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| <p style="text-align: center;">RESEARCH OF THE ERRORS MADE BY ALBANIAN STUDENTS, IN WRITING AND SPEAKING WHILE LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE</p> |  | <p style="text-align: center;">Linguistics</p> <p>Keywords: writing errors, pupils, research, verbs, tests, speaking errors, grammar errors, etc.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Edita Ramani</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">University of Tetova "Fadil Sulejmani". North Macedonia.</p> | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p>The objective of this research is to find out the pupils errors in speaking and writing English as their second language. This research used different searching methods such as: inductive method, deductive method modeling etc. The participants of this research were elementary school pupils of 8th and 9th grade of the elementary school "Gjergj Kastrioti Skenderbeu" in Poroj and high school students of "7 Marsi" and Gymnasium "Kirili Pejcinovic" both in Tetovo in the academic year 2018. A total of 100 students participated in this research. The main instrument of this research was writing and the second main was speaking. The data of this research were collected by giving students some questionnaires, to write informal letters, different tests on word formation and debates among pupils. The result of the research was as follow: Using wrong form of verbs, problems with tenses, wrong form of negative sentences, wrong use of singular and plural, omission of verb and lot of pronouncing problems. From the results was concluded that the main cause of errors made by pupils of all schools was the influence of native language and grammar differences between the two languages.</p> | | |

1. Introduction

Language is the most important communication tool between people, it is a tool that is used to accept and deliver information and in the same time to help express and create our thoughts. Language is a complicated grammatical lexical and phonological system. English language is an important language used by more than billion people. Since English is spoken all over the world people who are non-native speakers of English may have problems while speaking and writing it. Nowadays English is an obligated subject in elementary schools, high schools and universities. Since English is taught as foreign language by Albanian students they often have difficulties in writing and speaking English because the influence of their native language in this case Albanian language.

Richards (1973:97), defines that: "Error analysis offers us a clear view of students' language development and gives us clear instruction to the learning process". According to Corder (1974:15), he claims that "Errors are important for students" moreover he states that "errors are necessary during language acquisition, because fallibility is part of the learning process." Corder (1973:277), has classified errors into four main categories: "omission of some required element, addition of some unnecessary or incorrect element, selection of incorrect element, and disordering of elements.

2. Literature Review

Based on Brown (1987: 12), he stated that “Learning a second language is long and complex undertaking”. To refer to learning a second language is used the term SLA which means second language acquisition. According to Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005), it is stated that “Second language acquisition perceives learner language in two ways that coincide with two directions the SLA researcher can take when studying it. These two opposing views are learner language seen as content and learner language seen as expression”. The research has shown (Corder 1987; Ellis & Barkhuizen 2005; Richards & Sampson, 1974), they claimed that: “In the process of language acquisition, learners also make use of the resources that come from their native language knowledge.” According to Corder (1967: 161-170.), he stated that “The learners compare the foreign language with their native language and when they detect similarities and when it appears feasible and correct, they borrow the hypotheses from their mother language and apply in the foreign language”. Learning a second language often leads to errors of different kinds. It is been known that errors play an important role in language learning. According to Wikipedia.org it is stated that “Error analysis studies the types and causes of language error; it distinguishes between errors, which are systematic, and mistakes, which are not”. According to Richards, J. C. & Schmidt, R. (2002: 184), state that: “error is the use of a linguistic item in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning. A distinction is sometimes made between an error, which results from incomplete knowledge, and a mistake made by a learner when writing or speaking and which is caused by lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness, or some other aspect of performance”. Based on Norrish (1983: 7) as cited in “Correction of Errors In English A Training Course” refers to an “error as a systematic deviation that happens when a learner has not learnt something, and consistently gets it wrong”. We should differentiate between error and mistake. A mistake is not a systematic deviation of the norms of language; on the other hand errors are systematic deviations. Moreover Richard (1970: 3), classified errors into two categories: “The Interlingual Error and the Intralingual”. According to Norrish (1983: 21-26), he classifies causes of error on three types that are: “carelessness, first language interference, and translation”. Two main types of errors are distinguished while learning a second language: writing errors and speaking errors that can be further divided in many categories. According to Cf. Bussmann, Hadumod (1996:378), it is stated that “Errors are classified according to:

- cause (e.g., interference, interlanguage)
- modality (level of proficiency in speaking, writing, reading, listening)
- linguistic levels (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, style)
- form (omission, insertion, substitution)
- type (systematic errors/errors in competence vs. occasional errors/errors in performance)”

According to Hemchua & Schmitt (2006: 3), it is stated that “The language produced by foreign language learners almost inevitably contains errors of various types. This is the process of learning a language”. According to Corder (1987:260), it is stated that: “Native speakers should have perfectly knowledge of their language; yet they commit goofs when they use their language; but when the attention is drawn to these goofs, they can easily recognize and correct them”. On the other hand learners of a foreign language are not aware of this errors, these sorts of goofs that foreign language learners do are called errors. To learn a language a person should master the four skills of listening, reading speaking and writing. Errors are part of learning process, and students should not feel stressed about it but try to recognize these errors and improve them so the learning process will be more efficient. Based on Richards & Renandya (2002: 303), they state that: “among all the skills writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners, since they need to generate ideas organize them and translate into text which is a very difficult process for students”. Moreover they state that “Teachers try to improve these errors in different ways but often they are unsuccessful, because errors are repeated”. According to Krashen (2004), as cited in Grey says that: “Teachers of ESL/EFL should offer grammar correction feedback for improving their student's grammatical competency in writing; they should constantly stress in their classes the importance of outside reading.” Some studies have shown that voluntary reading in the target language greatly helps the overall writing and grammatical skills of second language students.

Shoebottom, P. (2012) stated that: Native speakers rarely make grammar mistakes on writing, but less proficient ESL students do a big number of grammar mistakes since their mother tongue interferes in the production of correct English structures. ESL students make a big number of mistakes in the use of nouns, verbs, tenses articles etc. According to Carter (1997:35), notes that, “Knowing more about how grammar works is to understand more about how grammar is used and misused’. There is a need for students to recognize the significance of errors which occur in their writing, to fully grasp and understand the nature of the errors made. This requires English language teachers to be better equipped, more sensitive and aware of the difficulties students face with regard to grammar.”

3. Methodology

This is a study that focuses on error analysis of Albanian students on writing and speaking English as foreign language, mostly focused on grammatical errors. This study aimed to examine grammatical error types because grammar is a basis of a language and also structures writing and speaking. On this study a big number of students from different levels were involved and the number of errors and different type of errors were collected by this research. This study used deductive and inductive method, observation method, method of data collection and modeling method where the theory and practice will be united etc. According to www.deborahgabriel.org it is stated that: “A deductive approach is aimed and testing theory usually begins with a hypothesis, an inductive approach is concerned with the generation of new theory emerging from the data and usually uses research questions to narrow the scope of the study”.

3.1 Sample and Sampling Procedures

The procedures used by the researcher is a convenience sampling that is a type of sampling that is made up of people who are easy to reach. The samples consisted of students of two high schools and one elementary school that have English language as a school subject. This study was conducted on a number of 200 students who were divided in three different schools. The first groups of students were; 60 students of high school with higher grades on English language, the second group were 60 students of high school with medium and low grades in English language, whereas the third group consisted of 40 pupils of elementary school. It was conducted in three different schools in order to distinguish between the errors that occur according to age, level of English language taught on schools. Both high schools are located on Tetovo and the elementary school located on a village 3 kilometers near Tetovo Macedonia.

3.2 Instruments of Research

Three different instruments were used in this research that are: writing an essay on a common topic which is directly related to the pupil so they can express themselves freely and based on their experience, the theme of this essay was “school bullying”, the second instrument was asking pupils to fulfill a pre-compiled questionnaire by the researcher, and the third instrument was role playing a debate among students during classroom. The topic of essay was chosen because it was directly related to the students and is an increasing phenomenon in schools and it also encourages students to express their selves freely about this phenomenon.

3.3 Procedures of Data Collecting

Our research deals with grammatical errors on speaking and writing, so the material for the research was collected both in written form and oral form, students were asked to write an essay that was collected immediately after finishing the class, other written instrument was asking students to fulfill a questionnaire during a class and it was also collected immediately after finishing the class. Each student was given a questionnaire and was asked to work individually so we could have clear view of student’s errors. Both writing assessments were easy to collect and to be analyzed since they provided clear evidence of grammatical errors. They were both easy realized and gave us clear results of grammatical errors done by students in writing. Despite the fact that written exercises were easier to achieve and the results were clearer oral exercises were more difficult to accomplish and data analysis was more complicated. Speech is a faster process, so it is more difficult to investigate all mistakes made by students during the debate. The written data are easy to obtain and also to be presented on paper, meanwhile during spoken exercise the researcher should be very careful to realize and write down all the mistakes the students do and many errors may not be accessed by the researcher. Errors were counted and converted into percentage.

3.4 Procedures of Data Analyzing

The essays and tests were taken from the students immediately at the end of the English class and they were later analyzed, the errors of spoken debate were written from the researcher during the classroom or during the debate and part of them were recorded for to analyze later. Grammatical errors founded were extracted and then classified into two categories: Written errors and spoken errors, later they were classified into subcategories as follows: Spoken errors were classified on local errors and global errors whereas written errors were classified into several types such as tenses and errors on parts of speech which were founded on our research. On this stage errors were counted and then classified on respective categories, and later was made a comparison on the frequency of the types of errors. Errors were identified, analyzed and divided into different categories and tabulated and finally the percentage of errors is extracted. The most common grammatical errors found were errors in using Grammatical Tenses which were further divided in sub categories.

Limitations

One obvious limitation is that this study is done in the region of Tetovo and cannot include the mistakes that make Albanian pupils in Macedonia in general; to be precise this study includes the students of only three schools in the region of Tetova. This is due to limited time and possibilities of the researcher to collect and record all the errors made by learners.

4. Data Analysis

In this section, we will present the data collected in our research, and we will present two types of data: qualitative and quantitative. Based on smallbusiness.chron, the definitions about qualitative and quantitative research has been given. According to smallbusiness.chron, “Qualitative research deals with people reaction and feeling about a specific situation whereas quantitative research presents numerical results which are measured.” This section consists of three parts which include: grammatical errors committed by Albanian students in writing, grammatical errors committed by Albanian students in speaking and the last part errors that Albanian students did in the use of tenses in writing.

Types of Grammatical Errors

Grammatical Errors Committed By Albanian Students In Writing

| Student | Tenses | Verb | Preposition | Adjective | Pronoun | SVA |
|---------|--------|------|-------------|-----------|---------|-----|
| 1 | 12 | 3 | 5 | - | - | 4 |
| 2 | 3 | - | 2 | 2 | - | 3 |
| 3 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| 4 | 10 | 5 | 7 | 3 | - | 4 |
| 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - |
| 6 | 11 | 1 | 3 | 2 | - | 2 |
| 7 | 4 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 2 |
| 8 | 6 | - | 3 | 2 | 1 | - |
| 9 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 10 | 6 | 2 | 1 | - | 2 | - |

In this table are presented seven types of grammatical errors from the data collected in the three schools.

The errors included on this table are: errors in Tenses, Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Prepositions, Pronouns and Subject –Verb agreement. The biggest number of errors is done under the category of Grammatical Tenses than followed by errors in using Verbs, Nouns and then the others, Pronouns have the lowest number of errors. The table above presents all the errors we collected from our research, and the table presents the errors the students made as individuals, based on our findings all students committed one or more errors in using tenses. Errors were counted and the percentage was calculated for each category. Tenses cover the biggest number of overall errors (758) and the second category with a big number of errors is Verbs with a total of (188) after verbs there are errors in using Nouns (114) there are also a big number of errors in Subject-Verb category (115) and the three categories with less errors are Preposition (91), Adjectives (78) and pronouns (84). At the end of the table, are represented the grammatical errors in percentages, of which the highest percentage of errors are in Grammatical Tenses (53%) followed by the Verbs (13%), Nouns (8%), SV (8%), Preposition (6%), Adjectives (6%) and Pronouns with (5%). Also one average per student is made from which 7.58 % made errors using Tenses, 1.14% in using Nouns, 1.88% errors in Verbs, 0.91% in Preposition, 0.84% in Adjectives, 0.78% in Pronouns and 1.15% in SVA. This means that every student has made these mistakes on average for each of the above mentioned categories.

Grammatical Errors Committed by Albanian Students in Speaking

To understand kinds of errors Albanian students do while speaking English we have done a research on the elementary school, it was organized a debate on the topic “Should mobile phones be banned in school?” students were divided in two groups those who were pro banning mobile phones and those who were contra. In this debate participated 18 students from which 10 females and 8 males, all of them 14 years old. The debate was recorded with a sound recorder and then analyzed and errors were classified. According to the research, students made a lot of errors. The collected data shows many grammatical errors, such as: verb tenses, word order, pronoun, preposition, article, subject-verb agreement, omission, misinformation and disordering, double negatives etc.

According to the findings students made more mistakes in using verb tenses, a total number of 15 mistakes per 17 students since the recording for one student was not clear, the second category with a big number of errors is Subject-Verb Agreement with a number of 10 errors and then with the lower number of errors are the categories of omission, with a total number of 6 errors and word order with 8 errors.

Conclusions, Discussions And Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions and Discussions

In this section will be presented conclusions and discussions of our theme based on our research. The conclusions and discussions are based on the data analysis and research made with students of three Albanian schools in Tetovo. The conclusions will be separately presented on the following sections.

5.2 Grammatical Errors of Albanian Learners Committed in Writing

Based on data presented on the chapters above there have been introduced several types of grammatical errors that Albanian students committed while learning English, which include errors in the use of Nouns, Verbs, Tenses, Pronouns, Adjectives, Subject-Verb Agreement (SVA) etc. There are different causes that made Albanian students do these kinds of errors. These errors causes were based on the classification that Richard (1973) classified the causes of errors which are: Overgeneralization, Ignorance of rules restriction incomplete application of rules and false concept hypothesized but in our case errors were committed by overgeneralization and the Ignorance of rules restriction. In most cases errors were committed due to Overgeneralization which is when students apply a grammatical rule in cases where it shouldn't apply ;as learners have learned that verbs take -ed in the past tense and they use this rule with irregular verbs and comes to an incorrect sentence. Due to overgeneralization sentence b) in Excerpt 4.1.4 is incorrect since the past of the verb buy which is irregular and the correct form is bought but students overgeneralize the rule that all verbs in the past take ed. b) Her father buyed her a new pair of glasses the day she was bullied. Another example of error committed due to overgeneralization is on the sentence b) in excerpt 4.1.5. Where the plural of the noun country is made contrys since the plural nouns take -s in the end but some nouns display irregularities to a certain extent in forming the plural; nouns that end in -y changes to -I and then -es is added country-countries. Besides the errors committed due to the overgeneralization we also find errors committed possibly by the ignorance of rule restricted. According to iiste.org, it is cited that: "The ignorance of rule restricted is that when students do not understand the restrictions of certain structures so they apply a rule in sentence context where is not necessary." Referring to the Excerpt 4.1.4 (j) there are no errors of grammar but the context was not taken in the consideration as the sentence refers to a past action and some verbs are used in present. In conclusion Albanian students of EFL committed eight types of grammatical errors in writing which involve: errors in the use of Tenses, Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Pronouns, Prepositions and SVA. After analyzing the errors we found out that these errors emerged from several causes which include: overgeneralization and ignorance of rules restrictions.

5.3 Errors that Albanian Learners Committed in the Use of Tenses in Writing

According to our research the biggest number of errors that Albanian students did is listed on the category of Tenses, a number of 100 students did 758 errors on this category. According to Ibrahim, S., & Iseni, A. (2008: 293), they stated that, “with tenses we understand the correspondence between the form of the verb and our concept of time.” Albanian students have difficulties in using English Tenses. According to Lado (1957), in his Contrastive Analysis Hypotheses he cited that that “learners who learn a second language may have difficulties in learning some aspects of the language that are different from those they have in their native language.” Albanian students mix tenses that are close in sequence which means that they mix tenses that are almost the same or close to each other in meaning. Students committed a big number of errors in using tenses starting with Present tenses and continuing with all Tenses and the number of errors was bigger in using Past tenses. We have given examples on the chapters above about the errors in using Tenses and almost all errors are caused by not changing the verb in the correct tense. In the excerpt 4.4.3 (c) we have a sentence in present perfect were have is used instead of “has” ,the other error is that some verbs have irregular participles so the past participle of understand is “understood”. Students often tend to mix Tenses or use another tense instead of the proper one In the excerpt 4.3.4 (a) we have the use of present continuous instead of present perfect continuous, since there is no equivalent of this tense in Albanian language students tend to use present continuous to refer to actions that started and continued on the past. Simple Past Tense is the tense where students did most of their errors, which includes a number of 180 errors of the total errors. Most of errors under this category are done in the use of irregular verbs, since simple the past is formed by adding ed to the verb, students put ed after irregular verbs and thus produce incorrect sentences. In the excerpt 4.3.5 (b) we have an example of this kind when the irregular verb find is done finded, also the example (c) that is an interrogative sentence the auxiliary verb is in its correct form but the verb is changed in the past that is incorrect since the interrogative form of past simple is done when the verb do is changed in did and is put before the subject and then is added the basic form of the verb so the verb remains unchanged. The cause of these errors as we so far have seen should be classified under incomplete application of rules, a term that was firstly propose by Richard (1974) Incomplete Application of the Rules occurs when learners do not apply the rules completely. In the cases when students use another tense instead the proper one in the excerpt 4.3.12 is a sentence in which an incorrect tense has been used to show that something will continue up until a particular event or time in the future. Student use present perfect to express a future action instead of future perfect continuous, since the before mentioned tense has not its equivalent in Albanian language students are confused which tense to use. In these cases we can say that these kinds of errors are done because some grammatical structures of their mother tongue are different from those of the second language. Making errors is an inevitable process in learning a foreign language, through errors and corrections students learn to correct those mistakes and not repeat them again. Teachers play a very important role on finding errors and correcting them during the teaching process.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on this research there are proposed some recommendations to be considered. Recommendations have to do with teaching and learning process, by improving these processes the number of errors can be decreased. Based on our findings students made errors in using tenses, so the teachers should give more space in learning tenses, they should use different methods to make the process of learning grammar more attractive for students. Students should be given more exercises on tenses and teachers should correct student's errors. Students may feel frustrated about error correction of the teacher but in the future they tend to not repeat the same errors. During the debate on the elementary school students made different errors, in some cases teacher corrected their errors even that in the first sight students were confused, they were more careful to not make the same errors during the debate, the interesting thing was that not only the student who was corrected tried to be more careful but other students too. The syllabuses should give more space to the grammatical exercises and role plays or debates. According to our findings students of English as foreign language do errors in writing and speaking because of different causes discussed above.

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