1: Categories of Errors

CATEGORY OF ERRORS	EXAMPLES
<p>1. Spelling deals with misspelt English words</p>	<p><i>Determine the gear ratio, engine to back axle to provide maximum acceleration on 1 in 4 grades, when <u>raveling</u> at 24km/h.</i> (Q.3a – KJV377/322/APR2008)</p>
<p>2. Mechanics of Writing deals with errors in the mechanics of writing, involving correct punctuation, capitalisation, correct use of symbols, etc.</p>	<p><i>What type of circuit is used to eliminate these problems.</i> (Q.5– ELE531/KJE411/OCT2008)</p>
<p>3. Parts of Speech deals with errors in the use of any of the eight parts of speech : Nouns, Pronouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs, Conjunctions, Articles and Determiners and Prepositions</p>	<p><i>Internet advertising delivers millions of audience, and at the same time, <u>it's</u> advertising material production and airtime buy can run into millions of ringgit.</i> (Q.A29 - ADV255/547/ OCT2008)</p>
<p>4. Tenses deals with the wrong use of verb tense</p>	<p><i>This statement described which of the following countries?</i> (Q.6 – HTT247/OCT2008)</p>
<p>5. Subject-Verb Agreement deals with errors of concordance between subject and verb</p>	<p><i>Only one transaction of each type <u>need</u> to be tested.</i> (Q18c – AUD370/OCT2008)</p>
<p>6. Sentence Structure deals with incomplete, run-on sentences, errors parallelism, inconsistency in the use phrases or clauses and other poorly constructed sentences which lack the proper structure of English sentences</p>	<p><i>Selling overheads <u>are varies</u> with the number of volume.</i> (Q.B3 – ACC104/OCT2008)</p>
<p>7. Missing Word/s deals with the error of omission of an important word or words in a sentence that renders the sentence ungrammatical and confusing to the reader</p>	<p><i>George Frederic Handel (1865-1759) was born in ^ United <u>State</u> of America.</i> (Q.A9 – MME152/OCT2008)</p>
<p>8. Others deals with errors that do not fall under any of the above categories such as wrong word choice, redundancy and repetition of words</p>	<p><i>A floor main girder which is of a simply supported beam with <u>a length</u> of 3.25 meters <u>long</u> has to support a point load of 2.65 kN at mid-span.</i> (Q.5 – WTE409/OCT2008)</p>

Causes of Errors

James (1988) further states that there are four causes of errors: 1) interlingual errors – the kind of errors that are influenced by the native language which interferes with target language learning; 2) intralingual errors – the types of errors that are caused by the target language itself, or by the use of wrong strategies in learning the language; 3) communication strategies using errors; 4) induced errors – which are the result of being misled by the way in which the teachers give definitions, examples, explanations and arrange practice opportunities. As this study is only interested in analysing the types of errors that occur in the examination papers, it will only focus on the interlingual and intralingual causes of errors to explain the occurrence. The other causes will not be as relevant in explaining the errors committed.

Interlingual and Intralingual Errors

Interlingual errors are those that come from the differences between the first language (L1) and the second/foreign language (L2) (Richards, 1973 in Johnson, 2002). This type of errors is attributed to the negative language transfer from the L1 to L2. It is also called mother tongue interference. The errors occur when learners depend on their L1 in the process of helping them develop their own understanding in L2. The errors may include avoiding grammatical formatives by omitting articles or plural forms.

Intralingual errors, on the other hand, come from within the language itself (Richards, 1973 in Johnson, 2002). Richards proposed that the errors are created by the learners themselves, or what they infer, during the process of language acquisition. He identified four types of intralingual rules: 1) over-generalisation which includes ‘where the learner creates a deviant structure on the base of his experience of other structures in the target language’, 2) ignorance of rule restrictions, i.e ‘failure to observe the restrictions of existing structures’, 3) incomplete application of rules, i.e ‘the occurrence of structures whose deviancy represents the degree of development of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances’, and 4) false concepts hypothesized, i.e ‘faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language’ (in Johnson, 2002, p.67).

Based on the description of these two types of errors, it can be said that the local English variety, or Malaysian English (ME), especially the mesolect variety, is formed based on the interlingual and intralingual processes to conveniently suit the communicative needs of the community. Wong (1983) discusses the five main processes of simplification that give the linguistic features of ME: over-generalization, omission, reduction substitution and restructuring. The following table summarises these features:



Table 2: Structural Features of Malaysian English

FEATURES	EXAMPLES
1. Overgeneralisation	
Singular-plural distinction of nouns	<i>chalks, furnitures, staffs</i>
2. Omission	
a. copula as main verb or auxiliary	<i>He very selfish.</i>
b. pleonastic subject 'it/there' and the copula and its substitution with 'got'	<i>Got two men at the gate.</i>
c. auxiliary 'do' from Wh-questions	<i>When he say that to you?</i>
d. object pronouns	<i>I would appreciate if you reply soon.</i>
e. inflectional markers of present and past tense	<i>She do it all the time.</i>
3. Reduction	
a. the question tags resulting in the invariant tag, 'isn't it?'	<i>She used to live here, isn't it?</i>
b. tense and aspect with the use of 'already'	<i>My father already pass away.</i>
c. the modals to only two main ones	<i>Can lend me your bike or not?</i>
4. Substitution	
a. many of the modal auxiliaries	<i>I think he telling lies.</i>
b. adverbials for the tense inflections in verbs	<i>Just now I see him in the park.</i>
c. functional particles that indicate attitudes	<i>I don't like it what.</i>
d. multifunctional of particle 'lah'	<i>Yes, lah.</i>
5. Restructuring	
a. using the active voice for the passive	<i>People say may be he retire early.</i>
b. avoiding the use of modals through particles	<i>That George, aah?</i>
c. using 'why' clause to express censure	<i>Why he not yet come?</i>
d. using 'how' as a form	<i>How can John so busy?</i>
e. preposing the direct object for emphasis	<i>This kind we don't have.</i>
f. through pronoun copying (head plus pro-form)	<i>My mother, she want me to help around the house.</i>

(Source: Nair-Venugopal, 2000)

The Study

The aim of this study is to uncover and analyse the nature of language errors that appear in final exam papers. Its main objectives are to: 1) identify and analyse the common errors that occur in the final examination papers; 2) find out whether the examination papers have been thoroughly edited and proofread; and 3) recommend measures to rectify the situation (of the recurring errors in the examination papers).

Twenty per cent of the total number of examination papers were selected as samples for the study. Samples were taken from a population of all examination papers for both April and October examinations in 2008. All faculties were selected as the writers hoped that the data available would provide a comparative analysis of emerging errors among the various faculties. As a result of the sampling process, a total of 916 papers were selected from 22 faculties. The papers used were retrieved from the digital collection of examination papers taken from the UiTM Library website. The data collection process started in 2009 and the latest available data then were from the two examination sessions in 2008.

A content analysis was then carried out using an analytical framework as described in Table 1 as point of reference. The errors were tabulated, treated into frequency counts and highlighted. A description of the type of errors most frequently occurring, least frequently occurring and the papers which have the highest number of errors as well those with the least number of errors or those with no error at all were noted among the faculties.

Findings and Discussion

The following tables show the number and types of errors found in the samples of examination papers analysed.



Table 3: Summary of the Types of Errors Found in Examination Papers for All Faculties for the Jan -April 2008 Semester

FACULTY	Spelling	Mechanics of writing	Parts of Speech	Tenses	S-V-A	Sentence Structure	Missing words	Others	Total
Chemical Engineering	1	5	3	0	3	4	0	1	17
Civil Engineering	1	11	8	0	2	16	2	1	41
Mechanical Engineering	1	4	4	0	2	1	12	1	25
Electrical Engineering	0	14	21	0	8	8	12	3	66
Education	1	1	0	0	0	4	1	2	9
Music	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
Pharmacy	0	5	1	0	1	2	0	0	9
Office Management & Technology	3	12	9	3	10	9	8	2	56
Communication and Media Studies	8	19	9	0	4	15	5	6	66
Applied Sciences	2	9	48	11	16	42	19	7	154
Health Science	6	5	38	8	15	23	13	3	111
Business Management	3	5	29	7	11	22	4	5	86
Info Management	0	0	5	3	3	5	0	1	17
Accountancy	4	2	14	3	5	5	1	0	34
Hotel Tourism Management	4	8	35	9	10	19	7	7	99
Administrative & Policy Studies	0	0	0	0	0	4	7	4	15
Architecture, Planning & Surveying	3	1	4	0	1	4	0	0	13
Artistic & Creative Technology	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Art & Design	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Information Technology & Quantitative Science	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Law	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	6
Sports Science & Recreation	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	4
TOTAL	41	102	231	45	91	184	98	43	835

Table 4 : Summary of the Types of Errors Found in Examination Papers for All Faculties for the July – October 2008 Semester

FACULTY	Spelling	Mechanics of writing	Parts of Speech	Tenses	S-V-A	Sentence Structure	Missing words	Others	Total
Chemical Engineering	0	7	2	0	1	7	2	0	19
Civil Engineering	1	9	7	1	5	8	12	6	49
Mechanical Engineering	2	9	13	2	6	13	8	0	53
Electrical Engineering	0	8	15	1	3	13	3	0	43
Education	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	6
Music	1	3	1	1	0	1	1	0	8
Pharmacy	0	2	3	0	1	6	4	1	17
Office Management & Technology	2	5	20	2	10	15	7	3	64
Communication and Media Studies	5	8	15	3	10	16	5	7	69
Applied Sciences	4	11	47	18	26	39	19	7	171
Health Science	6	9	14	6	10	16	13	5	79
Business Management	3	3	26	3	6	16	3	4	64
Info Management	0	0	6	1	0	3	2	1	13
Accountancy	0	1	13	2	10	3	1	0	30
Hotel Tourism Management	1	5	67	27	20	40	14	10	184
Administrative & Policy Studies	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Architecture, Planning & Surveying	0	1	5	0	0	2	3	1	12
Artistic & Creative Technology	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	3
Art & Design	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Information Technology & Quantitative Science	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Law	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Sports Science & Recreation	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
TOTAL	25	89	254	69	109	203	99	48	896

As can be seen in the above tables, there is an extensive evidence of errors found in the examination papers from both the January-April 2008 and July for the July-October sessions. The January – April 2008 papers contain 835 errors while the July – October 2008 papers have 896 errors. It is also evident that almost all of the papers examined contain errors. In the papers for January – April 2008 session, the most common type of errors found is in the category of Parts of Speech with a total of 231 errors. The same goes for the July – October 2008 session with the number of Parts of Speech errors making up a total of 254 errors. The least common type of errors found in the papers is in the category of spelling with a total number of 41 errors and 25 errors for the January – April 2008 session and the July – October 2008 session, respectively.

Examples of Errors Found

Some of the examples of errors found under each category in the papers examined are shown below. A brief explanation is given for each of the errors highlighted.

Mechanics of Writing

Example	Explanation
<i>Assuming that one end is fully built, <u>Determine</u>.</i> (Q.4/ECS 518/KJA 414/ KJC 414/Jul – Oct 2008)	Wrong use of capitalization
<i>What is the term used to describe <u>Encik Malik</u> experience of making his own salad and free beverage refill at the restaurant?</i> (Q.C 1c/OSM504/Jan – Apr 2008)	Missing apostrophe 's'
<i>A multiple-concept chain stays with just one successful concept, theme, and niche. <u>While</u> a single-concept chain profit from several concepts</i> (Q.12/HTH 210/Jan – Apr 2008)	Wrong use of punctuation
<i>What is the general name for the device shown as <u>2</u>.</i> (Q.3a/CPE562/Jan - Apr 2008)	Wrong use of punctuation
<i>Identify and elaborate TWO (2) purposes of developmental counseling?</i> (Q.B2/ EDU430/Jul – Oct 2008)	Wrong use of punctuation

Spelling

Example	Explanation
<i>For example, he manages to influence the CEO at K Mart to alter a project by using his knowledge to declare that the idea of opening new branches at <u>east cost</u> is not worth it.</i> (Q.C 1 (Case study)/OSM 504/Jul – Oct 2008)	Wrong spelling of 'East Coast'
<i>In Gravure, the press speed is slower as <u>comparared</u> ^ offset and cylinder presses.</i> (Q.A 14/PUB 237/Jan – Apr 2008)	Wrong spelling of 'compared'
<i>If an advertiser had his or her distribution region in central region of Peninsula Malaysia, and wished to advertise in this region by placing 5 times a full colour half-page advertisement ROP in this newspaper, what would be the total cost he or she <u>as</u> to bear (inclusive of government tax)?</i> (Q.C 3.3a/ADV 255/547/Jul – Oct 2008)	Wrong spelling of 'has'
<i>The set of individuals or objects whose characteristics or behavior are of interest defines which of <u>he</u> following?</i> (Q.A 5/COM 361/Jul – Oct 2008)	Wrong spelling of 'the'
<i>A second story: As a result of AIDS research, scientists at MARA <u>Univerisity</u> Hospital have found what could be a treatment for multiple sclerosis.</i> (Q.C 1d/JRN 502/514/ 521/Jan – Apr 2008)	Wrong spelling of 'University'

Parts of Speech

Example	Explanation
Choose two (2) of the composers below and write a brief description of <u>his</u> life. (Q.D 1/MUE 403/Jan – Apr 2008)	Wrong noun-pronoun agreement
Sketch and label the <u>equipments</u> of Gas and Metal Arc Welding (GMAW) and Gas Tungsten Arc Welding (GTAW). (Q.5c/KJP 516/Jul – Oct 2008)	Wrong use of plural form of an uncountable noun
Design <u>an</u> voltmeter with three voltage ranges, 0-5V, 0-10V and 0-50V. (Q.2b/ESE122/Jul – Oct 2008)	Wrong use of article
What is the <u>different</u> between both systems? - (Q.A 1a/KEL 334/Jul - Oct 2008)	Use of adjective instead of noun form

Tenses

Example	Explanation
In monitoring the contractor's work performance and progress of a construction project, several type of meetings <u>were being held</u> . (Q.2a/ECM 547/Jul – Oct 2008)	Should be written in simple present tense
For the past few years, the performance of their network system <u>was</u> very good because the company always upgrade their IT resources. (Q.B 1(Case study)/OSM 551/Jan – Apr 2008)	Should be written in present perfect tense
In the root of dicotyledonous tree that <u>has undergo</u> secondary thickening, cork cambium is developed from.... (Q.6/BIO250/Jan – Apr 2008)	The verb 'undergo' should be in its past participle form
The term "French service" <u>referring</u> to the transferring of food from a serving dish to the plate in front of the guests in the dining room. (Q.2/HTH430/Jul – Oct 2008)	Should be written in simple present tense

Subject-Verb Agreement

Example	Explanation
What products would be formed if the reaction mixture <u>were</u> heated? (Q.5/CMT556/Jul – Oct 2008)	Singular verb should be used
Give one factor that <u>limit</u> the application of the diagram to real situations. (Q.2iv/CHM673/ Jul – Oct 2008)	Singular verb should be used
The following statements regarding the nervous system <u>is</u> INCORRECT: (Q.A2/PHR121/Jul – Oct 2008)	Plural verb should be used
Determine the load at which maximum efficiency <u>occur</u> and the value of maximum efficiency at 0.8 power factor lagging. (Q.2b v/EPO341/Jan – Apr 2008)	Singular verb should be used



Missing word/s

Example	Explanation
<i>One of the strengths of television ^ an advertising medium is that its rates are low.</i> (Q.A 58/ADV255/547/Jul – Oct 2008)	The word 'as' is missing
<i>Distinguish between Gram positive bacteria ^ Gram negative bacteria.</i> (Q.3/BMS411/Jul – Oct 2008)	The conjunction 'and' is missing
A state of stress at a point in a body relative to the XYZ co-ordinate system ^ given by: (Q.2/KJM511/Jul – Oct 2008)	The verb 'is' is missing
<i>In Gravure, the press speed is slower as comparared ^ offset and cylinder presses.</i> (Q. A14/PUB237/Jan – Apr 2008)	The word 'to' is missing

Sentence Structure

Example	Explanation
<i>What form of sampling <u>she did use</u>?</i> (Q.A 24/COM 361/Jan – Apr 2008)	Does not follow correct question sentence structure
<i>All the following below is not an advantage of sugar alcohol except</i> <u> </u> (Q.15/HTC165/Jul – Oct 2008)	Redundancy
<i>Quality printing does not <u>requires</u> frequent examination of sheets.</i> (Q.A12/PUB237/Jan – Apr 2008)	Does not follow the 'does + [not] + base form' structure
<i>Sewed books must be given a heavy, rapid squeeze to eject air, compress the paper, stitching, and fold, and generally produce a compact unit.</i> (Q.A 36/PUB237/Jan – Apr 2008)	Awkward sentence structure

Others

Example	Explanation
<p><i>Due to sufficient budget, this advertiser then changes the plan to just sponsorship of a standard half-hour program on Radio 1 from 7.00pm to 7.30pm on Sunday (exclusive of 5% government tax)?</i> (Q.C 4/ADV255/547/Jan – Apr 2008)</p>	No question given
<p><i>Malaysian foreign policy includes establishing diplomatic relations with all countries <u>irregardless</u> of their ideology.</i> (Q.A 8/ LIB403/Jan – Apr 2008)</p>	Wrong word used
<p><i>In paper making, paper has to go through a calendar, where it is pressed between a series of <u>steal</u> roller to give it the desired degree of roughness.</i> (Q.A 20/ PUB237/Jan - Apr 2008)</p>	Wrong word used
<p><i>Lymph composed all the <u>above</u> EXCEPT</i> A. Lymphocytes B. Protein C. Hormones D. Granulocytes (Q.A 21/PHR121/Jul – Oct 2008)</p>	Wrong word used
<p><i>Sharif sees <u>Amir</u> in the quad and says, Hey <u>Amir</u>. Where were you? I thought we were going to meet at McDonalds for lunch. <u>Amir</u> responds, Hey, man. I was there. Where were you? Sharif says, I was there at noon, like we agreed, and waited 30 minutes for you to show up. <u>Sven</u> says, I was there at noon and didn't see you</i> (Q.A 8/COM155/567/Jul – Oct 2008)</p>	Inconsistent use of proper noun (name)

Based on the analysis of the findings for each faculty presented here, it can be concluded that the overall number of errors found in the samples scrutinized is quite high. The types of errors that were found in the samples cut across the board as there was no clear pattern on the most common type of errors. However, in many faculties the most frequently occurring error types seem to be from the Parts of Speech, Sentence Structure, Tenses and Subject- Verb Agreement categories. The faculties that have the lowest number of errors seem to be the ones whose questions do not use a lot of words or sentences such as the Faculty of Artistic and Creative Design, Faculty of Information Technology and Quantitative Science (whose papers deal with a lot of numbers), and the Faculty of Art and Design. Thus, it can be said that in general, the test writers' overall grasp of language rules, whether rules relating to grammar or mechanics, is still quite poor. This can be seen from the recurring errors in the same papers and in some cases in the same questions. This is most apparent in lengthy questions such as those involving case studies. Examples of recurring errors in the same question and in the same paper are shown below.

Question 5

- a) How does buying club works?
 b) How does purchase order draft system works?

(Q.5/HTC540/Jul – Oct 2008)

Question 2

Differentiate between any five (5) of the followings:

Question 3

Give reasons for any five (5) of the followings:

Question 4

Explain briefly any five (5) of the followings:

(WTE159/Jan – Apr 2008)

In general, the kinds of errors that have been uncovered can be divided into two categories based on what the researchers think caused them to occur in the first place. The first would be errors that stem from lack of knowledge on the rules of the English language, in other words, lack of proficiency in English, and the other is probably due to mistyping. It is felt that many of the errors in spelling fall within the second category since the misspelled words are often common everyday words such as the word 'dry' which was misspelled as 'dray', and 'during' was misspelled as 'uring'. However, for the other types of errors, the specific reason or cause of these errors (whether typing or lack of proficiency), cannot be fully determined and can only be speculated on. This is due to the limitations of this study whereby the individuals who constructed the questions could not be asked about how these errors arose in the first place. In fact, some of these questions were probably taken from collections in the existing test banks of the respective faculties so much so that it would be impossible to trace the original test setters. Furthermore, many questions were solicited from various branch campuses and not just from the main campus.

However, upon closer examination of the errors, it can be said that many of these errors stem from lack of proficiency of the test-setters. Many of those who were asked to write the questions in English were probably not well versed in the English language interrogative forms or the command or instructional sentence forms. Thus, they commit a lot of errors that relate to the wrong question structure. They also seem to be lacking in the basic knowledge of English grammar and there are lots of basic errors found in the papers scrutinised that are indicative of this.

Thus, it can be concluded that the errors found have shown a serious discrepancy in the skills of the test writers in writing good examination questions. While there can be no denying that the test setters are very knowledgeable and proficient in their content areas, much should be done to increase their proficiency and raise their skill level in the area of writing questions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The significance of the study lies in its importance for the continuous improvement of the current practice in the university's system. Based on the analysis of the data, it is fair to say that the examination papers in UiTM contain numerous language errors. This implies that care had not been taken in ensuring the quality of the papers in terms of language accuracy. Obviously, the papers had not gone through proper and rigorous editing and proofreading processes.

The findings of this study have raised some legitimate concerns for the quality improvement of the final examination papers in UiTM. First, the language editing and proofreading processes must be made mandatory in the standard procedures of preparing the final examination preparation. One of the ways to do this, may be by appointing English language lecturers to help them with the process of editing and proofreading. The examination unit, thus, should only accept the papers that have been edited and proofread, and endorsed by the English language lecturers.

However, to ensure that the burden will not be on the English language lecturers, the test writers themselves should improve their English language competence. Otherwise, there might be a possibility that the test writers will take it for granted that all the papers will be proofread by someone else, and thus, may not take great care in ensuring that their papers are free from language errors.

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