SOCIAL and MANAGEMENT RESEARCH JOURNAL

Research Management Institute

SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT RESEARCH JOURNAL

© UiTM Press, UiTM 2013

Social and Management Research Journal is jointly published by Research Management Institute (RMI) and UiTM Press, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 40450 Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

The views, opinions and technical recommendations expressed by the contributors and authors are entirely their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors, the publisher and the university.

SOCIAL and MANAGEMENT RESEARCH JOURNAL

Research Management Institute

An Analysis of Speech Errors of English as a Second Language Learners in UiTM Negeri Sembilan

Norfazlika Abd. Karim

Academy of Language Studies,
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kampus Kuala Pilah,
Beting 72000, Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia
Email: fazlika345@ns.uitm.edu.my

ABSTRACT

This study examined errors in the speech transcripts of 18 learners during their first semester Pre-Diploma in Science taking Pre-Diploma English I (BEL 021) course at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan. The objectives of the study were to identify the speech errors and the possible sources of such errors as some English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers seemed to make only few attempts in correcting errors in their evaluation of the learners' speaking tasks due to the fact that they might not be fully equipped with a practical guide to an examination of learners' spoken English errors. Data were obtained through the learners' individual oral presentation in which it was tape-recorded, transcribed and analysed for errors. An analysis of the speech errors suggested that the sources of errors may be attributable to two major transfers: interlingual and intralingual and most errors learners produce resulting from the normal development of the target language (intralingual errors).

Keywords: *Error Analysis, Speech Errors, Intralingual Errors, Interlingual Errors*

INTRODUCTION

Learners of non-native language undeniably find it difficult to avoid from making errors and in doing so, it does not indicate that language learners simply failed to effectively learn the rules of the target language (hereafter TL). Instead, making errors can be regarded as 'a device' that a learner uses in order to learn (Selinker, 1992 as cited in Ho, 2003). Moreover, an error has more positive roles as it helps to describe and explain the way in which learners learn a language rather than their progress towards conforming to a set of real or imagined standards of expression (Crystal, 1980 as cited in Khodabandeh, 2007). A lot of researches have been done to highlight the importance of learners' errors as an effective tool to improve grammatical accuracy (White *et al.*, 1991; Carroll & Swain, 1993; Trahey & White, 1993 as cited in Ho, 2003). Khodabandeh (2007) and Mohideen (1996) have claimed that error analysis is useful in second language learning as this will reveal to teachers, syllabus designers and textbook writers the problem areas, with a variety of techniques for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the errors made by the language learners.

This study focused on error analysis of the spoken English as one of the important aspects in the teaching and learning of English as a second language (hereafter ESL) as it seems as if the problem of learners' speech errors is compounded by the fact that ESL teachers pay little attention to correct such errors in their evaluation of the learners' speaking tasks. Mohideen (1996) has contended that error analysis should be the examination of errors that learners produced in not only the written medium but the spoken medium as well. The objective of the Pre-Diploma English I (BEL 021) course is to remedy learners' weaknesses in the use of English and to raise their proficiency level with emphasis on the four language skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. In line with the objective of this course, the purpose of this study is to analyse the speech errors produced by these particular learners of ESL in their individual oral presentation and it is hoped that the findings of this study is significant to ESL teachers in developing their skills to understand learners' speech errors and later, they are able to help the learners to avoid the production of such errors or at least to avoid the fossilization of these errors as errors need to be corrected rather than ignoring them with the hope that they will automatically fade away.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to analyse the speech errors committed by the ESL learners in their individual oral presentation. In particular, the study was conducted to address the following research questions:

1. What are the speech errors committed by the ESL learners in Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan in their individual oral presentation?
2. What are the possible sources of such speech errors?

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has certain limitations which need be taken into account in interpreting and generalising the results. The main limitations were as follow:

1. The study was done on a considerably small scale due to time constraints.
2. Only 18 out of 27 individual oral presentations of the first semester Pre-Diploma in Science students taking Pre-Diploma English I (BEL 021) course at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan were selected, transcribed and analysed for errors. The remaining individual oral presentations have not been selected, transcribed and analysed for errors as some of the words uttered by the subjects were unclear even though they have been reminded to speak clearly. As a result, the selection of the speech transcripts was mainly involved the female subjects and few male subjects (12 females and 6 males).
3. The researcher was not able to personally observe the learners' individual oral presentation as it was administered by the language instructor concerned during the normal class hour. Therefore, performance factors like nervousness or 'slips of the tongue' that could possibly affect the learners' accuracy and fluency were not being observed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Error Analysis of Learners' Errors

Error analysis in language teaching and learning refers to the study of the language forms which break the accepted rules made by someone learning a language, particularly a foreign language (Crystal, 1999 as cited in Jayasundara & Premarathna, 2011). Corder (1967) has highlighted the importance of looking into errors made by learners in the language learning process in three different aspects in which errors enable: i) the teachers to know what need to be taught ii) the researchers to know how learning proceeds and iii) the learners to test their hypothesis about the TL as errors become a means in relation to second language acquisition. Therefore, error analysis has been seen as an appropriate instrument to find out what are the possible causes and sources of learners' errors and also to find out ways to overcome such errors. As Corder (1974) then stated that error analysis is significant for the language learning process in the sense that it does not only provide an overview of a learner's linguistic development but it also gives an indication as to the learning process.

It is important for language practitioners to firstly differentiate what are errors and what are mistakes. This is because the two are practically very different. According to Brown (2007), *a mistake* is a temporary breakdown or imperfection in the speech production made by learners and it could be self-corrected as the learners are able to know that it is wrong. A mistake is a non-systematic grammatical deviation (Sematle, 2001). Whereas *an error*, according to Brown (1994) and Ellis (1997), is a systematic grammatical deviation from a native speaker adult grammar and it reflects a learner's actual level of competency in the TL. A learner may not be able to do self-correction even when an error was pointed out as he/she does not know that it is wrong. "An error is an imperfect production caused by a genuine lack of knowledge about the language," (Hubbard *et al.*, 1986, p. 327).

Speech Production Analysis

The main objectives of this study were to analyse the speech errors made by learners in their speech production and to find out why they happen and the sources of such errors. By doing so, we are able to come up with better solutions in helping learners to understand their speech errors and

the grammatical rules involved. Raymond (2000) attempted to understand the processes of speech production that accomplish grammatical encoding in order to find out when and why errors happen and defines grammatical encoding as the component of the human language production system that transforms a speakers' message into an ordered set of lexical items that are suitable for conveying the intended message and meet the semantic and syntactic constraints of the encoding language.

According to Raymond (2000), there are two stages of speech production. The first stage is the functional stage, where function relations are established between lexicalized concepts and the second stage is the positional stage, where the serial ordering of words is established. His research was focused on the former stage by first examining the subtypes of lexical errors made and interpreting the properties as constraints of the production system. Secondly, he has viewed the errors as involving structure other than words or their components: the functional relations. His research has proved that errors are made by learners while they are constructing the speech and these constructions are done in the cognitive domain.

Kim (2007), in her study of Korean, English and Korean-English speech errors has found that there was a universal speech production planning mechanism in the speakers' speech production. The data were collected through naturalistic methods: film-narration and word game. This mechanism, according to Kim, was more complex for bilingual than monolingual speakers due to the differences in the two languages known. She has also found that lexical errors were the most frequent in bilingual speech errors. These are the significant points that need to be taken into account as few of the subjects of this present study are also bilingual and English is their L2 while the majority, on the other hand, are monolingual.

Error Analysis Theoretical Frameworks

Contrastive analysis and developmental analysis are two major theoretical frameworks of error analysis that are relevant to this study. Contrastive analysis is claimed to be the most dominant form of data analysis since in second language learning. However, much emphasis is placed on the role of a learner's first language (hereafter L1) (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991 as cited in Sematle, 2001). According to Sematle (2001), this analysis involves the systematic comparison of the learner's L1 and TL in which it is useful to predict learning difficulty and to observe whether

5

or not a learner makes many, few or no errors in the areas of difference and similarity between the L1 and the TL. In order to identify points of similarities and differences between the two languages, *interlingual errors* were used as the category of errors that learners produced which could be traced to L1 interference.

Developmental analysis, on the other hand, received support from researchers as they have contended that second language (hereafter L2) learners produced similar errors regardless of their mother tongue, and that there were similarities between errors that L2 learners made and the errors made by L1 children learning their own language in which these errors are referred to as *intralingual errors* (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991 as cited in Sematle, 2001). In brief, the occurrence of intralingual errors is caused by the difficulties that learners face in their attempt to apply the rules of the TL which are truly complex in nature.

In this study, a synthesis of both major theoretical frameworks: contrastive analysis and developmental analysis, was used so that one framework may make up for the weaknesses of the other.

Sources of Errors

Once errors have been identified, they need to be classified in terms of the possible sources of errors. An error needs to be described in detail so that it can be categorized into a specific category by following the description. A lot of sources of errors have been introduced by some innovative theorists, however, to determine the sources of errors involved a great deal of speculation as the sources of some errors are ambiguous (Sematle, 2001; Khodabandeh, 2007). In this study, the sources of errors were attributable to two major transfers: interlingual and intralingual. The sources of errors have been determined by referring to what have been proposed by Brown (1994). This was further emphasized by Sematle (2001):

> *"Interlingual transfer is said to be a source of errors in the early stages of second language learning. Intralingual transfer serves as a source of errors when learners have acquired parts of a second language and generalize what they have acquired within the target language (pp.26–27)."*

For the purpose of this study, it is important to realize that errors were categorized according to both aforementioned major sources of errors as errors were conceived of as a result of interference between the mother tongue and the TL (interlingual errors) and the difficulties in the TL rules that induce them to commit errors (intralingual errors).

Error Classification Systems

There are quite a number of taxonomies that can be used to descriptively classify errors for instance, linguistic category, surface category, comparative analysis and communicative effect (Dulay *et al.*, 1982). However, according to Sematle (2001), linguistic category taxonomy is mostly used by many researchers as a reporting tool to classify the errors that they have collected in which these errors are classified according to either language component such as phonology (pronunciation), syntax and morphology (grammar) or the particular linguistic constituent the error affects.

In other words, this classification of errors based on linguistic category taxonomy helps to locate an error in the overall system of the TL by focussing on the linguistic item which is affected by the error (Dulay *et. al.*, 1982 as cited in James, 1998). Besides the linguistic category taxonomy, comparative taxonomy is commonly used for the descriptive classification of errors especially when it involved L2 errors and the errors made by L1 children learning their own language (Sematle, 2001). Comparative taxonomy deals with comparisons between the structure of L2 errors and certain other types of constructions.

For the purpose of this study, both taxonomies: linguistic category taxonomy and comparative taxonomy were used as they are useful for the description and classification of errors in accordance with the two proposed major transfers: interlingual and intralingual.

METHODOLOGY

Population/Sample

The population in this study consists of 27 learners of the first semester Pre-Diploma in Science taking Pre-Diploma English I (BEL 021) course at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan. Pre-Diploma English I (BEL 021) is the first part of a two-semester course designed to remedy learners'

weaknesses in the use of English and raise their proficiency level. It covers the major aspects of grammar, reading, writing, listening and speaking. Emphasis is placed on developing grammatical accuracy and improving communicative fluency.

Even though 27 individual oral presentations were video recorded in the presence of the language instructor concerned, only 18 individual oral presentations (involving 12 females and 6 males) were selected, transcribed and analysed for errors. The remaining individual oral presentations have not been selected, transcribed and analysed for errors as some of the words uttered by the subjects were unclear even though they have been reminded to speak clearly. The age of these learners was not known and was not a variable that was looked into in this study as it focused more on the speech errors made in an individual presentation. The target population of this study comprised learners who are in the categories of both monolingual and bilingual in which English is their L2.

Data Collection Procedures

The collection of data took place in a natural learning environment where the subjects were given an individual oral presentation task using language functions. The researcher designed a descriptive topic and provided a stimulus, entitled: "It is Not Healthy to Eat Fast Food." The researcher chose this form of task because it would easily elicit language to analyse and learners would have information to talk about as the topic could be assumed to be familiar to all learners since they are majoring in science. Therefore, they could express themselves in speaking and apply the knowledge that they have. The individual oral presentation was administered by their respective language instructor in which they were given 2 minutes for preparation of the task and 3 minutes for presentation. 27 individual oral presentations were tape-recorded and 18 were randomly selected, transcribed and analysed for errors.

All of the speech errors in the individual oral presentation were identified by the language instructor concerned. The transcriptions were subjected through rigorous error identification process and were classified by the researcher using the linguistic category taxonomy (Table 1) employed by Sematle (2001) in his descriptive-analytical cross-sectional study of errors in written English and the comparative taxonomy employed by KirkgÖz (2010) in her study of an analysis of written errors of Turkish adult learners

of English. However, the researcher of this present study has included and excluded some other sub-classes of errors which have and have not been employed by Sematle (2001) and KirkgÖz (2010). The sub-classes of errors were based on the errors made by the subjects of this present study due to the fact that this study deals with learners' speech errors and not the written errors of a descriptive composition.

Subsequently, the speech errors which were identified and classified were put into a table. After completing the table, both language instructor and researcher checked for the accuracy of the classification, therefore, the inter-reliability was high. Finally, the speech errors for each class were tabulated and were turned into percentages for the researcher to analyse. This is mainly the process of error analysis before errors can be corrected with a direct or indirect treatment (James, 1998).

Table 1: Coding System of Grammatical Errors

Grammatical Category	Classification of Errors
Verb	Omission of verb Omission of auxiliary verb Redundant used of verb Wrong choice of verb Tense Subject-verb-agreement
Article	Omission of article Redundant used of article Wrong choice of article
Preposition	Omission of preposition Redundant used of preposition Wrong choice of preposition
Noun	Singular for plural Plural for singular
Conjunction	Omission of conjunction Redundant used of conjunction Wrong choice of conjunction
Pronoun	Omission of pronoun Redundant used of pronoun Wrong choice of pronoun

As mentioned earlier, the linguistic category taxonomy has been employed as to organize the errors collected. This classification of errors deals with errors from the perspective of their effects on the listener. It could be either errors that affect the overall organization of a sentence or

errors that affect a single element of a sentence or both. This can be seen in Table 1 above.

The sub-classes of errors were arranged according to the various kinds of grammatical errors made by the subjects as can be seen in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Classification of Error Type

Sub-Classes	Description of Errors
Omission (verb, article, preposition, conjunction, noun and pronoun)	Auxiliary or main verb, article, preposition, conjunction, noun and pronoun were not used when they should have been used *(Is there something missing?)*
Redundant (verb, article, preposition, conjunction, noun and pronoun)	Auxiliary or main verb, article, preposition, conjunction, noun and pronoun were used when they should not have been used *(Is there an unnecessary insertion?)*
Wrong choice (verb, article, preposition, conjunction, noun and pronoun)	Wrong application of verb, article, preposition, conjunction, noun and pronoun *(Is there something which shouldn't go with another?)*
Tense	Wrong application of tense
Subject-verb-agreement	Errors in subject-verb-agreement

FINDINGS

This study examined the speech errors made by the subjects in an individual oral presentation and it is aimed to locate the possible sources of such speech errors. Table 3 presents the percentages of errors in the speech transcripts. A preliminary review of the data revealed that the most frequent error made by the subjects is in the use of verb with 37.9% and followed by error in the use of noun with 31.6%, while the least frequent error made by these subjects are in the use of conjunction and preposition in which both have the same percentage: 2.9%.

Table 3: Percentage of Errors in Speech Transcripts

No. of Speech Transcript	Grammatical Category	Frequency of Errors	Percentage (%)
18	Article	36	20.7
	Verb	66	37.9
	Noun	55	31.6
	Pronoun	7	4.0
	Conjunction	5	2.9
	Preposition	5	2.9
	TOTAL	174	100

In order to identify the source of such errors, these errors were classified into a more specific sub-classes (i.e. errors in the use of verb; tense, subject-verb-agreement and et cetera). However, the classification of errors was only based on the type of errors made by the subjects of this study even though there were a lot more sub-classes of errors apart from what is pointed out in this present study. The percentages of errors of these specific sub-classes are presented in Tables 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Table 4: Percentage of Errors in the Use of Article

Errors in the Use of Article	Frequency of Errors	Percentage (%)
Omission of article	28	77.8
Wrong choice of article	5	13.9
Redundant used of article	3	8.3
TOTAL	36	100

There were 3 sub-classes of errors in the use of article made by the subjects, namely: omission of article, wrong choice of article and redundant use of article. The results revealed that the most frequent errors in the use of article made by the subjects was omission of article with 77.8%, while the least frequent errors was redundant used of article with 8.3%.

Table 5: Percentage of Errors in the Use of Verb

Errors in the Use of Verb	Frequency of Errors	Percentage (%)
Tense	32	48.5
Subject-verb-agreement	14	21.2
Omission of verb	1	1.5
Omission of auxiliary verb	12	18.2
Wrong choice of verb	5	7.6
Redundant used of verb	2	3
TOTAL	**66**	**100**

There were 6 sub-classes of errors in the use of verb made by the subjects, namely: tense, subject-verb-agreement, omission of verb, omission of auxiliary verb, wrong choice of verb and redundant used of verb. The results revealed that the most frequent error in the use of verb made by the subjects was tense with 48.5%, while the least frequent error was omission of verb with 1.5%.

Table 6: Percentage of Errors in the Use of Noun

Errors in the Use of Noun	Frequency of Errors	Percentage (%)
Wrong choice of noun	54	98.2
Subject-verb-agreement	1	1.8
TOTAL	**55**	**100**

There were 2 sub-classes of errors in the use of noun made by the subjects, namely: wrong choice of noun and subject-verb-agreement. The results revealed that the most frequent error in the use of noun made by the subject was wrong choice of noun with 98.2%, while the least frequent error was subject-verb-agreement with 1.8%.

Table 7: Percentage of Errors in the Use of Pronoun

Errors in the Use of Pronoun	Frequency of Errors	Percentage (%)
Wrong choice of pronoun	4	57.1
Omission of pronoun	3	42.9
TOTAL	**7**	**100**

There were 2 sub-classes of errors in the use of pronoun made by the subjects, namely: wrong choice of pronoun and omission of pronoun. The results revealed that there was a small difference between the numbers of errors in the use of pronoun. There were 4 errors identified for the wrong choice of pronoun (57.1%) and 3 errors for the omission of pronoun (42.9%).

Table 8: Percentage of Errors in the Use of Conjunction

Errors in the Use of Conjunction	Frequency of Errors	Percentage (%)
Omission of conjunction	2	40
Wrong choice of conjunction	2	40
Redundant used of conjunction	1	20
TOTAL	**5**	**100**

There are 3 sub-classes of errors in the use of conjunction made by the subjects, namely: wrong choice of conjunction, redundant used of conjunction and omission of conjunction. The results revealed that the most frequent errors in the use of conjunction made by the subjects were wrong choice of conjunction and omission of conjunction in which both errors had the same percentage: 40%, while the least frequent error was redundant used of conjunction with 20%.

Table 9: Percentage of Errors in the Use of Preposition

Errors in the Use of Preposition	Frequency of Errors	Percentage (%)
Wrong choice of preposition	5	100

In this study, only 1 category of error in the use of preposition made by the subjects has been identified which was the wrong choice of preposition. The results revealed that there were 5 errors for that one particular sub-class.

After the speech errors have gone through the error identification and classification processes by using the linguistic category taxonomy employed by Sematle (2001), the comparative taxonomy employed by KirkgÖz (2010) was later been used as to see the comparisons between the structure of L2 errors and certain other types of constructions. Table 10 displays each category (intralingual and interlingual) that was further classified in detail as follows:

Table 10: The Relative Frequency of Intralingual and Interlingual Errors

Major Error Category	Error Type	Frequency of Errors
Interlingual Errors	Grammatical Interference: Singularization (wrong choice of noun)	54
	Subject-verb-agreement	15
	Prepositional Interference: Wrong Choice	5
	Sub-total	74
Intralingual Errors	Use of Article: Omission	28
	Wrong Choice	5
	Use of Conjunction: Omission	2
	Wrong Choice	2
	Use of Pronoun: Omission	3
	Wrong Choice	4
	Use of Verb: Omission	13
	Wrong Choice	5
	Verb Tense	32
	Pronunciation	37
	Overgeneralization / Redundancy	6
	Sub-total	137
TOTAL		211

DISCUSSION

This study has revealed many errors in the individual presentation of 18 learners of the first semester Pre-Diploma in Science taking Pre-Diploma English I (BEL 021) course. As seen clearly, the major cause of the learners' speech errors is due to the normal development of the Target Language (TL): intralingual errors.

14

SAMPLES OF ERRORS

Interlingual Errors

A total of 74 interlingual errors were identified, resulting mainly from the wrong choice of noun: singular noun form instead of the plural noun form (singularization).

Grammatical Interference

L1 and the TL have different grammatical rules. Therefore, when the learners transfer grammatical element from their L1 to the TL, they make errors. The following errors in singularization have been identified in the speech transcripts of the subjects. In the examples below, the subjects were obviously applying a grammatical rule which they know in their L1 to the TL. When "two black cats" or "many advantages" are thought in terms of the Malay grammatical rules, singularization can be seen on the nouns, which is contrary to the English grammatical rules.

For examples:

1.   There *is* many *effect* from eating this fast food.
2.   There are several *reason* why fast food is not healthy to eat.

Subject-verb-agreement

In some instances subjects had problems with subject-verb-agreement resulting from the subjects' simplification, by using the base form of the verb.

For examples:

1.   Fast food *contain* lack of vitamin that our body needs.
2.   The fast food contains ingredients that *has* high calories.

Prepositional Interference

It has been found that the subjects under this study made prepositional errors by adding the wrong preposition.

For examples:

1.   Fast food is very delicious but it is not healthy _to_ us.
2.   Secondly, fast food can damage our health _in_ example, those who eat fast food can easily get heart attack, diabetes and other diseases.

Intralingual Errors

A total of 137 intralingual errors were identified, resulting mainly from pronunciation.

Use of Article

Wrong choice of article and omission of article seem to be intralingual errors. The subjects were not very conversant with the use of article. As a result, they used the article indiscriminately.

For examples:

1.   As _the_ conclusion, fast food is not good for our health because it contains high cholesterol level. (wrong choice of article).
2.   Eating fast food is not a good habit because it can cause brain damage due to Λ high level of seasoning. (omission of article).

Use of Conjunction

It has been found that the subjects in this study commit errors in the use of conjunction in two different ways: by omitting the conjunction and adding the wrong conjunction.

For examples:

1.   Many people love to eat fast food. Λ Fast food can make our body becomes unhealthy. (omission of conjunction).
2.   _Otherwise,_ the exceed use of MSG in our meal will cause a lot of major health problems. (wrong choice of conjunction).

Use of Pronoun

The problem of missing pronoun was evident when the subjects tried to apply the TL rule that a noun and its pronoun are not used immediately after each other. May be because they had not attained its mastery, they left pronoun out even when it is needed. The wrong pronoun choice, on the other hand, may be resulting from the fact that the subjects are not yet perfect in their use of pronoun in English due to lack of practice.

For examples:

1. There are many effects when Λ eat fast food such getting the risk of obesity and heart disease. (omission of pronoun)
2. Moreover, when people eat fast food, *them* can become obese or overweight. (wrong choice of pronoun)

Use of Verb

There is some likelihood that the subjects might have resorted to "error avoidance" techniques to cover up for their uncertainty about the correct verb to be used. Wrong verb choice, on the other hand, seems to be a result of the fact that the subjects are not yet fully competent in their English vocabulary.

For examples:

1. Besides, fast food contains mono sodium glutamate (MSG), that Λ not good for our brain. (omission of verb).
2. Eating fast food can make people difficult to *remind* things because it contains a lot of corrosive substances which is not good for the brain. (wrong choice of verb).

Verb Tense

Verb tense errors may also be a result of the fact that the subjects appears unsure about the tense that they must use in the given individual oral presentation task. The subjects might have been taught that verbs take on different forms when they change from present to past or future tense and they might have learnt and/or been drilled in the long list of the forms of

verbs in the present, past and future tenses. However, in an attempt to apply this rule, the subjects might be going straight to the verbs in the sentences and changing them to any tense form irrespective of what precedes them and the context in which they are used.

For examples:

1.   When we *are eating* fast food, we do not really know the level of sugar and MSG content in our meal.
2.   Therefore, the calories consumed in fast food meal *are damaging* our health.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation errors may be a result of the medium transfer. This term is used for the learner's undue reliance on either the spoken or the written form of a word when the other medium is being used. If a learner pronounces a word according to its spelling or if a learner spells a word according to its pronunciation, then medium transfer has taken place (Tench, 1983, as cited in Mohideen, 1996).

For examples:

1.   Fast food may speed up people's risk of getting *clogged* arteries which can lead to heart attack.
2.   People can easily get their meals ready on time at any fast food *restaurant*.

Most of the faulty pronunciation errors suggest that the subjects pronounced from visual memory (from reading) instead of auditory memory (from listening). This implies that the subjects do very little listening to the ESL target sound.

For examples:

1.   /klɒggəd/ for "clogged".
2.   /rɛstaʊrɒnt/ for "restaurant".

Overgeneralization/Redundancy

Overgeneralization is the negative transfer of language items and grammatical rules in the TL, incomplete application of rules, resulting from the subjects' failure to apply rules of the TL under appropriate situations. Overgeneralization is associated with "redundancy" (Norrish, 1983, as cited in KirkgÖz, 2010). It may occur with language items that are contrasted in the grammar of the TL, yet do not carry an apparent contrast to the subjects.

For examples:

1.   In conclusion, eating fast food *can causes* so many diseases and *can* also *killed* ourselves. (overgeneralization).
2.   Many people *would like to prefer* eating fast food as it is undeniably delicious. (redundancy).

In short, the findings revealed that wrong choice of noun, subject-verb-agreement and wrong choice of preposition are the results of the subjects' L1 interference/interlingual errors. Whereas, omission of article, wrong choice of article, omission of conjunction, wrong choice of conjunction, omission of pronoun, wrong choice of pronoun, omission of verb, wrong choice of verb, verb tense, mispronunciation and overgeneralization/redundancy are caused by the subjects' developing knowledge of the TL: intralingual/developmental errors.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this study has shown the results of speech errors made by the ESL learners, still, there could be another explanation for the possible causes of errors which requires further research. Especially when considering the three main limitations of this study: i) it was done on a considerably small scale, ii) the selection of the speech transcripts was mainly involved the female subjects and few male subjects (12 females and 6 males) and iii) there was no personal observation by the researcher when the subjects performed their individual oral presentation. It is important to realize that ESL learners may also make errors which do not result from any underlying system, but from more superficial influences.

Performance factors could influence ESL learners to produce 'slips of the tongue', lose track of a complex structure during the utterance of words, begin with an utterance and abandon it and so on. In the terminology of error analysis, such performance errors are sometimes called 'lapses' or 'mistakes' as to distinguish them from the more systematic errors. Performance errors are also due to memory lapses, hasty responses, physical states, such as tiredness and psychological conditions such as strong emotion, lack of confidence *etc.* that are possible to be explored thoroughly rather than lack of knowledge (Nozari, Dell & Schwartz, 2011).

CONCLUSION

This study discussed some of the speech errors made by ESL learners whilst doing their individual oral presentation. It could be as an exposure to ESL teachers in overcoming learners' difficulties with ESL in general and particularly in helping their learners with problems in grammar and pronunciation when doing oral presentation as many of the previous studies conducted have examined the range of errors of written tasks set in English rather than the errors an individual produces when he speaks the language. In other words, this study hopes to shed some light on error analysis of speech transcripts in a way that it can facilitate ESL teachers to identify learners' speech errors which can be used as a guide in correcting and minimizing specific target areas of grammatical errors before errors become fossilized.

The ESL learners' errors have provided an evidence for the teachers, the system of language that they are using at a particular point in the course. Therefore, it has been proven that ESL teachers need to teach and to focus on grammar and its use in the contexts relevant to the learners' need. This is crucial when dealing with teaching and learning of ESL particularly the speaking component as learners who are good at language but do not know the content will not be able to succeed, while those who know the content but have a poor command of the language will also be unable to succeed. The latter is the one that is of utmost importance to this study because if a learner is good in a language, he will have to struggle only to master the content, while the one who is poor at language will have to struggle with both the content and the language (Sematle, 2001).

Besides that, oral presentation requires accurate English and for this reason serious weaknesses in grammar require more specific help. Therefore,

it would be beneficial if guidelines are provided by the ESL teacher as to compare and to show to the learners the different usage of grammar in spoken and written English. Teachers are recommended to give learners more target practices and get clear feedback because as long as learners do not understand why or what they have uttered is wrong, there is a high tendency for the same error to be repeated over and over again. However, explaining why something is wrong does not, in itself, guarantee future absences of error, but may be essential to the process of error correction.

Although it is quite difficult for ESL learners to avoid from committing errors, there are several measures that can be taken by teachers to minimize the production of such errors. Listed below are some of the ways proposed by Jayasundara and Premarathna (2011) in their study, *"A linguistic analysis on errors committed in English by undergraduate"*. However, only a few relevant ways have been pointed out in this study considering the fact that this present study deals with speech errors rather than the range of errors of the written tasks set in English. They proposed that ESL teachers must:

1. be equipped with discovering new ways to teach creatively as to familiarize the students with the rules subconsciously.
2. implement brainstorming, debates, role plays *etc.* in the pedagogical language classroom as to make speaking lesson interesting.
3. encourage the students in reading English newspaper as to add extra value in their speaking performance while gaining general knowledge and to minimize the frequency of producing errors.

In brief, although the evidence in this study is limited, it offers some tentative observations on the significance of learners' errors. The study has shown that the role of grammar is important in the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) and it should not be taken lightly as teachers should be better equipped, more sensitive and aware of the difficulties that the learners face with regard to grammar. Further research should be conducted taking into considerations other factors that could have an influence on learners' errors when giving speech such as the performance factors.

REFERENCES

Brown, H.D. (1994). *Teaching by Principles: Interactive Language Teaching Methodology*, New York: Prentice Hall Regents.

Brown, H.D. (2007). *Principles of Language Learning And Teaching*, New Jersey: Longman.

Corder, S.P. (1967). The significance of learners errors: international review of applied linguistics 5 (4). Reprinted in Richards J.C. (ed.) *Error Analysis: Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*. London: Longman.

Corder, S.P. (1974). Error analysis in Allen J.L.P. and Corder, S.P. (eds.) *Techniques in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dulay, H., Burt, M. and Krashen, S. (1982). *Language Two*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ellis, R. (1997). *Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Haja Mohideen M.A. (1996). Error analysis – contributory factors to students' errors, with special reference to errors in written English. *The English Teacher Journal*, XXV. Retrieved from http://www.melta.org. my/ET/1996/main4.html.

Ho, C.M.L. (2003). Empowering English teachers to grapple with errors in grammar. *The Internet TESL Journal*, IX(3). Retrieved on March 2009 from http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Ho_Grammar_Errors.html.

Hubbard, P., Jones, H., Thornton, B. and Wheeler, R. (1986). *A Training Course For TEFL*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

James, C. (1998). *Errors In Language Learning And Use: Exploring Error Analysis*. London: Longman.

Jayasundara, J.M.P.V.K. and Premarathna, C.D.H.M. (2011). A linguistics analysis on errors committed in English by undergraduates. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 1(1). Retrieved from www.ijsrp.org.

Khodabandeh, F. (2007). Analysis of learners' errors: the case of headlines. *The Asian ESP Journal*, 3(1). Retrieved on March 2009 from http://www.asian-esp-journal.com/April_2007_fk.php.

Kim, M. (2007). Monolingual and bilingual language processing: a study of Korean, English and Korean-English speech errors. Doctoral Thesis, State University of New York, Buffalo.

KirkgÖz, Y. (2010). An analysis of written errors of Turkish adult learners of English. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2, 4352-4358. Retrieved on November 2009 from www.sciencedirect.com.

Nozari, N., Dell, G.S. and Schwartz, M.F. (2011). Is comprehension necessary for error detection? A conflict-based account of monitoring in speech production. *Cognitive Psychology*, 63, 1-33.

Raymond, W.D. (2000). Towards a theory of grammatical encoding in speech production: Evidence from speech errors. Ph.D. Dissertation, Linguistics and Cognitive Science, University of Colorado.

Sematle, M.Z. (2001). A thesis in the special individualized program: errors in the written English of learners in selected Phuthaditjhaba secondary schools. Master's Thesis, Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Trahey, M. and White, L. (1993). Positive evidence and pre-emption. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition,* 15 (2), 181-204.