English Language Learners in Jordanian Schools: An Overview of Error Analysis

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Abstract
This study aims at highlighting and examining the difficulties faced by English language learners at Jordanian schools. The study focuses on what learners of the English language in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan experience and encounter while trying to write, communicate and express themselves in English language. While the study-population includes Jordanian English teachers and the Jordan 11th graders, the qualitative study relies on a case-study design. It was discovered that lack of frequent practice, absence of cultural engagement in the classroom, lack of confidence, outdated study-materials and traditional methods of teaching caused the difficulties faced by Arab learners of the English language. The study recommends a conducive learning environment and effective teaching approaches to strengthen learners' weak foundation. It also suggests adopting modern methods by encouraging interactive and communicative approach among English language learners; equipping English teachers with latest non-traditional techniques; and ensuring that writing skills are incorporated in the country's language curriculum towards reducing academic-writing errors among learners of English as a second language.
Keywords: English Language Learners, Traditional Methods, Communicative-Approach, Academic-Writing Errors.

Introduction
The English language is considered one of the most important international languages in the world, as it comes at the forefront of societal priorities that are effective in achieving progress in society. Language learning is considered the basic pillar for equipping individuals and establishing relationships among countries. If teaching the English language is based on modern methods and practical foundations, it would definitely reflect in the writing and speaking proficiency of English language learners in Jordanian schools as language reforms

need to be based on correct plans and programs that suit the level of learners.

To keep pace with development, the Jordan schools, like other schools in the world, have witnessed rapid transformations in the path of the educational system, in an effort to form generations that enjoy global specifications and openness to cultures and civilizations, toward keeping pace with rapid cognitive development. Foreign language has become a basic requirement in contemporary life. The interest in learning foreign language as a second language is not new in the international setting. The learning process requires a committed, eloquent and trained English language teacher who would implement the language learning contents, modules and curriculum outlined by the Ministry of education. Hence, the attitude and commitment of the English language teachers about the teaching process is very important, especially in the modern reforms proposed by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, their attitudes must be taken into consideration. This was confirmed by Dunia (2021) that teachers strongly support the English language, and are unanimous about the necessity of integrating it as the first foreign language. As such, the study aims at analyzing errors made by English language learners and teachers in Jordan schools towards learning English as a second language.

For a new language learner, complex steps, challenging processes and commission of grammatical errors are certain (James, 2013). Most errors committed by second language learners are largely caused by first language otherwise known as mother tongue (Selinker, 1978). For example, in the English language, SVO (Subject+ Verb+ Object) is the sentence construction order, while Arabic learners prefer VSO (Verb+ Subject+ Object) in constructing sentences. Therefore, it would be a challenging task for an Arabic speaker to learn the English language.

Among the major reasons why second language learners, particularly Arabs, commit grammatical errors is because of the teaching strategies mostly adopted in Arab-world training Arab-students to excel in forthcoming examinations, not upcoming societal linguistic challenges (Alhaisoni et al., 2017). This observation was personally noticed by the researcher who taught high school students ESL at Jordan for nearly 10 years. As a result of this personal observation, the researcher attempts to explore the challenges faced by English language learners in Jordan schools, and analyze the causes of their grammatical errors.

Problem Statement

Writing and speaking skills have always been a main obstacle for Arabs learning English as a second language. This is because the targeted language often requires in-depth understanding of English rules and guidelines. Failure to master the basic principles of English language scale-down the performances of many students at Jordan schools in writing and speaking, thus, affects Jordanians' participation and contribution globally.

Al-Zuoud and Kabilan (2013), observed that second language learners of the English language mostly struggle to be fluent in English grammar. These struggles are broadly linked to weak teaching strategies and first language involvement. Daud and Kassim (2016), argued that the grammatical errors committed by Arab students were as a result of their struggle to learn a new and foreign language. The implication of this is that Arab students would be poor in writing skills. Hence, the objective of the study is to ensure that Error Analysis reduces students' grammatical errors at Jordan schools.

Literature Review

Error Analysis Theory is the applicable theory used to measure and analyze the educational process. While English maintains its second language status, Arabic language remains the official language commonly used across Jordan. According to Alhabahba et al (2016), English language education gained its relevance in the 1920s in Jordan. As a result of business, touristic and political purposes, Jordanian educational system integrated the English language and made it a qualification for future jobs (AbuSeileek, 2004).

In the Jordanian educational settings, it became a prerequisite for every Jordanian student to master writing, speaking, listening and reading skills in English language at their early stage of life. Despite the early stage program designed for these students, Al-Abd Al-Haq (2019) noticed that these English language learners are still poor in writing skills. AbuSeileek (2004) explained the difficulties encountered by these learners while asked to construct English sentences. For example, spelling problems are one of the major concerns many English language learners have towards expressing themselves in writing (Al-Zuoud & Kabilan, 2013). In an attempt to pinpoint the learner's problem, Alhabahba et al (2016) highlighted the active role played by English language teachers in the setback. These authors argued that these teachers were only focusing on completing syllabus for the students, but disregarding learners' skills and competences. Jordanian students' incompetency was understood through their heavy reliance on memorization, instead of understanding language rules deeply. The teachers absolutely ignored the quality aspects of learning and concentrated on the quantity of covered topics. In other words, the adopted learning strategies negatively affect learners' learning outcomes. Hence, teachers' contribution in students' structural and grammatical errors is immense as stated by Alhabahba et al (2016).

Alkhawaldeh (2010), outlined large number of students in the classrooms; learners negative thoughts of English language; students' lack of passion for English language; absence of sufficient time to cover syllabus; absence of qualifying examination for the newly recruited English teachers; lack of extra-lessons on English exercises and skills; and absence of parental follow-up as challenges encountered by English language teachers at Jordanian schools.

From the above review of literature, it is evident that many stakeholders including the Government, the Ministry of Education, English language learners and teachers share in the poor performance and reaction of Jordanian students to English language learning. There are similarities and differences between this research and some previous studies. The similarities between this research and previous studies are in the same analysis of linguistic errors. As for the differences between this research and previous studies, they are that this research analyzes spelling errors, as previous studies analyze general linguistic errors, structural analysis to develop writing skills, analysis of lexical semantic errors, and analysis of linguistic errors based on Robert Aldo's theories. Of course, this research differs from previous studies in its contents, structure and composition.

The Concept of Error Analysis

The philosophical dictionary defines "error" as a failure to follow the rules that are morally, technically, scientifically, or logically required. Although, error technically has two meanings. It revolves around violating the agreed-upon rule in a certain field, and there are those who consider error and mistake to have the same meaning, but most linguists distinguish between

the two concepts (Al-Arabi, 2003).
Error analysis is another term used by applied linguistics in language teaching. It is the next step to contrastive analysis, and perhaps one of its benefits. There is no doubt that we all "make mistakes" when learning a language and when we use it. Error analysis is a posteriori analysis based on the actual linguistic production of the learner of the desired language, and not a priori analysis, as is the case in contrastive analysis. Linguistic error analysis usually sees that the interference of mother tongue is not the only source of errors committed by students. Other sources of errors are generalization, ignorance of the rules and their restrictions, incomplete application of the rules, and wrong assumptions (evolutionary errors).

It is well known that each language has rules that govern the phonetic system, and there are rules for the morphological system and rules for the syntactic system. There are also rules for the semantic level and the cultural level. In addition to the linguistic rules, there are other social rules (Ahmed, 1960). The social rules in the use of language are very important. Therefore, they should be taught to learners of foreign languages so that they do not fall into the cultural embarrassment that the people of the language deplore.

Based on the above, we can define a linguistic error as a departure from the rules of language use that the speakers of that language have accepted. This is appropriate, as presented by Taarijan that Error Analysis is the procedure that researchers and language teachers usually use. It includes collecting the sample, identifying those errors, and classifying them depending on its causes and evaluation of errors (Ahmed, 2008). Hence, error analysis differs from contrastive analysis since it studies errors attributed to all possible sources, and it is not limited to those due to negative transfer from the mother tongue only. Error analysis has easily replaced contrastive analysis, as it has been shown that some errors may be due to the influence of the learner in his mother tongue.

Objectives of Error Analysis
The objectives of error analysis are to determine the order of the elements of the study materials and the textbook, such as: arranging easy to difficult; determine the order of the relative weight of the elements of the related study materials; plan training and rehabilitation for those with limited ability; and select the elements of the student's skills.

The assumptions of error analysis are also explained by Adrian in his book, which include determining the order of displaying things that are taught in the classroom and in the textbooks, for example, an easy to difficult sequence; determining the sequence of the levels of concentration and practice of different things that are taught in the subject; planning and correcting teaching exercises; and identifying the elements to test the student's proficiency. Adrian (2016), said the purpose of error analysis is to improve and reduce student's linguistic errors. The goal has shifted to ignoring the important thing, which is to summarize or develop an explanation theory regarding the student's performance. In fact, the purpose of error analysis is not only practical but also theoretical (Sri Meragnes & Syarifah, n. d). Hence, it can be concluded that the purpose of error analysis is to provide information to teachers or language teachers about the shortcomings in the current learning process, teaching and training that has been carried out, planning remedial teaching programs and knowing the aspects of languages that the student has not mastered.

Reasons for Errors
The reasons for linguistic errors, as Taarijan said in his book, are:
1 - Factors of fatigue and lack of interest or what are called behavioral factors according to Chomsky. These errors are applied or training errors and are also known as mistakes.
2 - Lack of information for the learner or student in grammar rules or what is called the factors of competence according to Chomsky, which are the organized deviations caused by the learner's information; which are in their way of development in the second language and these are known as errors (Henry, 1990).

It is understood that errors are divided into two sections such as errors of linguistic interference and errors within language. The researcher saw that errors and mistakes are all among the linguistic violations of the rules of the second language that the learner commits and they need to be corrected and there is no need to differentiate. Therefore, the reasons for students' linguistic errors could be traced to Teaching and learning strategies; Linguistic interference from mother tongue; Control over a limited number of vocabulary; then, Social and psychological factors.

Sources of Error Analysis
Linguistic errors are caused by the influence of mother tongue, as said by Selinker (1972), where the author said there are five important processes that cause errors in the learner's comprehension of the target language, which are: 1) Language transfer, 2) Transfer in training, 3) Strategy for learning the target language, 4) Strategy for communicating the target language, and 5) Increasing generalization of linguistic material in the target language (wahab, 1998).

The researcher discovered that knowing the difference between the mother tongue system and the target language in the process of learning the second language will bring the learner closer to knowing the target language system.

Steps in Error Analysis
Ellis as quoted by Taarijaan in his book, argued that the steps in analyzing linguistic errors are: Collecting data; Identifying errors; Classifying errors; Explaining errors; and Evaluating errors. Corder opined that the steps in error analysis are: Collecting errors; Identifying errors; Dividing errors; Clarifying errors; and Estimating errors (Henry, 1998). As for Utari Sri, the steps that take place in the error analysis process include: Identifying errors; Describing errors; Explaining errors and clarifying them; Evaluating errors; and Correcting errors (Subyakto, 1993). Therefore, a summary of the steps of linguistic error analysis is collecting documents, identifying errors, dividing or explaining them, evaluating and correcting errors. According to the researcher, it is not necessary for these steps to be sequential according to the order of the thinkers. The researcher chose Ellis' theory because it is a theory that uses complete and detailed steps in its analysis process, and this theory is easy and enjoyable for linguistic researchers in all research processes, especially in English language.

Conclusion
After the researcher analyzed the causes behind students' spelling errors at Jordan schools, the researcher found that the reasons for the errors that occur in writing come from both the teachers and the students. The reasons why English language learners of Jordan schools

commit errors include lack of information among students about the correct spelling rules; short time for writing practice; linguistic interference; lack of knowledge about the spelling rules; and lack of repetition and careful review of students on their writing in the correct English language.

Both English language teachers and learners can find solutions to spelling errors at Jordan schools. The suitable solutions to spelling errors may include students paying attention to the correct spelling rules; ensuring long time required to construct academic writing; ensuring that students pay attention to correct English translation; ensuring that students re-read and apply the spelling rules; and ensuring that students repeat reading their writings and correct those errors. Ultimately, English language teachers must give and guide students about the spelling errors that exist in ESL and EFL.

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