CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF DATA ANALYSIS

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5.1 Introduction

The findings of this study relating to the three research questions are discussed in this chapter. Several limitations of this study, as well as some recommendations and pedagogical implications are also presented.

Whilst the development of literacy in English of native English speaking children has historically received a great deal of attention, the development of literacy in English from English of Second language speakers has received much less attention. There are difference between L2 learner and native English speakers which fall into a number of different areas, the phonological areas, literacy training etc. In this study analysis of spelling errors is made in order to trace the type and causes of spelling errors made in the English language writing by the Second language learner.

Within a few years, children are able to understand what they hear, and to speak and be understood, with a high degree of success. After what appears to be almost effortless acquisition of the fundamentals of language, largely from simple interactions with parents and peers, the child's knowledge of vocabulary and structures of the language is expanded and consolidated by formal instruction in spelling and grammar. Unlike learning the first or native language, the process of learning a second language seems much slower and often meets with limited success.

Mastering a second language especially English language depends on a number of biological, social, and educational factors, like aptitude for languages, attitude, cognitive style, learning strategies, neurological factors, personality, previous experience with language learning, proficiency in the native language, with an aim of finding better ways of teaching and learning.

Therefore, in order to succeed in Second language acquisition, these are the following push factors: the amount of time available to learn the Second language, motivation to learn, individual intellectual and personality differences, the age of learner and also the choice of learning material in language learning.

5.2   Summary of Data Analysis

This research concentrates on the causes and type of spelling error made by the second language learner. It investigates the causes and spelling error made by native language learners in the writing of a second language. This research focuses on the production of errors by the students in particular spelling errors and the causes of these errors.

In this research, the data was collected from different learners with different backgrounds. English is their compulsory subject. All of the respondents were given a questionnaire with personal and educational questions in order to know their background,

their feelings towards English as a subject and strategies used by them in learning a second language other than their mother tongue which is Bahasa Malaysia or the Malay language.

Using the theoretical background briefly explained in Chapter 2, spelling errors made by the respondents in their English written essay, were extracted, analyzed and classified with respect to the spelling errors. The most significant error is the use of native language in second language written essay.

The initial research questions were the type of spelling errors made by the respondents. This research question focused on the importance that a learner's native language has in the written production in a second language. Most of the respondents transfer knowledge of their native language or their mother tongue in the use of their second language written essay which is English language.

Furthermore, in this research, the data from the questionnaire shows that the respondents do not consider the English language as an important language to learn. This is because they pay less attention and time in reading in the second language. They favour the use of their own mother tongue which is Bahasa Malaysia or the Malay language in both the receptive (listening and reading) and productive skills(writing and speaking).

Further questioning of the worth of contrastive analysis has come from the classification of learner's errors in studies that become known generically as error analysis (Richards, 1971). In the research, one must make a distinction between mistakes and error.

Therefore, the problem of determining what is a learner's mistake or what is a learner's error is one of some difficulty. This can be based on the several factors which can have an impact on second language learning by the native language learner.

Second language learners have plenty of time every day to figure out their native language, which is often referred to as their First language, however it is hard for them to find time to devote to learning the second language. Students of English as a second language who are living in an environment where English is not the language of everyday use might be under just as much pressure in order to pass their school examinations. But no matter the situation of the learner, the tine required to learn a Second language is the same for all kinds of learners. It takes thousands of contact hours in Spanish or French, and 4 to 5 times longer than that for languages dissimilar to English like Russian, Mandarin, Japanese, or Arabic, for L1 English speakers to learn the language similar to L2 learners who must spends thousands of hours to study the language.

Different age groups and learners in different situations have different needs and wants, goals and desires, which drive them to succeed. What motivates the learner is a natural positive curiosity and interest in learning about anything new, which is most of their environment. It may be a challenging way to acquire a new skill, like a different style of writing. Some motivation might also come from the belief that learning English is important for their success in school and in their future. For example, if they watch a TV show like Sesame Street, High School Musical, the second language learner would like to understand the dialogue and thus be able to understand and enjoy the movie.

Learners have been trained to seek order in their studies. Study is serious and purposeful, tests and exams are required to give evidence of progress. Some of the learners may have developed attitudes of liking and disliking certain subjects. Some students might not see any benefit in studying English. Socio- cultural factors can positively or negatively affect personal motivation. Shortreed (1987) shows evidence that a learner who has emotional support from his or her family for bilingual language learning, may end up performing better. Some socio- cultural factors, such as the attitude of peers, learners' attitudes toward their learning situation, teacher's attitude towards their students, and one's own attitude towards one's own ethnicity, have been studied for their influence on Second language acquisition (Larsen-Freeman,1991).

Some of the qualities that make one individual different from another sources of motivation; however, individual traits can perhaps be considered. People may be characterized by their personality or affective traits: those who are confidents versus those who have low self-esteem; those who are self-reliant vs. ardiana write in full those who are more dependent on other; and so on. Other aspects of personality includes attitudes, degree of extroversion and inhibition, reactions to anxiety, and willingness to take risks, sensitivity to rejection, empathy, and tolerance of ambiguity(Brown, 1994).

Learners' errors provide evidence of the system of the language that the learner is using (i.e. what they have learned at a particular point). Accordingly, they are significant in three ways. Firstly, to the teacher in that errors can tell how far towards the goal the learners have progressed and consequently, what remains for them to learn. It is a way the

learners have of testing their hypothesis about the nature of language that they are learning. Secondly, they are indispensable to the learners themselves, because we can regard the making of errors as a device that the learners use in order to learn. And thirdly, they provide evidence to the researcher of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learners are employing in their discovery of the language.

One of the major challenges for error analysis is deciding what category to assign a particular error to. Some errors seem to arise not because of language transfer but from other sources or processes. According to Selinker (1972), there exists five distinct psycholinguistic processes which are central to second language learning: language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language communication, strategies of second language learning and overgeneralization of the target language linguistic material.

5.3   Conclusion

The results from this research show that native language transfer takes place in the target language writing. In fact, spelling errors documented in the data collected contribute to show the type and causes of spelling error made in learning a second language. There can be little question that cross-linguistic influence directly impacts the process of acquisition of a second language. However, transfer is not the only factor affecting this process. Other several factors such as language mixing, proficiency level in second language, literary skills, social factors, individual variations affect the process of second language learning but mostly to different degrees.

Future research in this area can investigate the relation between transfer and level of proficiency in second language. Pedagogical implications of this study show that teaching can be more effective through a consideration of differences between language and cultures in order to prevent the errors. Also consideration of research showing similarities in errors made by the learners of different backgrounds will help the teacher to foresee what may be difficult or easy for learners learning the language they are teaching. It is hoped that this study can contribute to the recognition and better understanding of the problems and difficulties found by students when dealing with the target language.

These findings suggest that transfer is a reality and an important determinant in second language acquisition, however, it is not the only determinant and the questions remains as to just how language transfer interacts with linguistics as well as cultural, social and personal factors in second language learning and use.

Furthermore, this study has shown that there is still a lot of room for improvement in spelling and punctuation among second language learner. Students appear to be making basic spelling errors as well as some errors influenced by the first language. Therefore the researcher recommends that spelling should be given more emphasis in future curriculum planning in Malaysia, as it is clearly causing difficulties for students. And also an emphasis on regular reading practice on the part of language learners would be a highly useful way of exposing learners to some examples of 'correct' spellings, thereby helping them to unconsciously avoid making spelling errors in their writing practice.