ACCURACY AND MISTAKES IN MILITARY ENGLISH WRITING

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Abstract

Teaching writing and especially Writing for Specific Purposes in a second language is a challenging task for a teacher. Among the four skills in a foreign language, the writing skill is the most difficult one to learn since the writer has to pay attention to many things like, style, grammatical structure, format and the lexical resource. The methodology of this research is based on the gathering and the study of the written pieces/tasks of the students. The current research is conducted in order to find out and specify the problematic areas in Military English Writing, how accurate the students are while writing, and in case of mistakes what kind of mistakes they are. The study has been carried out at the foreign languages centre of the Albanian Armed Forces academy and the objects of this study were the written pieces that the military personnel had to write during their English course attended at the centre. According to the analyses of the written tasks of the students it was discovered that the most common mistakes made by the military students included mistakes in the lexical resource, sentence structure, subject verb agreement, other grammatical areas as well as conceptual mistakes. Since the military writing is based on a specific language, the mistakes in the lexical resource were closely related to the terminology and the jargon used within this environment. While, related to the sentence structure the most common mistakes encountered were those in the compound and complex sentences where the subject-verb agreement was one of the most dominating mistakes. In relation with the other grammatical areas, it was observed that the errors made were in the wrong use of the prepositions, articles, possessive pronouns and adjectives, the wrong verb tense, and the wrong relative pronoun or conjunction in some cases. It was observed that the conceptual mistakes occur mostly because the military students base their writing in the models or formats of their first language.

Keywords: Military Writing, accuracy, mistakes, sentence structure, punctuation, lexical resource