

Error Analysis of Arab Learners of English  
A Case Study of Jubail Technical Institute, Saudi Arabia

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

The first chapter of the study will be the introduction chapter which will present in detail the background of the study. It will also discuss the statement of problem and research aim and objectives that also derive the research questions which will be explored in the study. Lastly, the chapter will present the significance of study to justify undertaking this topic.

### **Background of Study**

Lungu (2003) also claimed that a major characteristic of learning second language is the assumption of language transfer. However, there remains the space for two main types of errors as said by Lungu (2003). These are the interlingual errors and intralingual errors. In case of interlingual errors, there is interference of first language (L1) while in case of intralingual error; there is difficulty in the second language itself. AbiSamra (2003) reported that the Arab learners are found to be making a number of errors when speaking and writing English. Most of the errors are made because of interference from the native language such as complexity of target language, incomplete transfer of target language and overgeneralization.

### **Problem Statement**

A number of researchers have determined the sources of errors in learning the second language. Almost all of these have focused on the interlingual and intralingual errors where the former one are interference errors or transfer errors while later one are the development errors arising from faulty of partial learning. However, Laser-Freeman suggests using the chaos/complexity theory to analyze the second language acquisition (SLA) as the language goes

through the nonlinear changes in diachronical manner. This means that the way in which new forms enter and leave the language are non-predictable and also non-additive. Due to these characteristics, different persons use the forms in different ways to indicate the same meaning. The literature analysis shows that learning English as second language by the Arabic students in light of chaos/complexity theory as not yet been addressed and thus there exists a gap in connecting errors with language learning given language as the dynamic system.

### **Research Aim and Objectives**

The aim of this study is to carry out “Error Analysis of Arab Learners of English from A Case Study of Jubail Technical Institute, Saudi Arabia”. The objectives are:

- What are the linguistic areas that Arabic learners in Jubail Technical Institute encounter as troublesome?
- What is the impact of length of time taken by students of Jubail Technical Institute to learn English on chances of error making?
- What is the impact of exposure to the English language of the students of Jubail Technical Institute on chances of error making?
- How the Arabic students in Jubail Technical Institute can improve their English learning skills based on results of error analysis?

### **Research Purpose**

The purpose of this study extends beyond the analysis of errors by the Arabic students in learning English and also entails the ways in which students can enhance their English learning

skills. Therefore, the study will identify the areas of difficulty in learning English by the Arabic students and will also present the remedial procedures for overcoming the weaknesses.

### **Significance of Study**

The results of the study are of high significance as they relate to the linguistic behavior of Arabic students in learning English as L2. The study will use the error analysis technique that explains the systematic nature of errors made by the L2 learners. Therefore, the technique of error analysis will produce valuable outcomes and the teachers and educationalists of institutes in Saudi Arabia and particularly of Jubail Technical Institute will be able to understand the process of second language acquisition by the Arabic students and learning strategies and progress can be designed in the light of study outcomes.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

The second chapter will carry out extensive analysis of the previous studies that were carried out in second language acquisition. The findings from these studies will be used to analysis the results of current study. The chapter will also discuss important theories in learning second language.

### **Chaos and Complexity Theory**

Although most of the studies have focused on using the interference and developmental theories to interpret difficulties in learning second language, this study will use the chaos/complexity theory to analysis the sources and causes of errors. According to this theory, some of the characteristics of complex non-linear systems are that these are “dynamic, nonlinear, chaotic, unpredictable, sensitive to initial conditions, open, self-organizing, feedback sensitive and adaptive” as said by Larsen-Freeman (Ellis, 2008). Also, these systems have fractal shape and have strange attractors.

Larsen-Freeman (1997) stated that there are a number of similarities between the language and complex non-linear system. The study will in detail explore how the language posses characteristics of the complex nonlinear systems. It is important to assess the second language learning in light of the characteristics of complex nonlinear systems as Larsen-Freeman (1997) cited that “A language such as English is a collaborative effort of its speakers, and changes in the system of English are ‘emergent’” which means that English also organizes itself and grows from bottom up approach as in case of other complex nonlinear systems.

Second language acquisition (SLA) performance of the learner can be less proficient when continuous additions are made in the learning system. This happens after reaching a certain breakeven that the orderly period is followed by the chaos period. Reason behind the chaos is that learner has to understand the way in which introduction of new learning material can be fit to the existing system. For this purpose, the learner will has to revise the understanding of existing system so that new awareness can be accommodated. This is possible through the interaction with others and thus order is restored. However, it does not produce the target-like language but new stage of interlanguage is formed.

The current study will also identify the order and chaos periods for the students and will assess their performance in these periods.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

The third chapter presents the method that will be followed by the study. The chapter will also present the methods of data collection and analysis and will also shed light on sampling techniques and size. It will also identify the ethical considerations that will be adhered while the study is carried out.

### **Research Method**

The study will use mixed method approach that is carried out in two stages. In first stage, the qualitative data will be collected from the participants as they will be asked to write essays while in second stage, the errors will be analyzed quantitatively from the essays submitted by the students.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Data for the study will be collected from two sources i.e. primary and secondary. Primary data will be collected from the responses of the participants. On the other hand, secondary data will be collected from digital libraries i.e. from online journals and books.

For the primary data collection, language learning history of the learners will be used in order to determine the length of time taken to learn second language and exposure to the same.

### **Sampling Technique and Size**

The study will utilize the probability sampling that means there is probability of selection of every element of population. Thus, the probability is non-zero for selection. The study will use



the stratified (random) sampling and ten participants from the institute will be selected. Five students will be low achievers while five will be high achievers.

### **Data Analysis**

The study will utilize an error analysis approach that is explained by Khansir (2008) as the process in which the deviations of the rules of the second language are observed, analyzed and classified. These deviations are then matched with the system operated by the learner. Thus, in this case, Arabic students will be asked to write different pieces of essays and then the content of essay will be reviewed for errors. Therefore, data analysis will take place through error analysis which will focus on the errors made by the learners. For this purpose, firstly, the errors in the responses will be calculated and then relationship of error chances with language learning history will be assessed.

## **CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

This chapter will present the sample characteristics, participants' responses and analysis of their responses. Therefore, first qualitative responses will be identified and then the quantitative analysis of the responses will be generated. The results will then be compared with the existing literature findings and the reasons for the outcomes will also be laid down.

### **Sample Characteristics**

There will be ten participants in total where five participants will be high achievers while five will be low achievers.

### **Responses of the Participants**

This section will discuss the writings of the participants and the statements will errors will be identified in this section.

### **Analysis**

The following table will be generated for all ten participants.

Type of Errors	Number of Errors	Percentage

The results from the table above will be again assessed in light of the time taken to learn English and exposure to English as the second language for Arabic learners.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS**

This chapter will conclude the study in the light of responses and analysis of these responses. It will also present the summary of each chapter. Finally, in the light of findings, valuable recommendations will be given for the learners as well as teachers to improve second language acquisition.

## REFERENCES

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