UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

SYNTACTIC ERRORS IN ESL MADE BY FORM FOUR IBAN STUDENTS IN AN URBAN SECONDARY SCHOOL IN KUCHING

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Abstract

Making errors in writing is inevitable as it is part of the learning process. Although many have considered mother tongue interference as the main cause of errors made, the question is to what extent does it really influence learners' writing? Based on this assumption, the purpose of this study is to examine some syntactic errors found in the students' essays as well as to investigate the sources of errors. The respondents are 25 Form Four Iban students studying at a secondary school in Kuching, Sarawak. They have experienced the same number of years of education through primary and secondary education in Malaysia. They all come from non-English speaking background and rarely communicate in English outside the school. They speak the Iban language which is their mother tongue most of the time. The instrument used to collect the data was the respondents' written essays. Authentic learners' essays were collected and analyzed based on the Surface Strategy Taxonomy and Comparative Taxonomy in order to identify the different types and sources of errors in the essays. The results of the study revealed that errors of misformation were the highest and the main source of these errors was mainly due to developmental rather than inter-lingual. The findings implied that mother-tongue interference is not the main contributor to language problems in English language learning. As such it is hoped that this finding will help provide information on common trouble-spots in language learning which can be used in the preparation of effective teaching strategies.
Abstrak

Candidate’s Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of University Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This topic has not been submitted to any other academic institutions or non-academic institutions for any other degree or qualification.

In the event that my thesis is found to violate the conditions mentioned above. I voluntarily waive the right of conferment of my degree and agree be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of University Teknologi MARA.

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