A CONTRASTIVE AND ERROR ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS BY MALAY LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study has two main objectives. The first objective is to find the similarities and differences between the prepositions in English and Malay through the description of the prepositions of both the languages. Next, the second objective is to identify prepositional errors in the written text of Malay Form Five students and explain why these errors occur.

The primary sources of reference for English prepositions are from four written sources namely Casell's Students' English Grammar, A University Grammar of English, A Practical English Grammar, and A Communicative Grammar of English. *Tatabahasa Dewan, Tatabahasa Melayu* and *Nahu Kemas Kini: Panduan Bahasa yang Baik dan Betul* are three written sources of reference for Malay prepositions. The methodology used is the Contrastive and Error Analysis approach as the two methods complement each other. Moreover, Contrastive Analysis reveals that the similarities between the native language and the target language facilitate learning for the students. It also suggests that the differences between both the languages can cause difficulties in the learning of the target language.

Using Contrastive Analysis, the researcher found that there are similarities and differences between English and Malay prepositions. A hierarchy of difficulties is drawn up based on the analysis with the most difficult prepositions on the top of the hierarchy to the easiest ones at the bottom. An Error Analysis which focussed on the use of English prepositions in sixty written essays by thirty Malay students from SMK Alam Megah, Shah Alam was carried out to find whether the results of the Error Analysis would match with the findings of the Contrastive Analysis.

One of the findings of this study is that prepositions which are easy to learn share the same functions and distributions in a sentence for both languages. When a preposition in English has more functions and meanings despite having the same distribution, this preposition is difficult to learn. Some prepositions in English do share the same meaning and Malay learners tend to think they can use one preposition for various functions and meanings. Next, the error analysis carried out on the study essays revealed that many errors were caused by interference of the learners' mother tongue as learners tend to translate from their native language (Malay) to the target language (English). Malay learners have difficulty using simple English prepositions which they are familiar with. In addition, they also face difficulty with prepositions that do not exist in their own language.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini tertumpu kepada dua objektif. Objektif yang pertama adalah untuk mengenalpasti dan menyenaraikan persamaan dan perbezaan dalam Bahasa Inggeris dan Bahasa Melayu dengan mendeskripsikan subsistem preposisi kedua-dua bahasa. Objektif yang kedua adalah untuk mengenalpasti kesilapan preposisi dalam karangan yang ditulis oleh pelajar Melayu Tingkatan Lima dan menerangkan sebab-sebab kesilapan yang telah dibuat.

Sumber utama preposisi Bahasa Inggeris adalah didapati dari empat buku iaitu *Casell's Students' English Grammar, A University Grammar of English, A Practical English Grammar,* dan *A Communicative Grammar of English*. Manakala, preposisi Bahasa Melayu dikutip dari Tatabahasa Dewan, Tatabahasa Melayu dan Nahu Kemas Kini:Panduan Bahasa yang Baik dan Betul. Metodologi yang digunakan dalam kajian ini adalah Analisis Kontrastif dan Analisis Kesilapan di mana kedua-dua pendekatan ini saling melengkapi antara satu sama lain. Tambahan, Analisis Kontrastif menyarankan bahawa ciri-ciri linguistik bahasa sasaran yang sama dengan bahasa ibunda pelajar memudahkan pembelajaran bahasa tersebut. Sebaliknya akan berlaku apabila ciri-ciri linguistic bahasa sasaran yang berbeza boleh menyukarkan proses pebelajaran bahasa sasaran.

Analisis Kontrastif telah menunjukkan padanan setara dan perbezaan kedua-dua bahasa. Suatu hieraki kesulitan dikemukakan berdasarkan analisis yang dibuat dengan preposisi yang susah di atas senarai sehingga preposisi yang mudah diletakkan di bawah.

Tambahan, analisis penggunaan preposisi dari enam puluh karangan Bahasa Inggeris yang ditulis oleh tiga puluh orang pelajar SMK Alam Megah, Shah Alam telah dilakukan untuk melihat sama ada keputusan Analisis Kontrastif adalah sama dengan Analisis Kesilapan.

Salah satu dapatan dari kajian adalah preposisi yang senang dipelajari mempunyai fungsi dan posisi yang sama dalam suatu ayat dalam kedua-dua bahasa. Apabila suatu preposisi Bahasa Inggeris mempunyai posisi yang sama dengan Bahasa Melayu tetapi mempunyai jauh lebih banyak fungsi dan pengertian, pembelajaran preposisi tersebut akan menjadi rumit. Terdapat juga beberapa preposisi dalam Bahasa Inggeris mempunyai makna yang sama di mana pelajar Melayu membuat tanggapan bahawa mereka boleh menggunakan satu preposisi itu untuk semua situasi. Tambahan, analisis kesilapan karangan pelajar menunjukkan gangguan bahasa ibunda dalam penggunaan preposisi dalam Bahasa Inggeris. Mereka menterjemah dari Bahasa Melayu ke Bahasa Inggeris dan mengakibatkan kesilapan berlaku dalam penggunaan preposisi. Tambahan, mereka juga menghadapi masalah dalam penggunaan preposisi yang mudah walaupun mereka kerap menggunakan mereka dan preposisi yang tidak terdapat dalam Bahasa Melayu.

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ABBREVIATION

CA	Contrastive analysis
CAH	Contrastive analysis hypothesis
EA	Error analysis
ESL	English as a Second Language
*	Grammatically incorrect sentence/ errornous sentence
No.	Number
%	Percentage
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
NL	Native Language
TL	Target Language

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