

Mother Tongue Interference

A study of Interlingual Errors in The Written Performance of the EFL Preparatory Year Female Students At Al-Baha University in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract: Language teachers have long recognized the phenomenon of native language influence on the learning of a second language. The present study attempted to investigate the effect of mother tongue interference in English writing essays of one hundred and twenty (120) English Foreign learners (EFL) Preparatory year. The study identified and categorized morphological errors according to surface structure taxonomy. The study then presented the influence of mother tongue interference (MTI) in the writing. The researcher used a comparative linguistics taxonomy model to identify the source of errors and both taxonomie s by Dulay, Burt, & Krashen (1982). The questionnaire in this study was used to collect data support the results of the study, as well as to identify the weak points in participants writing skills. The findings revealed a variety of (lexical and grammatical) errors. The majority of errors were found to be attributed to free morpheme rather than bound morpheme. Omission errors were more frequent than other types of errors. Furthermore, the analyses of results showed statically significant effect between (MTI) and students' interlingual errors. The study results include recommendations for the improvement of student's performance in writing task/Based on results of study, some recommendations were included for improvement student's performance writing skill.

Key Words: (L1): Arabic Language (first language) - (L2): English Language (foreign language) - (IL): Interlanguage - (MTI): Mother tongue Interference - (EA): Error Analysis , (SLA): Second Language Acquisition.

Introduction

In the field of second language acquisition, researchers have been interested in examining the performance of learners in the process of second language acquisition. Thus, writing is considered as a proper input, which is an intricate and complex task: "it is the most difficult language skill to acquire" Allen & Corder (1947). Writing is a complex process even in the first language and undoubtedly; it is more complicated to write in a foreign language.

As it is said "to err is human," it would seem that making errors is a normal learning process. One cannot learn without making errors. In this sense, making errors is seen as an integral part of learning, Dulay, Burt-& Krashen (1982); Gorbet, (1979). Consequently, Second language researchers and the structuralist tradition prior to the 1960s emphasized that second language errors are a problematic phenomenon, James

(1977); Dulay et al. (1982); Taylor (1975). Committing errors provide researchers and linguists different facts about several issues taking place in the language acquisition process such as the fact that learners are not passive participants in the learning process, language is rule governed, and learners employ different strategies in language acquisition (LA) among other important aspects.

Learners commit errors due to many reasons. According to Brown (1994), some errors are a result of interlingual interference such as interference of first language (L1). As beginning learners have not learned much about the second language (L2) yet they assume that “it operates like the native language,” Brown (1994). Therefore, ESL / EFL writing may contain many errors. Some of these errors are systematic, grammatical, and lexical or discourse aspects. However, many teachers neglect the problem of learners' native language interference in written English. Therefore, it is important to consider (L1) interference as a major factor in (ESL/EFL) writing errors.

Statement of the Problem

Learning to write appropriately in English is not a simple task particularly to non-native learners. English foreign language learners spend a lot of time and effort to acquire language that includes writing in a foreign or second language. In their attempt to master the writing skill, learners inevitably make errors. One of the major difficulties with writing in English is in the linguistic structure of the language, which has been found to be a major cause of writing errors. (Phillips, Perry, Fakhri, Obenauf, Patricia, William, Scott (2001).

The researcher who is also a teacher diagnosed and analyzed learners' writing and found several misuses of vocabulary and grammatical structures of the target language. For instance, subject omission, direct translation, failure to use simple past tense, and use of pronouns represent some of the difficulties learners' experienced. For example, Arabic Language interference with the learners' foreign language output in writing, reducing their writing effectiveness. Therefore, the researcher intends to conduct this research to show the influence of (MTI) through students' writings and then classify the learners' errors production.

Aims of the Study

The objective of this study is to investigate, analyze and categorize lexical and grammatical errors (in the writing of first-year female learners in basic English course in preparatory year at Al-Baha University). The study aims to analyze different types of morphological errors in order to reveal interlingual errors caused by (L1) interference in learners' (L2) writing. The researcher who is also a teacher diagnosed and analyzed learners' writing and found several misuses of vocabulary and grammatical structures of the target language. For instance, subject omission, direct translation, failure to use simple past tense, and use of pronouns represent some of the difficulties learners' experienced. For example, first language interference with the

learners' foreign language output in writing, reducing their writing effectiveness. Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct this research to show the influence of Mother Tongue Interference in learning English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia and reveal the interlingual errors in learners' writing.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would serve as a database for the general language departments, specifically the English Language departments to illustrate writing difficulties caused by first language interference in (L2) writing in order to provide possible solutions. It would be useful for English Forging Language teachers to consider the issues of first language interference in learners' writing and enable more effective methods of dealing with errors.

Research Questions

The study attempted to find answers to the following questions:

- What type of morphological errors do first year female students learning English as a foreign language at Al-Baha University commit?
- Which errors are ascribed more to developmental or interlingual sources?
- What is the most effective factor that influences students' writing from their perspectives?

Literature Reviews

Overview of Errors

Language learning like any kind of human learning, involves committing errors. In the past, language teachers considered errors committed by their learners as something undesirable, which they diligently sought to prevent from occurring. However, during the past years, researchers in the field of Applied Linguistics viewed errors as evidence for the creative process of language learning in which learners employed hypothesis testing and various strategies in learning a second language. Corder (1967) ascertains that errors:

Are significant in three different ways. First, to the teacher, in that they tell him/her, if he/she undertakes a systematic analysis and how far towards the goal the learner has progressed. Second, they provided the researcher with evidence of how language is learned or acquired, and what strategies the learner employed in discovery of language. Thirdly, errors are indisputable to the learner because the making of errors was regarded as a device learner use in order to learn. (P:167)

Thus, Corder tried to justify that errors are significant to teachers, researchers and learners themselves.

Error Analysis (EA)

Richards (1974) defined the field of errors as dealing with the differences between the way people learned to speak a language and the way adult native speakers use language. In order to further understand these errors, we need to distinguish between mistakes and errors. Ellis (1997) raised the distinction between errors and mistakes and made an important distinction between the two. He stated that errors reflected gaps in the learner's knowledge; they occurred because learners do not know what is correct. Mistakes reflected occasional lapses in performance; they occurred because in a particular instance, the learner was unable to perform what he/she knows.

This area of error analysis has been a growing research interest conducted with learners in order to examine errors found in student writing. Richards (1974) proposed three ways of classifying errors; namely, interference errors, intralingual errors and developmental errors.

The interference (interlingual) errors are those caused by the influence of the learner's mother tongue (L1) on production of the target language in areas where the languages clearly differ (Robinson & Schachter (1983)). In addition, interlingual errors are "similar in structure to a semantically equivalent phrase or sentence in the learner's native language" (Dulay et al. (1982:171)), and that the errors resulted from mother tongue "interference" or "transfer". Therefore, the errors reflected native language structure.

The second classification, by Richards & Sampson (1974), showed that intralingual errors reflected errors contributed by the target language itself, autonomous as the NL. Richards and Sampson asserted that intralingual errors "reflected the learner's competence at a particular stage and illustrated some of the general features of language acquisition instead of the incapacity of the learner to separate". The study further indicated that intralingual errors resulted from overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, ignorance of rule restrictions and developmental errors. The consequential errors of the gained language produced by second language learners, specifically referred to overgeneralization and simplification, that arose in a similar way in first language learning. Littlewood (2002).

Finally, the developmental errors reflected the strategies learners used to acquire language. These errors showed that learners, sometimes completely independent of the native language, made false hypotheses about the target language based on limited knowledge. Dulay & Burt (1974) found that a large number of errors were developmental errors.

James (1998) proposed four sources of errors as 'interlingual, intralingual errors, communication strategy-based and induced errors.

The studies and taxonomies, discussed above, are valuable and give much insight into how learners learn a second language, as well as factors affecting that process. Moreover, the studies provided a greater understanding of errors that L2 learners made in the process of second language learning.

This study follows the classification of error taxonomies for classification of morphology errors; surface structure, taxonomy, and comparative taxonomy. (Dulay et al. (1982).

Theoretical Issues Related to Errors

Interlanguage

The term “interlanguage” is defined as the linguistic system that learners produced in the process of learning another language. Selinker (1972) pointed out that there must be a separate linguistic system governing the language performance of the learner in process of learning the target language. This linguistic system is called “interlanguage”. Corder (1978) suggested that learners' language is systematic and rule-governed. It is the mixed or the intermediate system showing systematic features of both the first language and the target language and that it was difficult to examine interlanguage competence directly. However, the direct examination of interlanguage performance data can be demonstrated directly through writing sentences, grammatical form and spontaneous speech. Lakshmanan & Selinker (2001).

Crystal (2002) stated “Interlanguage reflects the learner's evolving system of rules, resulting from a variety of processes, including the influence of the first language (transfer), contrastive interference from the target language, and the overgeneralization of newly encountered rules.”

Transfer

From the 1940s to 1960s, scholars were particularly interested in language acquisition and showed deep interest in evaluating similarities and differences in native and target languages.

Thus, transfer is one of the most important elements that affected interlanguage forms. It has been used by educational psychologists to refer to the use of past knowledge or experience in new situations. For instance, Dulay *et al.* (1982) showed that learners may use past knowledge in the first language when they learned a second language. In second language acquisition, it is believed that the learners' first language significantly influences the second language acquisition Brown (2000); Dulay et al. (1982); Ellis (1997).

According to Ellis (1994), language transfer is merely the incorporation of the “features of L1 into the knowledge system of L2, that every learner tries to build.” That happens in one of the following two forms: **Positive transfer (facilitation)**: This occurs when there is a commonality between L1 and L2, leading to correctness in the acquisition process. **Negative transfer (interference)** This occurs when there is a disparity

between L1 and L2, leading to incorrectness. Researchers have experienced great difficulty defining transfer. Different scholars defined the concept differently. Corder (1981) defines language transfer as the influence of the mother tongue. He believed that learners might discover the target language by comparing the features of L1 and the target language and Corder viewed this as the influence of transfer.

The Impact of - L1 Interference

Contrastive Analysis (CA) is the primary approach used to study L1 interference. According to Richards & Schmid (2002), CA focuses on the comparison of linguistic systems of the two languages, in particular, the sound and grammar systems of L1 and L2 to find solutions to second language instruction problems. It emphasized the native language is the main factor affecting second language learners' errors.

In 1960, Error Analysis (EA), was offered as an alternative to contrastive analysis. It suggested that the learning process of the target language causes second language learners' errors. Dessoouky (1990) stated EA is "non-stop research" and that as long as people continued to learn the language (L1 & L2), learners would commit errors, as opposed to performance slips and mistakes Brown (2002). There would also be the need for EA for not only traditional purposes of error correction and remedial teaching, but also for what it can reveal about the process of learning and using language.

The current study would utilize the above approaches to analyze and describe EFL learners' writing errors.

Previous Studies in Error Analysis

Many studies on error analysis interference between L1 and L2 are common studies that deal exclusively with Arab EFL learners. In reality there are a number of studies done by Arab and Non-Arab researchers on errors committed by L2 learners.

Research carried out by Dulay and Burt (1974) showed that "less than 5% of errors observed reflected the children's first language, Spanish". However, interlingual errors committed by adult learners fall between 8% to 23%. Such errors by L2 learners are very much like young children learning a first language. This research shows the developmental nature of the errors, which is considered inevitable.

Dulay et al. (1982:138) supported this view that "L1 learners' errors, most of the errors L2 learners make indicated a gradual building an L2 rule system."

Iloimaki (2005) conducted a study Cross-linguistic Influence on Grammar with particular reference to Finnish-speaking and English-speaking learners of German. While the results of the present study give an insight into the influence different languages may have on the acquisition process of an additional language, these results cannot be fully trusted to represent an entire population of learners. The researcher used learners written output to analyze learner errors and identify reasons why different errors occurred. Iloimaki (2005)

concluded that learners do not necessarily make the same errors in writing and oral production, due to different processing conditions and learners with one native language do not necessarily make the same errors as learners with different native language. The study revealed that adult learners' errors resulted from cross-linguistic influence, that is, when one language influences another through borrowing, interference and language transfer.

Wang and Wen (2002) carried out a study examining the source of adjective errors committed by Chinese learners of English. They concluded that 62 % of the errors were caused by L2 and 28% of the errors were caused by L1 among others.

In a further study, Yin and Ung (2001) investigated errors made by ESL students in their written work. They focused on subjects with low language proficiency. They attempted to analyze, describe, and explain the cross-linguistic influence found in 50 written English essays of low proficiency. In order to determine how the native language or mother tongue (in their case, Bahasa Melayu) influenced the acquisition of English. The analysis revealed items that had been used incorrectly due to interference from L1 and low proficiency of the target language. The findings identified the following items: language switch, medium transfer, inappropriate use of tenses, omission of articles, omission or wrong usage of articles, adjective morphology errors, and prefabricated patterns and literal translation.

El-Sayed (1982) investigated the frequent syntactic errors in compositions written by Saudi students. The errors were categorized into verbs and verbal's, articles, pronouns, nouns, adjectives, and prepositions. Verbs and verbal's were found to be the major cause of errors. His findings also supported the claim that mother tongue interference was the prime cause of student errors.

Al- Khresheh (2011) conducted a study examining the extent to which the errors committed by Jordanian EFL learners in using the syntactic category "and" being equivalent to "WA" can be ascribed to Arabic. He concluded that his subjects committed "enormous number of errors with respect to the coordinating conjunction 'and' interlingual interference might be the main cause of committing this enormous number of these errors."

The researcher's current study is different from the previous studies as it is believed that no other research had been undertaken on the writing of female learners at Al-Baha university.

Methodology

Participants

The data of this study was collected only from selected students of the different majors in the preparatory year as follows: (Medical Science, Science, Arts and Humanities, Education, Business

Administration and Computer Science College). Participants chosen for this study were 120 female EFL learners, aged between 18-20. The researcher used a Cluster Random Sample to select the sample of the study. She conducted the study in (The Preparatory Year College) in Al-Baha University. The preparatory year is a transition for all students who have recently graduated from high schools, so the researcher divided the participants into different groups. She selected a cluster of 120 students through sample random sampling and made groups from the selected groups randomly selected students. As a result the researcher included all the students in the preparatory year as the population of the study. The researcher applied this study in the main branch of the preparatory year female college. The main objective of this study was to analyze the Morphological errors, then to reveal interlingual errors caused by first language (L1) interference in the learners' writing in foreign language (L2). All the participants had attended a high school in Saudi Arabia before enrolling there.

The validity of using essay writing

The data collection for this study was through essay writing. All the students were asked to write an essay describing themselves, their parents, their siblings and the city they live in. Before choosing this writing topic, the researcher had consulted some English teachers about which topic to choose to ensure that the participants would write the essay using mother language. This was done to check the validity of using essay writing for this type of research. To check for validity a group of experts were consulted about using essay writing and about the topics chosen for this study. They all ensured that essay writing was a valid tool to obtain results for this study.

Instruments of the Study

The current study employs a mixed method design which includes both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (written test performance) research methods.

For obtaining data, that explores students' attitudes toward English writing skills and identifying the most cause of errors in student's essays, Dually et al. (1982) Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST) and Comparative Taxonomy for classification of morphological errors were followed. Their taxonomy was as follows: The first one was used to classify errors into types. The focus is on the alternation that takes place in the surface structure of the form. Learners may omit morphemes, add unnecessary ones, mis-form, or mis-order them. The second taxonomy was useful in identifying the source of the error. Namely, (i) developmental and (ii) interlingual errors (iii) Ambiguous errors (iii) and Unique errors. The researcher conducted this study using the following instruments for data collection.

Using essay writing

The researcher used writing essays as the main instruments in this study. One hundred and twenty (120) essays were targeted with approximately 120 to 200 words each, written in classes in the preparatory year college. All of the students answered five questions in the form of descriptive essay writing. (See Appendix I section 2). Questions were translated to Arabic Language to avoid any ambiguity. The students were given 50 minutes to complete the writing task. The length of essay writing was not limited. The students were not allowed to consult a dictionary, course textbook or any grammar book during the task. The purpose of collecting the samples was to analyze and classify morphological errors to reveal the source of errors whether they were a result of mother tongue interference or not.

Procedures of the Study

The researcher contacted faculty members of the preparatory year female students to agree on a best time to collect the data samples without affecting the examination schedule. This was done after the researcher had taken formal permission to carry out the study from the Higher Studies Deanship, (See Appendix II, and Section 2.) The data samples were collected at different times within two weeks period. The researcher conducted this study in all the classrooms. Before collecting the data, the researcher gave detailed instructions to the students. The participants were assured that information would be confidential and the researcher would be the only one to have access to this information. The participants were given fifty minutes of class time to write an essay describing themselves, their parents, siblings and the city they live in. Each student was assigned a number, so that names would be kept confidential. During the test, students were asked not to use a dictionary, laptop, cell phone or any of their study materials. The questionnaire was distributed at the same time as the writing essay was collected.

Setting

The study was conducted among Arabic EFL participants enrolled in the various sections at Al - Baha University in Saudi Arabia. The participants were drawn from various specializations in the preparatory year in the academic year 2014-2015. At the time of data collection, science groups had finished two books from the Touchstone Series. Whereas, the Arts groups had finished one and half books. By the end of the year, students must have finished four books in the series. Student must achieve 60% or more in the final exam of English course to pass to the next level. The components of the English course cover the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. There was also another course of English for specific purposes.

Measurement

This study was designed to analyze the students' morphological structure (grammatical & lexical) errors and to reveal if there is a significant effect of mother tongue interference or otherwise. In order to accomplish this end, students participating in this study were asked to write an essay consisting of five points. This topic was chosen for three main reasons: (1) the topic was related to students' lives and experiences, and, therefore, appropriate for students at the beginning level, (2) it gave students the opportunity to reflect on their lives; thus, encouraged self-discovery, and (3) in order to accomplish this writing task, students were expected to exhibit their knowledge of English grammar and morphology including areas of difficulty such as omission and addition. Hence, grammatical features of English could be measured and the students' writing proficiency could be assessed.

The essay that students were asked to write was not part of the course requirements. The essay was to be used as a source of data for this study only. The students were given one hour to complete the writing task. The length of the essay was not limited. The students were not allowed to consult a dictionary, course textbooks or any grammar book during the task.

Data Scoring Procedure

After the data was collected, the researcher manually corrected each essay while counting the total number of sentences in each essay. The data was entered into the chart distribution schedule designed by a researcher with seven columns. (See Appendix III). The researcher manually classified morphological errors according to Dually et al. (1982) Surface Structure taxonomy (SST) and Comparative Taxonomy for classifying errors according to their sources. In addition, the researcher classified the types of morphological errors either in a bound or free morpheme. After counting all of the errors, the researcher ran the data through an Excel spreadsheet to find the percentage of errors in the sentences. Finally, the data was entered and analyzed in SPSS using different types of tests and tabulations.

In summary, the researcher used Surface Structure Taxonomy (SST) to answer the first question, which required taxonomies and analyzing morphological errors. That was followed by using (CLT) Comparative Linguistics Taxonomy for classifying errors according to their sources to answer the second question and to decide which errors ascribed more to developmental or interlingual. Third question seeks for the most affective factors that influence students' errors from students' perspectives.

Result

Participants committed several of errors in using free and bound morphemes. A free morpheme is that morpheme which can stand alone by itself, that is to say, without being joined to other morpheme(s);

whereas, the bound is the one, which cannot stand alone and needs to be attached to other morphemes and thus categorized as affixes. The free ones are lexical or grammatical ones and the second ones are of two types inflectional or derivational Yule, (1996). Table 1 below shows the common types of free and bound morpheme committed by learners.

Table 1. The common types of free and bound morpheme committed by learners.

Bound		Free	
Inflectional	Derivational	Grammatical	lexical
S plural	Morpheme ly	Prepositions	Nouns
Possessive 's	Morpheme er	Determiners	Verbs
3rd person singular s	Morpheme ion	Conjunctions	Adjective
Past tense morpheme ed	Morpheme al		Adverbs
Past plural morpheme en	Morpheme ssion		
Present participle ing	Morpheme en		
Comparative adjective morpheme er /est			

The researcher prefers using the clause what seems to be correct in the target language rather than the target language sentence for the reason that in many cases a learner's sentence is vague and can be corrected in different ways; thus, more than one target language is possible. In this study, the researcher depended heavily on the context to decide about what seems to be correct in the target language.

In order to answer the second research, question the researcher follows the Dulay et al. (1982) Comparative linguistic taxonomy (CLT) including four types of sources mainly: interlingual, developmental, ambiguous and unique. Figure below shows the frequency and percentage of the four sources of errors.

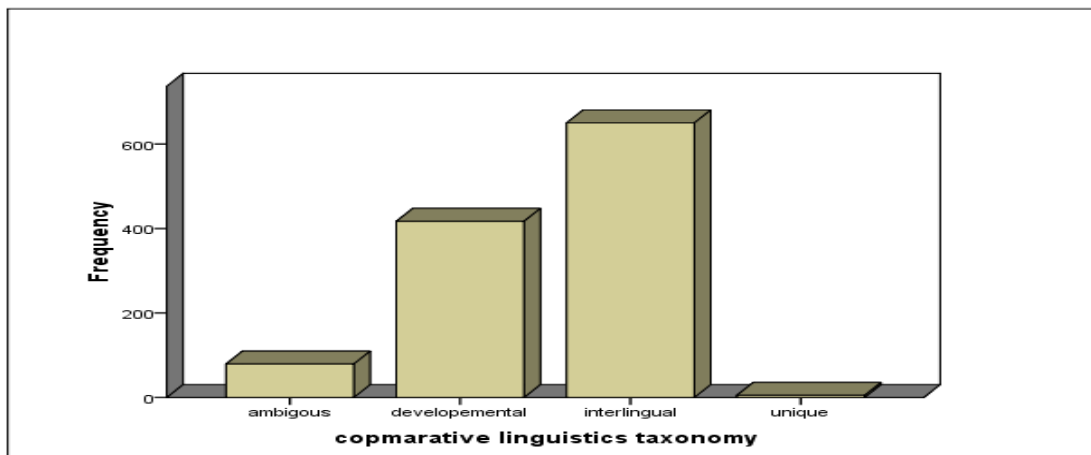


Figure 1: Scores of errors source according to CLT.

Different factors influence students' errors according to student's perspectives, which are considered more than mother tongue interference such as: incomprehensibility of grammar rules, lack of motivation, teaching methods, lack of vocabulary, lack of writing activities and homework, spelling, punctuations. It was clear that mother tongue interference mean score is the highest 2.72 and punctuation mean score is the lowest 1.81 percent.

Results

Summary of Results of the Research Questions

- What types of morphological errors are committed by first year female students learning English as a foreign language at Al -Baha university?

In summary, it was concluded that the present study through Surface Linguistics Taxonomy revealed four types of errors: omission, addition, misformation and disorders that were frequently found in students' essays. Errors occurred most frequently in omission of inflectional morpheme (-S plural, third person singular (-s), past tense morpheme (-ed), present participle morpheme -ing), misformation of grammatical (determiners, prepositions, and conjunctions) addition and disorder of lexical morpheme (nouns, pronouns, adjectives). The total number of errors (1439) omission is (905), addition (147), misformation (283) and Disorder (104).

- Which errors are ascribed more to developmental or interlingual sources?

According to comparative linguistic taxonomy four types were explored in this study: Developmental, interlingual, ambiguous and unique. As a result, the study revealed that most errors of L2 learners ascribed more to mother tongue interference (interlingual source) rather than developmental errors (intralingual source). The percentage of interlingual errors were more frequent than intralingual being (60.9%) : (39.1%)

- What is the most effecting factor that influences students' writing from students' perspectives?

Different factors influence students' errors according to students perspectives which are considered more than mother tongue interference such as: incomprehensibility of grammar rules, lack of motivation, teaching methods, lack of vocabulary, lack of writing activities and homework, spelling, punctuations. It was clear that mother tongue interference mean score is the highest 2.72 and punctuation mean score is the lowest 1.81 percent.

The findings above can be interpreted as follows:

Definitely, errors may be caused differently and complex with in which it can be overlapped and sometimes does not belong to a clear –cut category. Performance of 120 participants in this study ranged

from excellent to bad, however, groups of Science students were better than groups of Arts students. Lado (1957) proposed the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) to account for the pedagogical purposes in the process of learning. The hypothesis states that a feature in L2 is difficult to learn if it is different from or does not exist in the learners L1. In this case, the learner is not enforced to use a feature that exists in his /her L1.

The research subjects are Interlanguage learners. Their written English reflected some relevance to characteristics of Interlanguage patterns. Some English sentence patterns by the subjects that were not influenced by L1 interference did not really show their full creativity. That is to say, the subjects attempted to remember sentence patterns they had learnt in the classroom to rewrite in this study; they did not attempt to structure new language patterns they had not learnt. This was because they were afraid of errors which would result in their lower score. The findings showed that the errors caused by L1 interference were the use of article, subject verb agreement and copula 'be'. This study agrees with researchers' studies such as Brown (1994) who found that interlingual interference is most powerful at the early stage of language learning, when the priori linguistic knowledge is the only experience for learners to rely on.

As learners progress, additional intralingual interference appeared. Several error analysis studies: El-Sayed (1982), Kharma (1981), Politzer & Ramirez (1973) found that interlingual errors accounted for the majority of second language learners' errors. The intralingual factors involves difficulties faced by the learners because different linguistic features of L2 itself. Views of EA in the findings appeared in certain types of common errors in the subjects' English sentences. For instance, overgeneralization errors were found in the example such as: "I have three sister and one brother". An avoidance error happened in the sentence "I like to read books very much". This study disagrees with Al-Hourani (2008) and Al-Soulmai (2010) studies which revealed that intralingual transfer errors were more frequent than interlingual ones. Transfer of L1 structure to L2 performance is negative if their structures are inevitable.

However, positive transfer happens if the structure of L1 and L2 are similar. The data analyzed was discussed through some aspects of CA. First, literal translation of vocabulary use in the Saudi students' written English was due to their misunderstanding of semantic systems of Arabic and English lexis. The students tried to directly translate Arabic words into English without awareness of the different system of word component and usage.

In addition, the occurrence of word order of Arabic structure in the students' English sentences was because of insufficient knowledge of similarities and differences between Arabic and English grammatical structures. This is also related to some English grammar points mentioned that are not found in the Arabic Language. For example, the change of English verbs according to tenses and time as well as the use of articles are the outstanding elements that result in L1 syntactic interference. If the subjects had acquired comparative

and contrastive concepts of Arabic and English words and sentences before writing, they might not have ordered English words and sentences in relation to Arabic structures, as well as would have realized other grammatical points.

Pedagogical Implications for ESL\EFL teaching.

- This research provides evidence that there is a negative transfer from L1 to L2 and errors committed by EFL Arab learners. Thus, the findings in this study suggest some implications that are of significance for ESL\EFL teachers and syllabus as follows:
- ESL\EFL teachers need to realize that learners often transfer the habits of their mother tongue into the second language, which might result in interference errors.
- The influence of Arabic on English is confirmed in committing errors by the students participating in this study. Thus, the teacher should recognize the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 that would help teachers to identify areas of similarities that can facilitate the learning process and thus should be reinforced in the teaching and learning of the second language.
- The present study identified four types of morphological errors: omission, addition, misformation, and misorder that tend to be problematic for the students. Exercises on grammatical aspects and communicative drills of English in these errors would be necessary in an ESL\EFL class.
- ESL/EFL teachers should have enough knowledge about the target language they teach and prepare lesson plans that help teachers overcome the daunting task of delivering a difficult and complicated lesson.
- An English language teacher should be a good model of the target language. Teaching and learning should focus equally on all the four language skills. When teaching writing, therefore, we must look for ways to help students learn how to express themselves clearly and how to organize their ideas logically. We must show them how to make their writing vivid and interesting. It has to be tidy, correct, and well formed.
- Contrastive analysis (CA) could be introduced as part of the teaching and learning process. Teacher-student conferencing/feedback should be carried out more often.

Suggestions for further Research

- Based on this study and its limitations, the following are recommendations for the further research.
- In attempt to investigate the negative (interference) from L1 on learning L2, this study has limited its scope to morphological errors (lexical and grammatical). Other types of errors, such as syntactic and phonological errors may make more significant contributions to write.

- Participants from other countries could be included to show if the problem relies on the English learning materials, teaching methods, educational background or is a matter of negative and positive transfer from Arabic to the target language.
- Further research is required to set up detailed and systematic comparisons of Arabic and English (articles, verbs, prepositions,...etc) to reduce the shortcomings as much as possible in addition to translations for more investigation and to figure out more interference points.
- Dulay & Burt (1982) claimed that the more the second language learners progress in learning the target language, the less influence from Arabic language will materialize. Further study is required to compare errors committed by advanced students and beginners in order to investigate whether or not the considerable exposure to grammar learning plays a role in reducing the influence of Arabic language over English learning.
- Adaptation of a face to face interview is needed to identify on what grounds all grammatical (morphological errors) are made. That would give the research more validity and reliability.
- In this study the researcher used 'writing an essay' as a main tool to gain information which is considered an open way for students to write. Further research must be done on close multiple choices containing a specific type of grammar (phonology, orthography, prepositions, articles...) in order to gain more specific and more accurate information to analyze.

Conclusion

In this study, it can be seen that errors in Saudi female learners' writing in Al-Baha University are mainly influenced by both interlingual and developmental causes. Interlingual errors were the most frequent than developmental errors. Both sources were found in Bound morphemes; inflectional errors, and free morpheme; lexical and grammatical errors. Both aspects of errors should be realized by teachers of basic writing courses so that the negative transfer would be diminished but the positive transfer would appear. It is clearly seen that writing errors are assumed as being not only a result of the first language interference habits but the learning of L2. Such errors as collation error, direct translation, L1 syntactic/morphological interference, spelling and subject- verb agreement, verbs, tense, relative clause and word order. Such developmental errors as; false analogy, misanalysis, incomplete rule application, overgeneralization and hyper correction. However, these common difficulties in language learning can point out some aspect for language teachers. Writing errors can reflect strategies that language learners use and indicate the process of acquiring the target language. Consequently, these would provide language teachers with practical aspects in order to develop methodology as well as materials for remedial teaching.

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تدخل اللغة الأم: دراسة الأخطاء في الأداء الكتابي لدى طالبات اللغة الانجليزية

في السنة التحضيرية في جامعة الباحة

الملخص: إن ظاهرة تأثير اللغة الأم على تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية قد أدركها معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية منذ وقت طويل. الدراسة الحالية هي محاولة للبحث عن تأثير تداخل اللغة الأم في كتابة المقال في اللغة الإنجليزية وذلك بعينة مجتمع بلغت مائة وعشرين طالبةً بجامعة الباحة (السنة التحضيرية). وعرفت الدراسة وصنفت الأخطاء الصرفية وذلك وفقاً للتصنيف اللغوي البدائي، وكما وضحت الدراسة أن هناك تأثيراً للغة الأم في كتابات الطالبات، استخدمت الباحثة التصنيف اللغوي المقارن لمعرفة مصدر هذه الأخطاء وكلا التصنيفين تابعان للباحث دولاي وبيرت وكراشن عام 1982. تم استخدام الاستبيان في هذه الدراسة كدعم لنتائج البحث وعلاوةً على ذلك من أجل معرفة أبرز نقاط الضعف في مهارة الكتابة. أشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى مجموعة من الأخطاء اللغوية والنحوية والتي تم إيعاز معظمها إلى الأخطاء المتعلقة بالكلمات المستقلة (المنفردة) بدلاً من الكلمات أو أجزاء الكلمات المرتبطة بكلمات أخرى. أخطاء الحذف كانت الأكثر تكراراً بين الأخطاء كما تبين أن الأخطاء الناجمة عن تأثير اللغة الأم (العربية) كانت أكثر من الأخطاء الناتجة عن تأثير اللغة المستهدفة (الإنجليزية). اقترحت الدراسة توصيات لتحسين الأداء الكتابي للطالبات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللغة العربية (الأم)، اللغة الإنجليزية (الثانية)، اللغة المزدوجة (الثالثة)، تحليل الأخطاء، اكتساب اللغة الثانية .