

THE MOST COMMON COMMA ERRORS MADE BY THE EFL LEARNERS AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL: A SURVEY

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ABSTRACT

The importance of correct use of comma in writing is vast. A correct use of comma not only ensures the readability of writing but also confirms the clarity of meaning and the effectiveness of writing. Unfortunately, many EFL learners fail to use it correctly in their writing that prevents them from developing their writing skills and eventually negatively affect their overall language learning process. The goal of the present study was to find out the most common comma errors made by the EFL learners at undergraduate level. By using a questionnaire, the study conducted a survey among 298 undergraduate students at Bangladesh Agricultural University and found that the use of comma with certain expressions like e.g., i.e., etc.; in address and date; after introductory phrase; with non-defining subordinate clause; with interrupters like however, after all, in fact, etc.; with parenthetical elements; between independent clauses when joined by connectors like and, or, but, etc.; with appositive; in quotation; with the list of phrases/clauses; etc. are the most frequent comma errors made by the learners. The study basically attempted to make the learners aware of their comma errors, so that, they can minimize the errors in their writing, and can make their writing more meaningful, clear, and cohesive.

KEYWORDS: Comma Mistakes, Comma Rules, EFL Learners & Writing Skills