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The stylistic values of the following Arabic sentences and their English translation are widely different: كان يختلف إلى الكتاب "He used to go to school". Here the verb ذهب which is the equivalent of "go" differs stylistically from "اختلف إلى". As a result, the above translation, from a literary point of view is dull. Another example is ألفتها في الحديقة "I found her in the garden". Here "found" does not convey the literary (formal) value of ألفت, which enjoys a higher literary level than وجد ، لقي.

Conclusion

Endeavours have been made in the preceding discussion to highlight some difficulties that people encounter when they translate from Arabic into English.

Modern standard Arabic has several literary sources behind it, which have affected its development and the stylistic value of its vocabulary. It has been concluded that translation aims primarily at transferring referential meaning of synonyms.

Thus, connotative meaning can be overlooked if the target language cannot fulfil them. This explains the fact that the greater part of lexical non-equivalence is stylistic or connotative.

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اصل	من أرومة، نجار
جرب	بلا

It is interesting to point out in this context that Arabic has plurals, which are associated with poetic language or emotive prose in comparison with other patterns of plurals of the same words. Once again, the words of the first column could be used neutrally as well as emotively and poetically, while the words in the second column are used only poetically and emotively.

Neutral	Emotive
دموع	ادمع
كلمات	كلم
الأحشاء	الحشى
أزهار	ازاهير
أضلاع	أضلع
نجوم	انجم
ساحات	سوح
سيوف	أسياف
أفعال	أفاعيل
أسرى	اسارى
أولاد	ولدان

be those referred to as “poetic diction”. Still, it would be unfair to expect translators to hit upon terms of identical literary value.

The following list shows pairs of Arabic standard language terms and their literary counterparts. While the words in the first column could be used in literary and non-literary usages, the words in the second column are confined to literary usage only.

standard	literary
قلم	يراع
الشفاه	اللمى
بحر	يم
ظلام	دجى
ارق	سهاد
اشترى	ابتاع
ابجر	مخر
أتعب	أضنى
تعب	نصب
حرب	وغى
دفن	وارى
دخل	ولج
اشتعل	تلظى

heart	eye	back	skin	nose
قلب	عين	ظهر	جلد	أنف
فؤاد	طرف	مئن	أهاب	منخر
جنان	مقلاة	كاهل	بشرة	
	لحظ		أدمة	

mouth	finger	neck	cheek	forehead
فم	اصبع	رقبة	خد	جبين
ثغر	بنانة	عنق	وجنة	جبهة
فؤا		جيد		
		نحر		

Some Translation Difficulties Arising from Synonymy

when the TL does not have equivalent term with the same stylistic value, it is sometimes that the only available equivalent to an Arabic word is that on a different level (or type) of usage, and thus has a different stylistic value.

Although English and Arabic Possess many synonyms, it is unlikely that each term in the Arabic lexicon would find an exact equivalent in English, or that there would be a parallelism in the type or degree of synonymy between the two languages. The closest equivalents to term with literary echoes would probably

Consequently, connotative meanings might be overlooked if the target language can not meet them. This demonstrates the fact that the major part of lexical non-equivalence is stylistic or connotative. To give concrete examples Cantarino (1976 Vol. 1, p19) translates the sentence *عيرَ قريشَ منه قريب* in to “That the caravan of the koreish was near him”. Then, on p. 63 he translates *وَدُفِنَ بِهَا بَعْدَ شَهْرٍ مِنْ مَسِيرَةِ الْقَافِلَةِ إِلَى مَكَّة* in to “a month after the caravan’s departure...”. So, he rendered both *عير* and *قافلة* into caravan aiming only at transferring the referential meaning. The same method is followed by him (Vol.I, p54) on a single page where he translated *م توفى نحو سنة ٥٤٠ م* into “He died about 540 AD “. Three lines later he translated *ما قبض نبي إلا دُفِنَ حَيْثُ يُقْبَضُ* into “No prophet has ever died who was not buried where he died “. (see also p.24, 29, 65).

One might be able to move on to consider an entire group of words. For instance, naming the different parts of the body which is indeed a linguistic universal, but the variety of names for a given part is language specific. It is interesting to note that Arabic has at least two synonyms, and up to four describing many parts of the body, but English on the other hand has only one.

not total synonyms because 'politician' has-connotation while statesman has + connotation.

Palmer (1981-92) emphasizes that some synonyms differ in their connotations. It is sometimes suggested that words become associated with certain characteristics of the item to which they refer. Thus, woman has the connotation 'gentle' and pig has the connotation 'dirty'.

The term connotation is also called 'associative' meaning, which is usefully distinguished from inherent or 'referential' meaning. Connotation is the meaning that individuals in a speech community associate with a lexeme over and above its referential meaning.

However differentiating the meaning of synonyms could be more difficult than establishing the meaning of single words. In other words, it is very easy to say the meaning of ذهب "to go" and مات "to die", but when it comes to the difference between ذهب and راح or between مات and توفي the task will not be an easy one. One might resort to the linguistic contexts in which each word of the pair appears.

Modern standard Arabic has several literary sources behind it affecting its development and the stylistic value of its vocabulary. This has resulted in overloading part of the Arabic vocabulary with literary or emotive values or both.

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the writer will be in a much better position to deal with the problem of selecting and grading language materials for any group of learners if the results of the analysis of their errors are available to him. Thus he will include precisely in a book what language materials a certain group of learners needs:

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formation and derivation), overgeneralization, etc. But of all these and some others not shown here interference from Arabic occupies a leading position.

The suggestion here is that systematic Arabic-English contrastive studies together with analysis of the actual errors made by learner at all levels can contribute effectively to the development of English language teaching in Iraq. Error analysis can contribute to the constituents of the language teaching-learning process which comprises the teaching materials, method of presentation, the teacher and the textbook designer.

Error analysis can reveal the learner's difficulties and sources of errors in English. It enables the English language teacher to be fully aware of the areas where the learner makes errors. It may encourage the teacher to practise analysing his learner's errors and pay more attention to Arabic, an essential factor in the process of English language teaching in Iraq that has so far been ignored. Error Analysis provides the teacher with essential knowledge of when to avoid or use translation carefully to show the difference in English and Arabic and when to use any other method of teaching. Such as:

For the textbook writer, knowledge of the results of E. A. of a group of learners for whom he intends to write a book is absolutely essential. With the evidence that the results provide,

Arabic interference is evident in the following forms as far as the meaning and the way words are used to convey it:

- x to do friendship: in the context looking for friendship.
- x different races: nationalities (referring to people of the same race). Both words are used interchangeably in spoken Iraqi in the same context despite their difference in meaning.
- x they must leave their narrowing opinions: broaden their minds.
- x life... a very large thing: big, wide topic

Some vocabulary errors are as persistent as those of concord or preposition, for instance. They are due to the limited amount of vocabulary the learner possesses and to his little practice in the language. Some of the above vocabulary errors can best be described as transitional errors and will die off sooner than some other syntactic errors. Some of them disappear shortly after the learner finds his way on his study.

Conclusion

As this paper shows, interference from Arabic constitutes a major source of errors to the Iraqi learner of English. Many other sources for errors are also pointed out which are related to the teaching material, method of presentation, the inherent difficulty in parts of the languages (for instance, the irregularities of world

In the following form words are often confused and used interchangeably mainly because of their physical resemblance:

x and my live began	(life)
x we life in the town	(live)
x you company him in good or bad	(acompany)
x we should work to be succeeded	(successful)
x the difficulty of the universal life	(university)
x a crash happens	(clash)referring to opinions
x everything exchanges .	(changes)
x my holiday became	(began)
x more exactly in spring	(especially)

Wilkins (1973: 196) states that it is not always apparent to decide how far someone speaking a foreign language uses words meanings that are actually used in that language and how far he uses these words with meanings derived from their equivalents in the mother-tongue. In other words "the actual error may or may not be related to the mother-tongue". Then what is the source?

- x I tell (to) her
- x letter for a friend (in) anywhere
- Or others necessary but omitted:
- x all us (of)
- x to listen my older brother (to)
- x the collection stamps (of)
- x considered himself responsible them (for).

Apart from his resort to Arabic, it must be frustrating for a second- language learner to discover that in English verbs may be followed by the infinitive (with or without to), by a direct object and the infinitive, by a gerund (with or without a preposition) or by a noun clause. There may even be a choice between two of these constructions (with or with out a change of meaning). Yet again, some verbs take a direct object while other take a preposition before a noun. which such as: Construction? which preposition? (Wyatt: 1973, 182).

8. Vocabulary

Errors may occur in vocabulary because of wrong collection, i, e. Words and idioms are confused or misused. With his limited amount of vocabulary, the learner tries to express himself by choosing the word which he thinks is suitable, but for one reason or another he may simply make wrong choice.

x at the first day	x in the same time
x in that beautiful day	x in the other hand
x on the evening	x in the end of this week
x in Friday	x in this time

The interference is clear in:

- x the train pass from it
- x the river pass from it
- x the water for grow it
- x three kinds for oil
- x it is so near about our place
- x my mother in home

Where the preposition by 'is replaced by' from` in the first two examples, the equivalent to the most frequent Iraqi Arabic preposition namely the prefix (ب). 'For' in the second two examples is equivalent to (من) and 'in' is the Arabic equivalent to (في or ب).

Mother-tongue interference is very clear in many instances in the data where necessary prepositions were inserted: and also the.

- x The travelling (to) home
- x to reach (to) what he want to be
- x things that affect (at) ourselves

x They journey with our friends	(their)
x They take with us	(them)
x advised my to study	(me)
x we mixed with them	(I)
x The animals depended on it to continue her life	(their)

This last example can as well be a sign of mother-tongue interference. The equivalent to the word 'animals' in Arabic is always referred to by the third person singular feminine pronoun 'she'.

7. Preposition

It is often said that English prepositions and verb idioms are a foreign learner's biggest headache (MacCarthy, 1972; Zughol, 1973 and 1979; Khampany, 1974; McArthur and Atkins, 1975). In this class of English words the Iraqi learner makes errors persistently even at more advanced levels. The interference from Iraqi Arabic here is very evident. Prepositions in English are plentiful and for some Iraqi prepositions there may be five or ten possible English translations depending on the context (cf. Erwin: 1963,299). As the data show, errors are very frequent in the choice of prepositions in expressing relationships in space and time especially those used idiomatically:

gender, number and determination, they do not necessarily do so in Iraqi Arabic. The equivalent of "this" in speech can be followed by both singular and plural nouns. The above forms can also be "example of interference from the English, however, all adjectives have the same form both in singular and the plural, except two: this and that. Therefore it is not surprising that under the overwhelming pressure of all other adjectives these two words are also treated as unchangeable" (Duskova, 1969: 21-22).

The difference between the use of adjectives in English and Arabic is that of word order. Whereas an adjective in English usually comes before the noun it modifies, in Arabic it comes after it:

x eyes blue	for blue eyes
x spring beautiful	for beautiful
x my day first	for my first day

6. The use of pronouns

The data support the idea which says that the Iraqi learner has no serious frequent pronominal problem. In substituting for nouns, the learner sometimes chooses the wrong pronoun. Carelessness accounts for the following errors:

5. *Adjectives*

Errors in adjectives are closely related to those of nouns since some adjectives overlap in their use and classification with nouns. A striking problem to the Iraqi learner, as the data reveals, is the irregularity in the formation of adjectives and their overlapping with forms of other classes, especially with nouns:

- x their houses are distance
- x we become most activity
- x The electric in the night be off
- x a very amusement season
- x many geography places

It is frustrating to the learner that some adjectives have more than one form, each used in a different context:

- x very interested
- x The life in the university is interested

There are some instances of errors that show a lack of agreement between the demonstrative adjective and its noun:

- x This difficulties
- x This places
- x This birds

The lack of agreement probably occurs because the learner translates the Arabic equivalent form into English. In standard Arabic, although adjectives follow the noun and agree with it in

x all peoples	x another times
x any pupils	x every things
x much friends	x another cities
x many show	x every other things
x these snows	

In the following, the determiners are used with count nouns but the student failed to add the plural morpheme (s) either due to carelessness, or mainly because this morpheme is considered superfluous, or because the determiner itself expresses the idea of plural:

x several colour	x it has many garden
x many reason	x all the boy and girl
x many accident	x in two part
	x all of them have job
x so many time	

sometimes the rule of plural is overgeneralized to include pluralization of non-count words:

x we must help them with money, foods

x they needed our helps

x these snows

x peoples are going

- x A good clothes
- x A wool clothes
- x A great quantities

It is either because words like clothes, quantities, mountains and so many others are always more likely to be used in the plural form that the learner comes to believe that they have no singular form or because at the early stages of learning the indefinite article is so heavily used in naming and introducing objects that "the learner might believe that every noun in English begins with the sound (a)" (George, 1972: 104).

b) Other determiners

The various classes of determiners: any, every, some, (an) other, all, so, many, (a)few. (a) little, etc. with respect to their co-occurrence with noun classes: singular count, plural count and non-count nouns constitute an area in the language where errors are very frequent. This is, as mentioned, partly because the categorization of nouns is not in itself clear and partly because these determiners in themselves are subclassified into many classes, each of which "distinctions according to their patterning with the classes of singular count and non-count nouns" (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973: 62) are made. It seems difficult for the learner to grasp these facts concerning the use of the various patterning of determiners at this stage. His confusion is reflected in his writing:

letters. The case being like that in Arabic, the learner of English does not think of its equivalence in English, instead he considers "the" redundant. He writes:

- x The four seasons of year
- x All things they needed
- x Some of people
- x In morning
- x One of worldcenters

"The" is used in the following:

- x Prevent me from the learning
- x My future in the life
- x The life isn't easy
- x After the winter is finished, the spring comes
- x In the spring
- x The student in the Mosul
- x The life (as a title)

Because words like life, winter, spring, Mosul, when used in a general sense are always definite in Arabic. The definite article is often added before a word in the plural especially when the word is separated from the article by a modifying word and does not immediately follow it:

- x A green clothes
- x A nice mountains

x It colded (called)

4. Noun Groups

Determiners

a) Articles

This is an area which is very problematic to Arabic students and it has been proven that the use of the English definite / indefinite articles is a serious source of difficulty to Arabic-speaking students. It has also been proven that one of the main sources of difficulty comes from Arabic interference. Arabic employs a different system for indicating definiteness and indefiniteness in the language (cf. Scott and Tucker 1974; Will-Cott, 1978; Khanji, 1981). This problem is closely related to the classification of nouns in English into count or non-count. It can also be traced back to Arabic in its use and classification of nouns and articles. In Arabic the definite article is "a prefix prefixed to the noun and assimilated to the first consonant (and) for the majority of definite Arabic nouns, these short vowels are followed by a final (-n) not indicated on the cursive line called 'nunation'" (Bateson, 1967: 10). In other words there is no indefinite article in Arabic represented as an independent word in writing, and even the definite article is always part of the word and can hardly be felt with some consonants usually referred to as "sun letters" because the definite article is assimilated to them and converted to t, d, r, z, s, etc. If the word begins with one of these

infinitive, that some are “awkward in questions involving inversion and others are preferred, that some modals are not used in the past tense except in reported speech” (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973: 57) and that some are idiomatically used caused frustration and confusion not only to the learner of English but to the teacher as well. The data shows such errors as:

- x He will saw
- x We can know
- x All the boys and girls will reading it
- x He see the brother is must then to go
- x I shall still said it
- x They must changed it

c) Irregularities and wrong conjugation

We have noticed that our learners have made so many mistakes in the conjugation of irregular verbs and they are always confused because these verbs are abundant. They seem to overgeneralize them on the form of regular verbs:

- x To made him happy
- x To chose a good friend
- x To spent most of our time
- x To found a car
- x The grandmother tolds me
- x He chosed the stamps

x In spring the sky is raining but after short time the sun is shining.

b) Sequence of tenses

The confusion can clearly be seen in the sequence of tenses. In the data very few were consistent in tense sequence.

- x They went to and they take
- x I felt sad because I don't know any one
- x I saw and speak
- x Who go to there did not feel tired
- x I went to the student house and I take all my

This is due to the fact that when writing in Arabic, the learner's attention is very rarely drawn to the gravity of such errors. They are not considered errors at all unless they sound odd enough. The learner then models his writing in English on Arabic. He does not borrow directly but may equate the tenses of the target language with the tense in his own language and then choose between them as if he was using his mother tongue (cf. Wlikins, 1973: 194).

The verb to be, as mentioned above, is always considered superfluous by the learner who drops it because it has no exact equivalent in his mother tongue. Its frequency is considerably high.

Like the verb to be as a main verb and auxiliary, the modal auxiliaries are very frequent errors as the data reveals them. Take fact that some modals take the to-infinitive and some take the bare

language (cf. Comrie, 1993: 7 and 1986: 13 and Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973: 40). Tense is a particularly thorny problem in both languages as there is no one to one correspondence between time and tense, Aziz (1989). This makes it very difficult for the learner of English to overcome errors in this field. In Arabic there are fewer distinctions in tense compared to those in English. The temporal distinction between waiting for a long time and a very long time is hardly experienced. Arabic has only three discernible points of time compared to eight in English (Setian, 1972: 293). The expression of time in terms of verbal means seems to be less precise than in English (cf. Al-Bamarni and Agha 1987). This subtle cultural difference in time is a big headache to the Iraqi learner who is always confused in his choices of tenses in speech and writing. Here he used the present tense in a past context:

- x My teacher welcome the student
- x The poor woman become happy
- x There we spend thew time
- x The first day when I come to the university
- x when I fail in finding

or the progressive in place of the simple present tense:

- x The rain is coming down
- x when the spring coming
- x In the university the student wearing

b) .Omission of essential components

In Arabic the subject is sometimes implied and not represented as an independent word in the sentence; it is usually indicated by short vowel suffixes (Beatson, 1967: 9). Arabic interferes here resulting into the omission of the subject as in:

- x Now I am happy for began to study
- x University life is very happy and read the new subject
- x The oil is very important because used in cooking .

If the omission of the subject is not very frequent, the omission of the verb, especially verb to be, is far more frequent:

- x The earth covered
- x Oil in Iraq better
- x Oil in Iraq very much
- x Oil in Iraq found

“Is” here is considered superflous since it has no exact equivalent in the learner’s language i.e Arabic.

3. Verb Groups

a) Wrong choice of tenses

The major group of errors here is related to the problem of the concept of time and tense. “Time” is universal and “tense” is a linguistic concept by which we understand the correspondence between the form of the verb and our concept of time in a particular

concord with the third person singular subject while others do not. There is no equivalent to this morpheme in Arabic.

The confusion of this morpheme with that of plural noun morpheme (s) creates confusion for the learner who sometimes adds the morpheme (s) not after a singular subject but after a plural subject, presumably because of the strength of association between-s and the plural (cf. Wilkins, 1973: 193). The learner produces:

- x The flowers grows
- x Many people goes out
- x The people enjoys themselves
- x We wents for a journey
- x In winter people usually wears
- x When they want to go

Duskova (1969: 11) relates this kind of errors "hypercorrection" and she suggests that these errors may be attributable to the pressure from all of the other endingless forms. Accordingly the Iraqi learner is so often corrected when he says "he go" for instance and he occasionally compensates in an effort to avoid the pitfall. On the other hand Kharma and Hajaj (1989: 90) states the Arabic verbs agree with the subject in person and number, so this is definitely not a case of mother tongue interference.

Although all the consonants in classical Arabic writing may be doubled they very rarely appear in modern Arabic writing as two successive identical consonants. There are limitations in some morphological contexts, on the appearance of the same consonant twice with only a short vowel intervening (Bateson, 1967: 5) The consonants in Arabic are very often reduced to one. It is not surprising then, that when writing in English the learner reduces the double consonant into one.

The frequency of vowel errors is far greater than that of consonant errors.

2. Sentences Structure

a) Concord

One of the most frequent errors made by the Iraqi learner is that of concord, the agreement between verb and subject. As the data reveals almost in all the papers this error occurred:

- x Zeki don't go to the university
- x The sun set and rise
- x The train pass
- x If the person like it
- x He want to be

The learner over generalizes the forms of verbs that occur with subject. The present tense verb takes the morpheme (s) only in

Writing a single for a double consonant and vice versa is another consonantal error. This reflects the relatively inconsistent and arbitrary nature of the English word derivation. The Iraqi learner at this stage hardly knows of the various rules of when to double a consonant and when not because they are many. He does not know for instance, that "bases ending in certain consonants are doubled after single unstressed vowels" (cf. Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973: 29). He may think that some words are written with a double consonant, but he can hardly tell when:

x beatifull	beautiful
x joyfull	joyful
x oppening	opening
x bringging	bringing

In the following a single for double consonant is used:

x to bas	pass	x apear	appear
x mared	married	x attractive	attractive
x hils	hills	x midle	middle
x hapy	happy	deferent	different
x hoby	hobby	x pasangers	passengers

x thic	thick
x now	know
x lisen	listen
x Autome	Autumn
x sik	sick
x wether	whether

Irregularities in English consonants are also shown with some sounds which are represented in writing in more than one way. This phenomenon has no equivalent in Arabic. Outstandingly, the palato-alveolar affricates (tʃ, dʒ) and the palato-alveolar fricatives (ʃ, ʒ) constitute special difficulty among others to the Iraqi learner. Each of these can be represented in many ways, sometimes nine ways as in the case with (dʒ). The learner can't at this stage master all these ways. His writing shows such errors as:

x speachly	specially
x speshally	
x spichaly	
x futcher	future
x occion	ocean
x chaket	jacket

English often confuse (p) with the voiced bilabial plosive (b) (cf. Aziz, 1974: 167). In the data only two papers made the confusion:

x to bas the examination	pass
x batient	patient

No error is found with the voiced velar plosive (g).

Another difference between the two languages which results into consonantal errors is that of the consonant clusters in English. Arabic does not permit clusters of two or more consonants at the beginning or ending of a word (Ibid). The learner, as a result, tends to insert a vowel between the consonants, especially when the cluster comes at the end in words such as:

x chiledhood	childhood
x reteren	return
x thired	third

Irregularities in English spelling account for many errors made by the Iraqi learner. There are some letters in English that are written but not pronounced. The learner, modelling his spelling on that of Arabic which lacks this phenomenon, simply writes what he pronounces. He makes errors with words such as:

x her	for	here
x there place		their place
x hut		hot
x lift		left

The learner sometimes slips as the native speaker does. In the data there are examples of words repeated many times with a vowel errors once or twice only:

x litter	for	letter
x her		here or reverse
x seid		said
x becaus		because

b) Consonantal Errors

As with vowel errors, it has been predicted that errors in consonants may fall into two types: those which result from the difference between the two-language different system and those which result from the nature and system of English. The findings prove our expectations.

The voiceless plosive bilabial consonant (p) and the voiced velar consonant (g) do not exist in classical Arabic. However, the sound (g) is found in many Arabic dialects including that of Baghdad and those spoken in the south of the country. Some Iraqi learners of

x chaing	change
x stady	study
x irea	area
x hevily	heavily

When a vowel has no sound value, according to his pronunciation, the learner simply does not represent it graphically, or may represent it according to his pronunciation:

x lik	like	x becom	become
x jok	joke	x homework	homework
x vist	visit	x languge	language
x swming	swimming	x animls	animals

The learner here is also modelling his pronunciation and spelling on that of Arabic, despite the fact that the script of the two languages is completely different-in Arabic, as mentioned before, he writes as he speaks and reads. Every vowel in his language, weak or strong is pronounced in normal situations.

vowel errors sometimes occur due to analogy with other item in English. The learner perceives certain similarities between two or more words, or mixes sometimes between two similarly pronounced words as in:

The following categories of spelling errors are revealed in the data:

a) *Vowel errors:*

We have found that the vowel errors in writing are made for various reasons. Often a learner has been instructed to write words as he pronounces them. He is very rarely told about the great deal of arbitrariness and inconsistency in the English spelling system, that the value of vowels in unstressed syllables is different when they occur in stressed ones. He does not know, for instance, that the long vowel (i) as in the word (police) can be represented in writing by the following combination of vowels: ee, ea, ie, ei, ey e or i (Gimson, 1970: 99). The learner, as a result, does not know the natural difference in presentation between spoken and written English. The corpus shows such error as:

x retern or reteren	return
x flawars	flowers
x mared	married
x ower	our
x deasamber	December
x mauntins	mountains
x claimet	climate
x helth	health

- b. Sequence of tenses
- c. Irregularities and wrong conjugation

4. Noun Groups

Determiners

- a. Articles
- b. Other determiners

5. Adjectives

6. Prepositions

- a. Wrong ones used
- b. Addition
- c. Omission

7. Vocabulary

1. Spelling

The phonological system of English compared to that of Arabic is considerably different. Arabic is for the most part phonetically represented (As-Safi, 1972: 168) whereas the nature of English spelling is non-phonetic (Ibrahim, 1978: 208). Thus the two languages employ two completely different scripts and spelling system. It is predicted that the greatest difficulty encountered by Iraqi students arises from the differences between the seemingly irregular spelling system of English compared with the greater regularity of the predominantly phonetic script of Arabic (Cf. Kharma and Hajaj 1989: 56)

The aim behind this paper is to classify, describe and explain the common errors made by Iraqi learners at this level. The errors described here are not new to most language teachers in Iraq. What is new, perhaps, is the account I hope I would be able to give to some of the errors found in the papers under examination, together with some suggestion concerning the value of error analysis for the improvement of English language teaching in Iraq.

Classification of Errors Detected in the Data

There is no one best or standard method of dealing with composition errors. In fact, "no two specialist would agree on the exact way of classifying some errors" (c. f. Etherton, 1977: 75). I hope the method I followed here will prove appropriate and generally useful to the objective of this paper.

Errors are classified and dealt with under the following heading:

1. Spelling

- a. Vowel errors
- b. Consonant errors

2. Sentence structure

- a. Concord
- b. Omission of essential components
- c. Punctuation

3. Verb Groups

- a. Wrong Choice of tense

expected to be equivalent as they have studied English for eight years under one unified system of education, at the end of which they sat for general Baccalaureate examination.

I have chosen to analysis written errors and not spoken because we believe that such writing requires considerable planning and organization on the part of the writer who should demonstrate his/her best ability to use his linguistic and communicative competence. Also the students would find it extremely difficult to speak for any length of time and if they did they would speak almost exactly as they would write if not worse.

This paper makes no claim to completeness since the papers examined do not cover all possible errors. The fifty students were given free choice of how to express themselves and what grammatical and lexical items to use in the content. They were only asked to write an average of 150 words. In view of these circumstances errors such as: tenses in general, preposition, articles, irregular formations of various word classes are common in most papers, whereas others such as: question, conditionals, reported speech, etc. rarely appeared in some papers. If the frequency of the last group of errors was low, that does not mean that the learner has no difficulty with them. It may simply mean that the learner avoided them due to their difficulty, or due to the nature of the topic he was writing about.

for the teacher because they are indicators of what should be taught thoroughly. Error are also significant for the research worker because they make up an important input to any discussion of second language SL theory (cf. Albarany, 1989; 23).

Description of the Data

The data chosen for analysis is that of the first and second year students at Mosul Technical Institute. Fifty students of both sexes were asked to write a short essay on one of the following topics: "Your first day at the institute" or "An account of an experience you have had", or "A person whom you admire". These three topics were chosen in order to have a variety of writing patterns: expository, narrative and descriptive. The composition varied in length from 120 to 200 words. The students were given 60 minutes to finish with it. No restrictions or guidance were given to them in advance or at the time of writing. The idea behind that, as far as the results are concerned, writing free composition is considerably different from writing guided composition in that the writer has relatively free choice of structure and Lexis.

I tried to make the group chosen as homogeneous as I could, despite the fact that there are always certain variables that defy homogeneity. The most important factor of homogeneity is the linguistic one. The group consists of students who speak the same mother-tongue i.e. Arabic. Secondly, their knowledge of English is

IRAL in 1967 has stimulated many language researchers and teachers in the world who started classifying and analysing errors taken from student's compositions and conversations and using them as a base for theory construction and classroom practice (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982: 140).

EA is limited by definition to the study of errors. It is based on the idea that careful study of learner's free production in a speech or writing in a foreign language can be expected to reveal and indicate the limits of the learner's knowledge (i.e. areas of difficulty) of that language: it will also show up the point where his knowledge is too insufficient. For him to rephrase correctly what he wants to say (Standhal, 1973: 116). The study of learner's errors in part of the study of languages learning... "it is part of the psycholinguistic" search for the universal process of second language learning (Corder, 1973:267) also (cf. Taylor, 1986: 144 ff.).

The significance of EA for the learner, the teacher and the research worker has been widely studied by many researchers (Corder, 1967 and 1973; Strevens, 1971; Selinker, 1972; Svartvik, 1973; Richards, 1975; Johanssen, 1975; Gorbet, 1979; Dulay et al, 1982; Norrish, 1983; Littlewood, 1984 Kharma and Hajaj, 1989 among others). All these researchers agree that errors are important for the learner because they construct evidence of the devices he employs to approximate the target language. Errors are important

Error Analysis of Students' Writing at Mosul Technical Institute

Lazgin Kh. Albarany^(*)

Abstract

Fifty composition papers were used as the basis for error analysis. Fifty students of both sexes at their first and second year of study at Mosul Technical Institute in Mosul were asked to write a short essay on described and explained. It has been found that these writers commit all errors that one can think of. The errors were classified under the following headings: spelling, sentences structure, verb groups, adjectives, prepositions, and vocabulary. Interference from Arabic constructs a major source of errors. Many other sources for errors are also pointed out which are related to the teaching materials and the learning process of the target language.

Error Analysis (EA): A Brief Review

The study of learner's errors has been a primary focus of foreign and / or second language research during the last decade. Corder's paper "The significance of learner's errors " which appeared in

(*) Mosul tech. Institute