

ADA 5475

2

LEXICAL ERRORS IN ENGLISH COMPOSITIONS OF
UPPER SECONDARY MALAY STUDENTS

ZAHIRA BINTI ABDULLAH

FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

MAY 2003

Perpustakaan Universiti Malaya



A511140946

**LEXICAL ERRORS IN ENGLISH COMPOSITIONS OF UPPER
SECONDARY MALAY STUDENTS**

ZAHIRA BINTI ABDULLAH

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA**

MAY 2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to my supervisor, Puan Sheena Kaur for her constructive comments, patience and invaluable assistance rendered in the completion of this dissertation. My thanks also goes to all the lecturers who have taught me in the course of this MESL programme, my close friends Loq , Que and Aznan, and last but not least, my family members for all the support and encouragement.

ABSTRACT

This research is concerned with the study of lexical errors found in the written compositions of fifty upper secondary Malay learners of English in an urban school namely, SMK Buyong Adil, Tapah, Perak. The study aims to investigate the types of lexical errors produced by the Malay learners. This study also attempts to explain the possible causes of the lexical errors in terms of intralingual and interlingual errors. The lexical errors are analysed by means of error analysis hypothesis based on the work of Richards (1974) , Corder (1981) and James (1998) among others. The classification of the types of lexical errors used in this study are mainly adapted from the lexical classification proposed by James (1998). The study reveals that the learners' lexical errors can be classified into 2 main categories namely, intralingual errors and interlingual errors. From the analysis of the data it is found that the highest percentage of errors is attributable to intralingual errors with 66.13 % of the total number of lexical errors. Interlingual errors are accountable for 33.87 %. The findings of this study show inherent difficulties the second language poses as the learners' main obstacle in acquiring the English language. The most frequent intralingual errors are those resulting from confusion of sense relations. The other contributory factor to learners' lexical errors is the interference of the mother tongue, that is the Malay language. The majority of the interlingual errors are the results of literal translation of the mother tongue. It is hoped that the results of this study would contribute to the further understanding of the difficulties faced by second language Malay learners of English in acquiring English lexis.

ABSTRAK

Penyelidikan ini mengkaji kesilapan leksikal yang diperolehi daripada 50 karangan bertulis hasil kerja 50 orang pelajar Melayu menengah atas yang mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua di SMK Buyong Adil, Tapah, Perak . Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk mengenalpasti jenis kesilapan leksikal yang dibuat oleh pelajar Melayu berkenaan. Penyelidikan ini juga bertujuan untuk menghuraikan punca-punca kesilapan leksikal dari aspek 'intralingual' dan 'interlingual'. Kesilapan leksikal dikaji berdasarkan pendekatan hipotesis analisis kesilapan yang dipelopori oleh Corder (1974), Richards (1981) dan James (1998). Dalam penyelidikan ini, kesilapan leksikal pelajar Melayu berkenaan dikategorikan mengikut klassifikasi yang diadaptasi daripada klasifikasi leksikal yang diutarakan oleh James (1998). Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kesilapan leksikal tersebut boleh dibahagikan kepada 2 kategori utama iaitu 'intralingual errors' dan 'interlingual errors'. 'Intralingual errors' mencatat peratus tertinggi iaitu 66.13 %. Bagi 'interlingual errors' peratus yang dicatat ialah sebanyak 33.87 %. Dapatan kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa kesukaran memahami struktur dan sistem bahasa kedua, iaitu Bahasa Inggeris merupakan punca utama pelajar melakukan kesilapan leksikal. Jenis yang terbanyak diantara kesilapan "intralingual" ialah "confusion of sense relations". Pengaruh bahasa ibunda, Bahasa Melayu juga menyumbang kepada kesilapan leksikal yang dibuat oleh pelajar berkenaan. Jenis kesilapan yang terbanyak di antara kesilapan "interlingual" ialah hasil daripada terjemahan secara langsung daripada Bahasa Melayu. Adalah diharapkan dapatan kajian ini akan membantu golongan guru khususnya dalam memahami kesukaran yang dihadapi oleh pelajar dalam menguasai bahasa kedua.

CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	iv
LIST OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
NOTATIONS	x

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Background of the Study	2
1.1.1	The Status of English in the Malaysian Education System	2
1.1.2	Background of the School	7
1.2	Statement of the Problem	9
1.3	The Purpose of the Study	12
1.4	Research Questions	13
1.5	The Significance of the Study	13
1.6	The Scope of the Study	15
1.7	Conclusion	16

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0	Introduction	17
2.1	The Importance of Vocabulary Learning	17
2.2	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis	20

2.3	Error Analysis Hypothesis	24
2.4	Procedures of Error Analysis	27
2.5	Learners' Errors	27
2.5.1	Interlingual Errors	30
2.5.2	Intralingual Errors	31
2.6	Interlanguage	35
2.7	Studies on Lexical Errors	38
2.8	Conclusion	47

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0	Introduction	49
3.1	Subjects	49
3.2	Research Tool	50
3.3	Administration of Research Tool	51
3.4	Method of Data Analysis	51
3.4.1	Identification of Errors	52
3.4.2	Classification of Errors	53
3.4.3	Explanation of Errors	71
3.5	Conclusion	71

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS

4.0	Introduction	73
4.1	Summary of Findings	73
4.2	Classification and Explanation of Intralingual Errors	76

4.2.1	Confusion of Sense Relations	77
4.2.2	Distortions	81
4.2.3	Confusibles	84
4.2.4	Word Class Conversion Errors	88
4.2.5	Redundancy	90
4.2.6	Collocation Errors	92
4.2.7	Lapses	94
4.3	Classification and Explanation of Interlingual Errors	95
4.3.1	Calque	95
4.3.2	Code Switching	99
4.3.3	Confusion Over Verbs of Movement	101
4.3.4	Loan Words	103
4.4	Conclusion	104

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

5.0	Introduction	105
5.1	Conclusions	105
5.2	Contributory Factors to Second Language Learners' Errors	109
5.3	Essential Steps in Vocabulary Learning	112
5.3.1	Encountering New Words	114
5.3.2	Getting the Word Form	115
5.3.3	Getting the Meaning of the Word	115
5.3.4	Consolidating Word Form and Meaning in Memory	116
5.3.5	Using the Word	117
5.4	Recommendations	117

5.5	Suggestions for Further Research	119
BIBLIOGRAPHY		120
APPENDICES		
APPENDIX A		127
APPENDIX B		128
APPENDIX C		129
APPENDIX D		130
APPENDIX E		131
APPENDIX F		132
APPENDIX G		135

LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 4.1	Distribution and Sources of Lexical Errors	74
Table 4.2	Distribution of Types of Lexical Errors	75

NOTATIONS

L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
MT	Mother Tongue
TL	Target Language
FL	Foreign Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
CA	Contrastive Analysis
EA	Error Analysis
*	Erroneous sentence