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Selected Common Errors Committed by Third Year University English Students

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ABSTRACT This paper examines certain negative trends identified in language usage by English Second Language (ESL or L2) third year university students. It is therefore, intended to identify these errors, pinpoint their causes, classify and analyse them. In this paper, the researchers used quantitative research design. An extract with commonly-made errors was administered to twenty third year English L2 students in order to evaluate their competence in the target language. The extract contained errors caused by carelessness, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incorrect application of rules, false concepts hypothesized and fossilization. The findings revealed that the majority of the students committed few errors in aspects relating to overgeneralization, fossilization and carelessness errors. However, the majority committed many errors with regard to ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules and false concepts hypothesized. It is recommended that lecturers devote more time to assisting students in eradicating the tendencies which lead to the commission of these errors.