

Dedication

Be grateful to Me and to your parents; to Me is the [final] destination.

Holy Quran: Surat Luqman, verse (14)

To the most selfless persons who sacrificed their whole life

Just for making our present and future

To my parents

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyze the grammatical errors in writing performance in English language among first year (Preparatory) students at Jazan University in Saudi Arabia. The study adopted the Descriptive Analytic Method of research. The data of the study are collected from two tests on writing and grammar for the students in addition to a questionnaire for the English language teachers. The tests were administered to a total sample of 250 students . The teachers' questionnaire , on the other hand, aimed at assessing the ELT teachers' views on the common grammatical errors made by Saudi students in their writing. It was administered to a total sample of 100 ELT teachers at the Saudi universities. The above mentioned tools satisfied the criteria of validity and reliability.

As for the research problems, the study raised four questions about the common grammatical errors made by the students in their writing. Moreover, four hypotheses were formulated corresponding to these questions. In the light of the findings, the hypotheses were all confirmed except for the third one which was only partly confirmed.

The findings revealed low abilities of the students in understanding and using syntactical rules properly which was reflected in the enormous number of grammatical errors made the respondents in the tests. The findings also revealed that negative transfer from the mother tongue language (Arabic) is one of the major causes of syntactical errors made by the students in their written production.

In the light of the study findings it is recommended that more attention should be paid to grammatical errors particularly tenses errors using more effective ways stressing tenses in meaningful and interesting texts. It is also recommended that

students should be guided to look critically and analytically at their written texts and try to find out by themselves the grammatical errors and correct them

Finally, it was suggested further studies on errors made by learners before the tertiary level. It was also proposed that further research could be conducted to investigate the impact of colloquial Arabic on errors made by Arabic learners of English language in Saudi Arabia.

ABSTRACT

(Arabic Version)

مستخلص

الهدف من هذا البحث هو تحليل الاخطاء النحوية في مهارة الكتابة لدى طلاب السنة الاولى بكلية السنة التحضيرية – جامعة جازان بالمملكة العربية السعودية.

تبنت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي في تحليل بيانات الدراسة المتمثلة في اختبار الكتابة و اخر للنحو للطلاب بالإضافة لاستبانة لأساتذة اللغة الانجليزية في الجامعات السعودية . هدفت الاختبارات قياس نسبة و نوعية الاخطاء النحوية الشائعة للطلاب في مهارة الكتابة وقد تم اجراؤها على عينة بعدد 250 طالب. اما بالنسبة للاستبانة و التي اجريت على عينة بعدد 100 من اساتذة اللغة الانجليزية في الجامعات السعودية فقد هدفت لتقويم اراء هؤلاء الاساتذة في الاخطاء النحوية للطلاب السعوديين في مهارة الكتابة التعبيرية. وقد تم التأكد من مطابقة هذه الادوات لمعايير الصدق و الثبات.

الباحث في اطار سعيه للتحقق من مشكلة البحث حاول الاجابة عن اربعة اسئلة تتصل بالأخطاء النحوية الشائعة للطلاب في مهارة الكتابة .

انبثقت عن الاسئلة اربع فرضيات تم اثباتها جميعا في ضوء النتائج المتحصل عليها ما عدا الفرضية الثالثة و التي تم اثباتها جزئيا فقط .

اظهرت نتائج الدراسة ضعف مقدرات الطلاب في فهم القواعد النحوية وفي استخدامها في مهارة كتابة التعبير. وقد كشفت الدراسة عن ان اخطاء استخدام الافعال هي الاكثر تكرارا. كما اظهرت ان النقل السلبي من اللغة الام يعتبر من الاسباب الرئيسية للأخطاء النحوية للطلاب السعوديين في مهارة الكتابة التعبيرية.

بناء على هذه النتائج فقد اوصى الباحث بإعطاء المزيد من الاهتمام للأخطاء النحوية و بصفة خاصة الافعال و حروف الجر باعتبارها الاكثر شيوعا و تكرارا. كما اوصى الباحث بضرورة حث الطلاب على استخدام الاسلوب النقدي التحليلي الذي يساعدهم في كشف الاخطاء النحوية بأنفسهم في تعابيرهم الكتابية و تصحيحها. اخيرا اقترح الباحث اعطاء المزيد من الاهتمام لدراسة الاخطاء النحوية للطلاب في مرحلة ما قبل التعليم الجامعي , كما اقترح ايضا اجراء المزيد من البحوث للتحقق من اثر اللغة العامية العربية في الاخطاء النحوية للطلاب في مهارة كتابة التعبير في اللغة الإنجليزية.

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Definition of Terms and Acronyms

Contrastive Analysis

A linguistic analysis to analyze the structure of a target language and compare and contrast it with the first language to discover the similarities and differences between them. Lado (1957) .

Errors and Mistakes

According to Brown (1994: 205) *mistakes* refer to "a failure to utilize a known system correctly" whereas *errors* concern "a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner". Mistakes do not require special treatment assuming they are recognized. Corder (1967) states that a mistake can be self-corrected, but an error cannot. Errors are "systematic," i.e. likely to happen regularly and not recognized by the learner.

Error Analysis

The term in the context of this study refers to the study and analysis of the errors made by second language learners. Ellis (1985)

Interlanguage

It was introduced by Selinker (1972) and is conceptualized as " A system that has a structurally intermediate status between the native language and the target language". Brown (1994)

Interference

It refers to those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occurs in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language, i.e. as a result of languages in contact. Richards (1993)

Interlingual Interference

It refers to those errors which are due to the interference of the mother tongue language in the process of second language acquisition. Richards (1971).

Intralingual Interference

It refers to errors that are not caused by interference of the learners' mother tongue language but caused by the nature of the target language. Richards (1971)

Mother-tongue Interference

It refers to the processes that lead to incorporation of elements from the mother tongue into the target language. Kellerman (1986).

Fossilization

It refers to a mechanism which is assumed to exist in the latent psychological structure of the brain. Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules and subsystems which speakers of a particular native language will tend to keep in their interlanguage relative to a particular target language. Richards (1993)

Overgeneralization

It refers to when the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language. Ellis (1995).

Strong version of contrastive hypothesis

It is a form of contrastive hypothesis which claims a predictive power of the difficult area in the foreign language. The source of the error in the version is assumed. Richards (1993)

Weak version of contrastive hypothesis

It is a form of contrastive hypothesis that leads to an approach which makes fewer demands of contrastive theory than the strong version. The source of error in this version is important. Richards (1993)

Abbreviations

1. EA: Error Analysis
2. SLA: Second Language Acquisition
3. CA: Contrastive Analysis
4. TL: Target Language
5. L1: Learner's mother- tongue(first) language
6. L2: Second Language
7. FL: Foreign Language
8. IL: Interlanguage
9. LAD: language Acquisition Device