

ANALYSIS OF ERRORS IN KURDISH AND PERSIAN

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ABSTRACT

This study suggests that some of the EFL learner's errors apparently are due to insufficient knowledge about L2 structure and background knowledge. The research aimed at investigating the learners' errors made by two groups under the investigation. The sample of the study composed of 30 Kurdish speaking and 30 Persian speaking groups majoring in English translation. They read Persian sentences and converted it into English. The result of the Chi-square test indicates that there is no statistical significantly difference between two groups under the investigation, but the only similarity between these groups is that they made omission error more than the other errors. The result of this study shows that interference from the learners' mother tongue was the main cause of errors.

Keywords: Contrastive Analysis 2. Error Analysis 3. Surface Strategy Classification of Errors (SSC)

INTRODUCTION

Error analysis emerged as a reaction to the view of second –language learning proposed by contrastive analysis theory second and foreign language learning, which saw language transfer as the central process involved in second and foreign language learning. This view of transfer was linked to behavioral view of learning. Error analysis, on the other hand tries to account for learner performance in terms of the cognitive processes learners make use of in recognizing the input they receive from the target language. A primary focus on error analysis is on the evidence that learners' errors provide to an understanding of the underlying processes of second –language acquisition.

In any branch of education, we can afford to neglect nothing which may, in some way or another, impinging on our approach to that particular branch. Every relevant factor should be thoroughly detected, defined and evaluated, or else our final objectives will not materialize.

The field of foreign language education is not an exception, any factor which is likely to impede or advance the process of teaching and learning should be given due consideration. To neglect a related element or to underestimate it means a flaw in our approach, for such negligence or underestimating draws our attention from the possible merits or demerits of such a factor and from the impact it may have on the overall system of our teaching.

Among the numerous factors influencing the art of foreign language teaching, the mother tongue of the learner is an important one (cf .Brown 1980). The influence of the learner's present linguistic knowledge in learning a foreign language has been overemphasized and empirically attested, therefore it should not be ignored or dealt whit superficially. Just as we should not overlook his interests, motivation, physical and mental abilities, we must not forget the linguistic habits the learner possesses while learning a new language (cf. Corder 1981, James 1987, oller.al. 1970).

In our country, the principle of what the learner already knows and the phenomenon of transferring skills and habits has a broader dimension because, for a good number of Iranians, English is their third rather than second language, Turkish speakers in the northwest, speakers of Arabic in the southwest, speakers of Guilaki, Baluchi, Kurdish, and other linguistic minorities scattered all over the country represent that group of Iranians (cf. S.M.Ziahosseiny 1996).

Peiman Rahmani and Morad Bagherzadeh Kasmani (2012) maintain that main causes of learner's errors are the results of interference from their mother tongue and unfamiliarity with the target language structure.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main purpose of the study was to figure out whether there is statistical significant difference between KSTs and PSTs in surface strategy classification of errors or NOT. The specific research questions dealt with in this study are:

1. What are type, frequency, and percentage of errors made by both groups under the investigation in Surface strategy classification?
2. What are statistical significant differences between Kurdish and Persian speaking students majoring in translation in Surface strategy classification of errors?

A peripheral, but important, question is whether the study of errors made by the learners will have any impact on the development of the learners view toward tackling their own errors by themselves or their peers?

METHOD

Subjects

The subjects of the study were 30 Persian and Kurdish speaking students in the Islamic Azad university of Sanandaj and Tonekabon branch. All subjects were almost 23-40 years old. The reason for selecting the two groups is that one can obtain better information about the developmental stage that the learners go through. A translation test was manipulated in this study. The subjects were exposed to some Persian sentences and asked to translate them into fluent English. The reliability of which has been confirmed by P.Rahmani & Morad, Kasmani, (2012). Finally, the subjects were given enough information about the rubric of the test.

Procedures and Measuring Instruments

Prior to the administration of the translation test, the research assistants were instructed to approach the subjects in a friendly manner and try to gain their cooperation and assistance. They were asked to explain the goals of the research to the subjects and to assure them that the personal information they provide in the first part of the translation test will not be disclosed. In order to ascertain this point, the subjects were not asked to write their names in the translation test. On the basis of the information elicited from the students' response their errors were classified based on the error analysis model presented by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) and the incomplete ones were discarded. Next, this study categorized and analyzed errors based on the Surface strategy classification (SSC). Then, the average type, frequency, and percentage of errors made by Iranian students majoring in translation of English as a foreign language were calculated. Finally, in order to find out whether the differences between the errors made by the both groups under the investigation are statistically significant or not, the Chi-square test was run by SPSS software.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The result of the analyses and research questions of this study are presented below.

1. The first research question concerned with the type, frequency, and percentage of errors made by both groups under the investigation in SSC.

Table 1. The total frequency, type, and percentage of surface strategy classification of errors made by KSTs

SSC				
<i>Types of errors</i>	<i>Omission</i>	<i>Addition</i>	<i>Misformation</i>	<i>Misordering</i>
<i>Frequency</i>	168	127	93	76
<i>%</i>	36.20%	27.37%	20.04%	20.04%
<i>SUM</i>	464			

It can be seen from the above table that omission is the highest frequency of errors consisting of 36.20%, followed by that of addition including 27.37%, misformation including 20.04% and misordering at 16.37%.

Table 2. The total frequency, type, and percentage of surface strategy classification of errors made by PSTs

SSC				
<i>Types of errors</i>	<i>Omission</i>	<i>Addition</i>	<i>Misformation</i>	<i>Misordering</i>
<i>Frequency</i>	235	186	123	48
<i>%</i>	39.69%	31.41%	20.77%	8.10%
<i>SUM</i>	592			

Table 2 displays surface strategy classification of errors in Persian speaking translation students. A total of four categories, 592 individual errors were identified. The highest frequency of errors is 39.69%, followed by that of addition 31.41%, misformation 20.04% and that of misordering at 8.10%. As the percentage of the different types of errors shows Persian – speaking translation students use Persian structures while performing the target language, which is due to the interference from their mother tongue.

Based on the obtained data in table 1 and 2 the frequency, type, and percentage of errors between Kurdish and Persian speaking translation students are different. It is worth mentioning that the only similarity between these groups is that they made omission error more than the other errors. This demonstrates the fact that these learners are not familiar with the application of preposition in the target language and mistakenly omit certain elements in the target language.

2. The second research question concerned with the statistical significant difference between two groups under the investigation in SSC.

Table 3. The comparison between total numbers of surface strategy classification of errors made by KSTSs and PSTSs

<i>SSC</i>	<i>SUM</i>	<i>%</i>
KTSs	464	43.93%
PSTSs	592	56.06%

Table 4. The total results of the table 4.1

<i>SSC</i>	<i>KSTSs and PSTSs</i>
Chi-square	0.157
Df	1
Sig.	0.05

According to the data in table 4 the researcher manipulate non-parametric analysis of the data in order to find out whether there is a statistically significant difference between two groups or not. So, the chi-square test was run. The obtained χ^2 was 0.157 in comparison with **0.05** level of significance in behavioral science it become obvious that there is **no** statistical significant difference concerning the total number of errors between Kurdish and Persian speaking translation students in surface strategy classification. ($p > 0.05$)

3. The third research question is to find out whether the study of errors made by the learners will have any impact on the development of the learners view toward tackling their own errors by themselves or their peers?

Familiarity with their errors helps learners to avoid recommitment of them. The role of the teachers should not be forgotten in this regard, they can also implicitly or explicitly teach them or provide enough feedback for them based on their level, age, interest, cultural differences, styles and strategies, and etc.

CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The major findings of this study are:

1. It can be seen from the above data the major problem of the both groups was unfamiliarity with the target language structure and lack of exposure to the target language.
2. Interference from their mother tongue was the major problem of the learners' errors
3. There is no statistical significant difference between two groups under the investigation, but that the only similarity between these groups is that they made omission error more than the other errors.
4. Familiarity with their errors helps learners to avoid recommitment of them. The role of the teachers should not be forgotten in this regard they can also directly or indirectly teach them or provide them enough feedback based on their level, age, Interest, cultural differences, and etc.

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APPENDIX

A Sample of the Persian Test for Persian and Kurdish Speaking Groups

1. صبح راه افتادیم و همینطور داریم میرویم.
2. ما از کسی نمی ترسیم.
3. با کارت دستش را برید.
4. ریووار با برادرش این خونه را ساخت.
5. ناگرین شیشه را شکست.
6. بوسیله طناب دو ماشین بهم وصل شده بود.
7. برنج را در کیسه ریختم.
8. دستمال را توی کیف بگذار.
9. یک قول دیگه مانده.