

PERSIAN EFL STUDENTS' ERROR ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The present study entitled Analysis of Errors Committed by Persian Learners of English is an attempt made to collect, describe, analyse and evaluate the errors were made by the intermediate level students from the Simin Institute in Ramsar, Iran. Ten Persian sentences from Contrastive analysis and error analysis by Keshavarz, M.H. (1999) were given to students to convert to English. The result of the study indicate that the majority of errors produced by these learners involve syntactico-morphological errors in the Descriptive of Errors, substitution in the Process of Errors, and Intralingual errors in the Source of Errors.

Keywords: Error analysis, error, intralingual error, syntactico-morphological errors

INTRODUCTION

Teachers, linguists and psycholinguists have always been interested in errors produced by second- language learners, either in their speech or writing or both. In fact, learners' errors have been the subject of extensive investigation and heated controversy for quite a long time. There have been two major approaches to the study of learners' errors, namely Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis.

Contrastive Analysis (CA) is an actively compares and contrasts the phonological, grammatical and semantic systems of two or morw languages.

Error Analysis (EA) is a procedure used by both researchers and teachers which involves collecting samples of learner language, identifying the errors in the sample, describing these errors, classifying them according to their nature and causes, and evaluating their seriousness.

Linguistic Taxonomy of Errors

In this taxonomy, four major categories of errors are used, namely:

1. Orthographic Errors
2. Phonological Errors
3. Lexico-semantic Errors
4. Syntactico-Morphological Error

Processes of Errors

In addition to the foregoing taxonomy, errors can also be classified according to their processes, i.e. ways in which errors are made or committed by second language learners. Four main processes which lead to erroneous constructions have been cited in the literature:

- I. Omission: of some required linguistic elements usually involves the deletion of function words, morphemes, and auxiliaries.
- II. Addition: In this process, some redundant elements are used in a sentence.

- III. Substitution: In this process, an incorrect element is substituted for a correct one.
- IV. Permutation (wrong ordering): In this process, sentence elements are not used in their correct order.

Sources of Errors

There are three types of errors respect to their sources:

Interlingual Errors

Interlingual errors result from the transfer of phonological, morphological, grammatical, lexico-semantic, and stylistic elements of the learners's mother tongue to the learning of the target language.

Intralingual and Developmental Errors

Intralingual and developmental errors are caused by the mutual interference of items in the target language.

Different types of intralingual errors are:

- a. Overgeneralization
- b. Ignorance of rule restriction
- c. False Analogy
- d. Hyperextension
- e. Hypercorrection
- f. Faulty categorization

Transfer of Training

Transfer of training or teacher-induced errors are those which result from pedagogical procedures contained in a text or employed by the teacher. In other words, these errors come about as a result of course design or teaching techniques.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Error analysis, a branch of applied linguistics, emerged in the sixties to demonstrate that learner errors were not only because of the learner's native language but also they reflected some universal learning strategies, as a reaction to contrastive analysis theory, which considered language transfer as the basic process of second language learning as what behavioristic theory suggested. Error analysis, on the other hand, deals with the learners' performance in terms of the cognitive processes they make use of in recognizing or coding the input they receive from the target language. Therefore, a primary focus of error analysis is on the evidence that learners' errors provide with an understanding of the underlying process of second language acquisition. At this point, Keshavars (1997) suggests that the field of error analysis can be divided into two branches: (i) theoretical, and (ii) applied.

The advocates of EA considered it important to draw a distinction between mistake and error, which are "technically two very different phenomena" (Brown, 1994, p. 205). Corder (1967) took notion of Chomsky's "competence versus performance" distinction relating errors to failures in competence and mistakes to failures in performance. According to this notion a mistake occurs not because of lack of competence but because of processing limitations which indicates learner's inability in utilizing knowledge of TL. An error results an infringement of the rules of TL language and hence experience deviation in grammaticality of TL. Errors arise because of lack of competence. Native speaker can recognize and correct

mistakes, but L2 learner need the linguistic competency in TL to identify errors and correct them accordingly. Error analysis focuses on the errors learners make by drawing a comparison between the errors made in (TL) and that TL itself.

The forerunner of EA, Corder (1987) explains the significance of learners' errors in three different ways. "The first to the teacher in that they tell him, if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed, and consequently what remains for him to learn. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly, (and in a sense this is their most important aspect) they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn." Brown (1987) gives the definition of error analysis as follows; "The fact that learners do make errors and these errors can be observed, analysed and classified to reveal some thing of the system operating within the learner led to a surge of study of learners' errors, called 'error analysis'."

PROCEDURE

The purpose of this paper was to analyze errors made by English Learners that learn English as their foreign language. Ten students at Intermediate level from the Simin Institute of Ramsar were selected and participated in the experiment. Ten Persian sentences from *Contrastive analysis and error analysis* by Keshavarz, M.H. (1999) were given to students to convert to English. The ten sentences were:

1. He smokes a lot of cigarette.
2. There were many fish in the lake.
3. My father is an employee of Melli Bank.
4. I am afraid of dogs.
5. The main food in our country is rice.
6. He entered the classroom.
7. My elder brother is a teacher.
8. I dont agree with you.
9. There is some water in the jug.
10. I saw an old friend, when i was shopping yesterday.

RESULTS

Error Analysis of the first student:

Sentence 1) he smokes very lot.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of 'lot' instead of 'much'

Process of errors: substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 2) there was some fish in....lake.

Taxonomy of errors:

1. Wrong use of 'there was' instead of 'there were'
2. Wrong use of 'some' instead of 'many'

3. Omission of the definite article 'the'

Process of errors: 1. substitution 2. Substitution 3. Omission

Source of errors: 1. intralingual 2. intralingual 3. Intralingual

Sentence 3) my father is personal of Mali bank.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. omission of definite article 'a' 2. Wrong use of 'personal' instead of 'personel' 3. Orthographic error, 'Mali' instead of 'Melli' 4. Orthographic error, 'bank' instead of 'Bank'

Process of errors: 1. omission 2. substitution 3. substitution 4. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Intralingual 4. Intralingual

Sentence 4) Iafraid from dog

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Omission of 'am' 2. Wrong use of 'from' instead of 'of' 3. Wrong use of 'dog' instead of 'dogs'

Process of errors: 1. Omission 2. Substitution 3. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Interlingual 3. Interlingual

Sentence 5)... Our country main food is rice.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. wrong word order 2. Omission of 'in' 3. Omission of 'the'

Process of errors: 1. permutation 2. Omission 3. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Intralingual

Sentence 6) He inturns in the class.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of verb 'inturns' instead of 'entered' 2. Addition of preposition 'in'

Process of errors: 1. Substitution 2. Addition

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Interlingual

Sentence 7) my older brother is teacher.

Taxonomy of errors: omission of the definite article 'a'

Process of error : omission

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 8) I 'm not agree with you.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of verb 'am' instead of 'dont'

Process of error : Substitution

Source of errors: interlingual

Sentence 9) there is some water in.... jar.

Taxonomy of errors: .omission of 'the'

Process of error: omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual

Sentence 10) yesterday when i was bought i saw my an old friend.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of tense, 'bought' instead of 'buying'
2. addition of 'my'

Process of error: 1. Substitution 2. Blend

Source of error: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Error Analysis of the second student:

Sentence 1) he smokes a lot**Sentence 2) There was alot of fish in the lake.**

Taxonomy of errors: Wrong use of 'there was' instead of 'there were'

Process of errors: substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 3) My father is a clerk of Melli bank.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of 'clerk' instead of 'employee'
2. orthographic error, 'bank' instead of 'Bank'

Process of errors: 1. Substitution 2. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 4) I'm afraid of dog.

Taxonomy of errors: Wrong use of 'dog' instead of 'dogs'

Process of errors: omission

Source of errors: interlingual

Sentence 5) Our main dish is rice.**Sentence 6) She enters the class.**

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Error in the use of tense present instead of simple past 2. Omission of 'the'

Process of errors: 1. Substitution 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 7) My older brother is a teacher.**Sentence 8) I'm disagree with you.**

Taxonomy of errors: addition of 'am'

Process of error : addition

Source of errors: interlingual

Sentence 9) There is some water in the jar.**Sentence 10) yesterday when i was shopping i saw an old friend.**

Error Analysis of the third student:

Sentence 1) she smookes a lot.

Taxonomy of errors: orthographic error 'smookes' instead of 'smokes'

Process of errors: substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 2) There was a lot.....fish in a lake.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of 'there was' instead of 'there were'

2. omission of preposition 'of' 3. Wrong use of definite article 'a' instead of 'the'

Process of errors: 1. substitution 2. Omission 3. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Intralingual

Sentence 3) My father works in Melli Bank.**Sentence 4) I....scare....of dog.**

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Omission of 'am' 2. Wrong use 'scare' instead of 'scared' 3.

Wrong use of 'dog' instead of 'dogs'

Process of errors: 1. Omission 2. Omission 3. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Interlingual

Sentence 5) Rice is the main food in our country.**Sentence 6) He entered the class.****Sentence 7) my older brother is a teacher.****Sentence 8) I'm not agree with you.**

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of verb 'am' instead of 'dont'

Process of error : Substitution

Source of errors: interlingual

Sentence 9) There is some water in the jar.**Sentence 10) yesterday, when i was shopping, i met an old friend.**

Error Analysis of the fourth student:

Student 1) He smokes a lot.**Sentence 2) There was a lot.....fish in a lake.**

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of 'there was' instead of 'there were'

2. omission of preposition 'of' 3. Wrong use of definite article 'a' instead of 'the'

Process of errors: 1. substitution 2. Omission 3. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Intralingual

Sentence 3) My father works in Melli Bank.**Sentence 4) I am scared of dogs****Sentence 5) Rice is the main food in our country.**

Sentence 6) He entered the class.

Sentence 7) My older brother is a teacher.

Sentence 8) I 'mnot agree with you.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of verb 'am' instead of 'dont'

Process of error : Substitution

Source of errors:interlingual

Sentence 9) There is some water in the jar.

Sentence 10) Yesterday when i was shopping i met an old friend.

Error Analysis of the fifth student:

Sentence 1) He smokes very much.

Sentence 2) there were a lot of fish in the lake.

Sentence 3) my father isemployment at meli bank.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Omission of definite article 'an' 2. Wrong use of 'employment' instead of 'employee' 3. Wrong use of preposition 'at' instead of 'of' 4. Orthographic error, 'meli' instead of 'Melli' 5. Orthographic error, 'bank' instead of 'Bank'

Process of errors: 1. Omission 2. Substitution 3. Substitution 4. Omission 5. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Interlingual 4. Intralingual 5. Intralingual

Sentence 4) Iafraid of dog.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Omission of 'am' 2. Wrong use of 'dog' instead of 'dogs'

Process of errors: 1. Omission 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. interlingual

Sentence 5) the main course of our country is rise.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. wrong use of 'course' instead of 'food' 2. orthographic error, 'rise' instead of 'rice'

Process of errors: substitution 2. substitution

Source of errors: intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 6) he comes intoclass.

Taxonomy of errors: 1.error in the use of tense 'comes' instead of 'came' 2. Wrong use of preposition 'into' instead of 'in' 3. Omission of 'the'

Process of errors: 1. Substitution 2. Substitution 3. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Intralingual

Sentence 7) my older brother is teacher.

Taxonomy of errors: omission of the definite article ' a'

Process of error : omission

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 8) I dont agree whit you.

Taxonomy of errors: orthographic error, 'whit' instead of 'with'

Process of error : Substitution

Source of errors:intralingual

Sentence 9) there are some wather in jar.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Error in the use of 'there are' instead of ' there is'

2. orthographic error, 'wather' instead of ' water' 3. Omission of the definite article 'the'

Process of error: 1. Substitution 2. Substitution 3. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Intralingual

Sentence 10) yesterday when i have bought i saw an old the friend.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of tense, 'have bought' instead of ' was buying' 2. Addition of 'the'

Process of error: 1. Substitution 2. Addition

Source of error: 1. Intralingual 2. intralingual

Error Analysis of the sixth student:

Sentence 1) she smokes a lot.**Sentence 2) There were many fish in the lake.****Sentence 3) my father is Melli bank's clerck.**

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of ' Melli bank's clerck' instead of ' an employee of Melli Bank' 2. Wrong ues of 'clerck' instead of ' employee'

Process of errors: 1. Permutation 2. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 4) I'm afraid of dogs.**Sentence 5) The main food in our country is rice.****Sentence 6) she stepped into the class.****Sentence 7) My old brother is a teacher.**

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of 'old' instead of ' older/elder'

Process of error : substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 8) I'm not in agreement with you.**Sentence 9) There is some water in the pitcher.****Sentence 10) when i was buying yesterday, i saw an old friend.**

Error Analysis of the seventh student:

Sentence 1) she /he smokes a lot.**Sentence 2)..... a lot of fish in lake.**

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Omission of ‘ there were’

2. omission of definite article ‘the’

Process of errors: 1. Omission 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. intralingual 2. intralingual

Sentence 3) my father isclerk in Melli Bank.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Omission of indefinite article ‘ an’ 2. Wrong use of ‘ clerck’ instead of ‘ employee’ 3. Wrong use of preposition ‘in’ instead of ‘of’

Process of errors: 1. Omission 2. Substitution 3. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Interlingual

Sentence 4) I am afraid of dog.

Taxonomy of error: wrong use of ‘dog’ instead of ‘dogs’

Process of error: omission

Source of error: interlingual

Sentence 5) The main food in my country is rice.

Sentence 6) she stepped in.... class.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of preposition ‘in’ instead of ‘into’

2. omission of ‘the’

Process of errors: 1. Substitution 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 7) my old brother is ... teacher.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. wrong use of ‘old’ instead of ‘ older/elder’ 2. omission of the definite article ‘ a’

Process of error : 1. Substitution 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 8) I’m not in agreement with you.

Sentence 9) There is some water in....pietcher.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Omission of ‘the’ 2. Orthographic error, ‘pietcher’ instead of ‘ pitcher’

Process of error: 1. Omission 2. Addition

Source of error: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 10) when i was buying yesterday,.... saw my old friend.

Taxonomy of errors: omission of subject ‘i’

Process of error: omission

Source of error: interlingual

Error Analysis of the eighth student:

Sentence 1) He smoke... cigarrete very much.

Taxonomy of errors: lack of subject-verb agreement // orthographic erro' cigarrete' instead of 'cigarette'

Process of errors: omission // substitution

Source of errors: intralingual // intralingual

Sentence 2) there was many fish in the sea.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of 'there was' instead of 'there were'

2. Wrong use of 'sea' instead of 'lake'

Process of errors: 1. Substitution 2. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 3) my father is an employe of Melli Bank.

Taxonomy of errors: orthographic error, 'employe' instead of 'employee'

Process of errors: omission

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 4) I am afraid of dogs.**Sentence 5) rice is original food in our country.**

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of 'original' instead of 'the main'

Process of errors: substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 6) He enter.... the class.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of tense

Process of errors: omission

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 7) my grand brother is teacher.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. wrong use of 'grand' instead of 'older/elder' 2. omission of the definite article 'a'

Process of error : 1. Substitution 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 8) Iam not agree with you.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of verb 'am' instead of 'dont'

Process of error : Substitution

Source of errors: interlingual

Sentence 9) there is some water in the jar.**Sentence 10) I see my old friend when i has bought yesterday.**

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of tense 'see' instead of 'saw' 2. Wrong use of tense, 'has bought' instead of 'was buying'

Process of error: 1. Substitution 2. Substitution

Source of error: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Error Analysis of the ninth student:

Sentence 1) He smoke...very much.

Taxonomy of error: lack of subject-verb agreement

Process of error: omission

Source of error: intralingual

Sentence 2) There was a lot of fish inlake.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of 'there was' instead of 'there were' 2. Omission of the definite article 'the'

Process of errors: 1. Substitution 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 3) my father is a national bank clerk.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong word order 2. Wrong use of 'national bank' instead of 'Melli Bank' 3. Wrong use of 'clerk' instead of 'employee'

Process of errors: 1. Permutation 2. Substitution 3. Substitution

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Intralingual

Sentence 4) Iscared dog.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Omission of 'am' 2. Omission of 'of' 3. Wrong use of 'dog' instead of 'dogs'

Process of errors: 1. Omission 2. Omission 3. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual 3. Interlingual

Sentence 5) rice is a original food in our country.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of 'a original' instead of 'the main'

Process of errors: substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 6) he came in class.

Taxonomy of errors: omission of 'the'

Process of errors: omission

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 7) my old brothe is ... teacher.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. wrong use of 'old' instead of 'older/elder' 2. omission of the definite article 'a'

Process of error : 1. Substitution 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 8) I dont agree with you.

Sentence 9) There is a little wather in jar.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Orthographic error 2. Omission of 'the'

Process of error: 1.addition 2. Omission

Source of error: 1. Intralingual 2. Intralingual

Sentence 10) I saw an old friend when i was shopping yesterday

Error Analysis of the tenth student:

Sentence 1) He smokes very much.

Sentence 2) There were a lot of fish in the lake.

Sentence 3) my father is an employee of national bank.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of 'national bank' instead of 'Melli Bank'

Process of errors: substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 4) I am scared from dog.

Taxonomy of errors: 1. Wrong use of preposition 'from' instead of 'of'

2. wrong use of 'dog' instead of 'dogs'

Process of errors: 1. Substitution 2. Omission

Source of errors: 1. Interlingual 2. Interlingual

Sentence 5) our national main course is rice.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of 'course' instead of 'food'

Process of errors: substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 6) She arrived in the class.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of verb, 'arrived in' instead of 'entered'

Process of errors: substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 7) my old brother is a teacher.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of 'old' instead of 'older/elder'

Process of error : Substitution

Source of errors: intralingual

Sentence 8) I'm not agree with you.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of verb 'am' instead of 'dont'

Process of error : Substitution

Source of errors:interlingual

Sentence 9) there is little water in the jar.

Taxonomy of errors: wrong use of ' little' instead of ' a little'

Process of error: substitution

Source of error: intralingual

Sentence 10) I sawan old friend when i was bying yesterday

<i>Error Categories</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>% of total errors</i>
<i>A: Descriptive</i>	Orthographic Errors	13	4%
	Syntactico-morphological Errors	92	28.6%
<i>B: Process of Errors</i>	Omission	42	13%
	Addition	6	1.9%
	Substitution	57	17.7%
	Permutation	3	0.9%
	Blend	1	0.3%
<i>C: Sources of Errors</i>	Interlingual Error	19	5.9%
	Intralingual error	89	27.6%

CONCLUSION

This table shows that the majority of errors produced by these learners involve syntactico-morphological errors in the Descriptive of Errors, substitution in the Process of Errors, and Intralingual errors in the Source of Errors.

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