WAYS TEACHERS CAN HELP OVERCOME THE MISFORMULATION
OF «-S» ENDING FOR THE THIRD PERSON SINGULAR

A MAJOR PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF LETTERS
AND THE INSTITUTE OF ECONOMICS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF BILKENT UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN
THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

BY
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August, 1989
The examining committee appointed by the Institute of Economics and Social Sciences for the major project examination of the MA TEFL student ARIF SARICOBAN has read the project of the student. The committee has decided that the project of the student is satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

Project Title: WAYS TEACHERS CAN HELP OVERCOME THE MISFORMULATION OF "-s" ENDING FOR THE THIRD PERSON SINGULAR

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ARIF SARICOBAN
August, 1989
I certify that I have read this major project and that in my opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a major project for the degree of Masters of Arts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Adults learning a foreign language in Turkey are especially interested in learning English because most of them need it in their professions. They would like to learn English for different purposes such as carrying out their high school or undergraduate studies, communicating with foreigners in their summer holidays, writing business letters, studying abroad, and working abroad to support their lives. To do this, they need to improve their skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening in English.

We should not forget that language is made up of four main skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. As Vanci (1967) states that crucial point in language teaching is that the learners should be grouped according to such factors as their ages, jobs, cultural backgrounds and interests.

The scope of this study, which claims to survey the misformulation of "-s" ending for the third person singular, may be regarded as a specific problem area. The results of this study, I strongly believe, can be applied to the problems of adult learners as well, as this survey can be expected to provide an overall perspective toward the factors that cause errors.

To conduct my research, I gave questionnaires to 15 teachers of English at different universities in Turkey. The universities included Bilkent, Hacettepe, Gazi, Ankara, Karadeniz, Ege, Erciyes and Cukurova. Eleven of those
teachers were also enrolled in MA TEFL program at Bilkent University. To conduct this study thoroughly, first of all, literature review was made to collect information as to what errors are, why they are important, what are the ways teachers help overcome these errors. To do this, I visited libraries to review literature about how to overcome this error type easily and effectively.

There seem to be two limitations for my study. As I am going to look at the subject matter from only one angle (the misformulation of "-s" ending for the third person singular), one of the limitations is that I am going to deal with only one type of error. This is not related to the other types of errors in second language use. Another is the limited sample of teachers I selected. This, of course, does not reflect all of the teachers' view on this subject matter.

I expect to see the easiest and the most effective ways to overcome this error type beginning level adult L2 learners make. Errors in second language learning can be avoided if methods of overcoming these problems are devised.

It is a fact that even native speakers of a language do make many errors and lapses in their speech, and sometimes in writing. So, it is natural for a non-native speaker of a language to make similar errors. For this reason, we should distinguish the differences between lapses, mistakes, and errors.
As Ersoz (1986) explains, lapses can be defined as slips or false starts or confusion of structure. Lapses are due to momentary lapses of memory or concentration. The most important factor causing lapses is the physical state such as tiredness. Errors exist because the learner is subject to some external and internal conditions.

Learners make errors because they have not mastered the code of the target language; that is, they have not the perfect knowledge of the language.

Mistakes are non-systematic because the learner knows that he made an error, then he himself corrects it during acquisition. They are usually defined as socially inappropriate forms. The foreign language user is operating not only within a foreign code but also within alien social rules.

Error analysis studies the differences between the way people learning a language speak and the way adult native speakers of the language use the language. It is believed that such differences may create interest for a variety of reasons. In the first place comes interests of those who study language for its own sake. The study of human language seems to be the most fruitful way of discovering what constitutes intelligence.

When we observe how children acquire a language, we can understand that some of the notions about adult language acquisition have come from this observation. By comparing children's speech with adult speech and trying to account for the differences, psycholinguists have been able to
speculate about the nature of the mental processes that seem to be involved in language. Since the goal of a language course is to lead the learner toward adult uses of the new language, differences between the way the learner and the native speakers speak the language have been studied in the hope that methods of overcoming these difficulties might be devised (Richards, 1974).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

ERRORS

Errors are a part of teaching. Errors are inevitable. In Krashen's view (1982), errors are the flawed side of the learner's speech or writing. They are those parts of conversation or composition that deviate from some selected norm of mature language performance. Unfortunately, some of us may confuse errors with mistakes. Errors are systematic because the learner believes that what the learner says or writes is correct. They always make the same error such as "They goes." This type of error is made because of the lack of knowledge people cannot learn a language without committing errors.

Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) claim that studying learners' errors serves two major purposes:

1. it provides data from which inferences about the nature of the language learning process can be made;

2. it indicates to teachers and curriculum developers which part of the target language learners have
most difficulty producing correctly and which error types detract most from a learner's ability to communicate effectively.

INTRALINGUAL ERRORS

Intralingual errors are the sort of errors we might expect from any learner learning English as a second language. These types of errors are systematic in language use. They are the sort of mistakes which persist from week to week and which recur from one year to the next with any group of learners.

An example taken from Ersoz's study (1986) such as the following can be given such as:

Dog eat it.

In this sentence there are two considerations which underline the interest in comparing second language (L2) and first language (L1) acquisition errors. The first deals with facilitating L2 theoretical development. The large pool of L1 research data may be applicable to L2 acquisition theory as well. The second consideration deals with the role of first language when learning a second language. In case the second language learners make errors, we can hypothesize that mental mechanisms underlying general language development come into play, not the rules and structures of the learner's native language.
OVERGENERALIZATION

In errors of overgeneralization learners apply the rules used to produce the regular verbs to those that are irregular. Overgeneralization is generally considered as the use of previously available strategies in new situations. Some of these strategies help us organize facts about the second language.

Overgeneralization includes instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures in the second language.

An example taken from Richard's study (1974) such as the following can be given:

In the first part of the article the author gives us reasons for investment in inaccessible regions.

With the omission of the third person -s, overgeneralization removes the necessity for concord, thus relieving the learner of considerable effort (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982). As all the grammatical persons take no ending except the third person singular in present tense, learners may omit -s in the third person singular because of the heavy pressure of all other endingless forms.

IGNORANCE OF RULE RESTRICTIONS

Rule restriction errors are generally considered that the learner who encounters the particular -s ending for the third person singular attempts to use it with other subjects such as the following:
She asks her to do it.

They asks her to do it.

This type of error can also be considered as overgeneralization in that the learners apply the rules for a particular personal pronoun to others.

INCOMPLETE APPLICATION OF RULES

In incomplete application of rules, the learner uses a statement form as a question. He may omit one of the transformations in a series he may add a question word to the statement form. We may consider redundancy as an explanatory factor.

Typical intralingual errors taken from students' studies can be seen in the following figures:

1. **be** + **verb stem** for **verb stem**
   
The sentence is occurs..........
   
   He is speaks English.
   
   We are hope.................

2. **wrong form after** "do"
   
   He does not has............... 
   
   They do not speaks...........

3. **wrong form after** **modal verb**
   
   She cannot goes.
   
   They may not comes.

4. **verb stem** for **stem + "-s"**
   
   He alway talk a lot.
   
   She speak German as well.

Figure 1. Errors in the production of verb groups
1. Omission of "do."
   How it looks like?
   How you say it in English?
   How much it costs?
   How long it takes?

2. Wrong form of auxiliary, or wrong form after auxiliary
   Do he go there?
   Do he comes from Samsun?
   Do she likes you?

Figure 2. Errors in the use of questions

INTERLINGUAL ERRORS

Interlanguage errors of syntax and morphology occur in the verbal performance of L2 learners. Interlanguage is the transmission stage to proceed from one language to another language. The learner is always developing rules to go from one step to another. As Krashen (1981) states this process is the same in all languages.

The teacher teaches "s" ending for the third person singular but the learner makes the same mistake during the learning process by using "s" ending for all persons such as "I goes".

To comprehend the interlanguage we should look at the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>interlanguage</th>
<th>L1</th>
<th>L2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(from birth)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to forever)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Interlanguage is a transmission from one into another.

PERFORMANCE ERRORS

Performance errors are non-systematic. The learner makes errors during the speech process while the learner is focusing on the message. Performance errors occur when the learners are hurried. This type of error is related to memory limitations rather than to competence. An example taken from students' studies such as the following can be given:

"Ayse clean her bag on Sundays. She cleans her table on Sundays, too."

Here, the learners are aware of the mistake and during the speech process they correct it.

COMPETENCE ERRORS

Competence errors are systematic. The learners think that what they are saying is correct. They do the same error every time because they learn it how they perform. This type of error occurs because of the lack of knowledge of the learner. An example such as the following can be given:

The teacher teaches present tense ending "-s" for the third person singular and the learner uses it with every personal pronoun such as "they likes."
DEVELOPMENTAL ERRORS

Developmental errors are the errors seen in L2. These errors disappear during the learning process. The sources of errors the learners make are the same. The students correct themselves during the learning process.

An example taken from the data collected by Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) such as the following can be given:

He no bite you

LINGUISTIC CLASSIFICATION OF ERRORS

OMISSION

Omission errors occur in the case of the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance. Content morphemes constitute the structure of a meaningful sentence. Grammatical morphemes also play an important role in conveying the meaning of a sentence. Second language learners sometimes omit these morphemes.

A good example taken from students' studies such as the following can be given:

Mary ask her brother for permission to go out.

Omission errors are similar to overgeneralization errors in that the learners omit the "-s" ending to be used with the main verbs.

Omission of content words is not as common in
sequential L2 acquisition where the learner is older
and more cognitively mature. If omission of content words
occurs because of lack of vocabulary and learners usually
indicate their awareness of the missing constituent.

ADDITIONS

Addition errors are just the opposite of omission.
They occur in the case of the presence of an item that must
not appear in a well-formed utterance. They usually
occur in the later stages of L2 acquisition when the
learner has already acquired some target language rules.

Additions have two types:
1. Double Marking
   Two items rather than one are marked for the
   same feature such as:
   
   Ali does not cleans his car every day.

2. Regularization
   Learners try to apply the rules used to
   produce the regular ones to those that are
   irregular such as the following:
   
   Children goes to school every day.

MISFORMATION

Misformation errors occur in the case of wrong form
of the morpheme or structure. The learners are not aware
of that they are using incorrect form of the verb such as
the following:

The dogs eats the chicken.
Misformation has three types:

1. Regularization Errors
   A regular marker is used in place of an irregular one, as in good for went.

2. Archi-forms
   Learners select one member of a class and supply it to represent others in the class.

   An example can be given such as the following:
   
   That cat --------- That cats

3. Alternating Forms
   As the learner's vocabulary and grammar grow, the use of archi-forms often gives way to the fairly free alternation of various members of a class with each other such as the following:

   Those cats
   This cats

Misordering

Misordering occurs in the case of the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance. An example taken from Ersoz's study (1986) such as the following can be given:

He all the time come late.
all the time is misordered.

Inferencing

Inferencing is the means by which the learner forms hypothesis by attending to input. That is, in cases
where the appropriate L2 rules cannot be successfully derived by means of transfer or overgeneralization of existing interlanguage knowledge, the learner will need to induce the rule from the input (Ellis, 1985). A good example of this transfer strategy is the model of No + v:

No like cola ---- "No" is overgeneralized.

There are three types of inferencing:

1. **Intralingual**

   Intralingual inferencing involves a process similar to that of pattern analysis of formulaic speech, the difference being that in this case the learner operates on external L2 data rather than internal L2 data. It is the result of intake analysis.

2. **Extralingual**

   Extralingual inferencing is one of the most powerful devices available to the learner for building hypothesis from external input. It consists of paying attention to features of the physical environment and using these to make L2 input comprehensible.

3. **Hypothesis Testing**

   Learners make errors in order to test out hypothesis about the L2 rule system.
HYPOTHESIS TESTING AND ITS ROLE IN L2 ACQUISITION

The learner builds up his knowledge of his target language by means of hypothesis testing. The learner's task is that of connecting his knowledge of basic grammatical relations to the surface structure of sentences in the language the learner is using. The concept of hypothesis testing is used to explain how the L2 learner progresses along the interlanguage continuum. L2 learners make errors in order to test out certain hypotheses about the nature of the language they are learning (Ellis, 1985).

For example: 1. The length of learners' utterances gradually increases.

No look-------don't look (in a sentence)

2. Knowledge of grammatical system is built up in steps. For example, the learner cannot learn the use of "-ing" and "do0does" at the same time but in sequence.

CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

Contrastive studies are recognized as an important part of foreign language teaching methodology. The aim is to discover and predict learning difficulties by comparing the native language with a foreign language. Contrastive analysis was developed in order to identify
the areas of difficulty in learning L2. This was founded on the belief that it was possible, by establishing the linguistic differences between the learners L1 and L2, to predict what problems the learner of a particular L2 would face (Ellis, 1985).

As Ellis (1985) notes, contrastive analysis has both a psychological aspect and a linguistic aspect.

1. **Psychological Aspect**

   The psychological aspect exists in a *strong* and a *weak form*. The strong form claims that all L2 errors can be predicted by identifying the differences between the target language and the learner's first language. The weak form claims only to be diagnostic. Contrastive analysis can be used to identify which areas are the result of interference. The weak form claims a less powerful role for the L1 than the strong form of the hypothesis.

2. **Linguistic Aspect**

   A comparison of two languages can be carried out using any of several different models of grammar. Ideally contrastive analysis needs to be based on universal categories which differ in the way they are linguistically realized from one language to another.

**FACTORS THAT CAUSE ERRORS**

There are two important factors related with
"conscious learning" and "subconscious learning."
Krashen (1981) mentions "aptitude" and "attitude," both of which are related to adult second language achievement, but are not related to each other. It has been hypothesized that aspects of aptitude directly relate to "learning" whereas attitudinal factors relate to "acquisition."

Regarding the distinction between "aptitude" and "attitude," Krashen (1981) says that aptitude and attitude are statistically independent, because they relate to very different and independent parts of the language performance and internalization model.

INTERNAL FACTORS

The foreign language learner has two types of knowledge of the second language: declarative and procedural. Declarative knowledge consists of internalized L2 rules and memorized chunks of language. Procedural knowledge is "knowing how"; it consists of the strategies and procedures employed by the learner to process L2 data for use and acquisition (Ellis, 1985). It can be subdivided into two parts such as social processes and cognitive processes. The social component comprises the behavioral strategies used by the learner to manage interactional opportunities. The cognitive component comprises the various mental processes involved in internalizing and automatizing new L2 knowledge and in using L2 knowledge in onjuction
with other knowledge to communicate in the L2.

The process involves both learning and using L2. Learning accounts for how the learner accumulates new L2 rules and simplifies through the use of existing knowledge. Production and reception processes have devices for using existing resources automatically. Communication strategies have devices for compensating for inadequate resources. Communication strategies are the result of an initial failure to implement a production plan. Thus, language use is characterized by both production and reception strategies.

According to Ellis (1985) internal factors stand for the following:

1. **Formulaic Speech**
   - This speech occurs in the early stages of development in the learner in naturalistic SLA. Here, we have pattern memorization and pattern imitation.

2. **Creative Speech**
   - This speech is the product of L2 rules. In creative speech we distinguish two basic and related processes such as:
     
     **A. Hypothesis Formation**
     - This formation is formed three ways:
       1. prior linguistic knowledge
       2. inducing new rules from input data
       3. combination of these two
Simplification and inferencing are the learning strategies in hypothesis formation.

B. **Hypothesis Testing**

The learner makes use of hypothesis testing as part of the process of communication. It can take place consciously and subconsciously.

In Vanci's (1987) point of view, in production strategies, we have a hierarchical process involving a planning, an articulation, and a motor programme. Semantic and linguistic simplifications are minimal strategies used to facilitate easy and effective use of the L2 system.

In communication strategies, the strategies are used by L2 learners and native speakers when they are faced by a production problem. They consist of substitute plans and are potentially conscious.

**PERSONALITY**

It is believed by contemporary linguists that there are certain personality characteristics which are helpful or detrimental to successful language learning. In psychology, personality has been explored in terms of personal traits which in aggregate are said to constitute the personality of an individual.

In general the personality of an individual can be considered as extraversion and intraversion. One of the ideas on extraversion and intraversion is that extraverted learners learn more rapidly and are more successful than intraverted learners (Ellis, 1985).
It has been observed that extraverted learners find it easier to make contact with other users of the L2 and therefore obtain more input. Krashen (1981), for example, argues that an outgoing personality may contribute to "acquisition." The classroom learner may also benefit from being extraverted by getting more practice in using L2.

Talkativeness and responsiveness are the most important factors of language development, for example, to structural knowledge, play vocabulary, and pronunciation. But it is not only social skills which enable learners to obtain more input because of the ability to make more active use of language. What counts are those personality traits that control the quality of interaction in L2 rather than the quantity of input (Vanci, 1987).

LEARNING THEORY

Two different views on this theory are the following:

5.1. Mentalist Learning Theory

Mentalists claim that we should provide the active contribution of the learners and minimize the importance of imitation and reinforcement. The learner's knowledge of his mother tongue is derived from a universal grammar. The universal grammar exists as a set of innate linguistic principles which comprise the "initial state." The acquisition device which consists of
universal grammar, to work, allows the learner to access to primary linguistic data.

The acquisition device is responsible for a grammar of a particular language.

5.2. Behaviorist Learning Theory

This theory deals with "Habits", "Errors", and "Transfer" or "Interference" which are seen in L1 learners learning L2.

Habits come about as a result of the association of a particular response to a particular stimulus. Behaviorist psychologists attribute two important characteristics to habits:

1. Observable
2. Automatic

Errors come from negative transfer from L1 into L2.

The notion of interference has a central place in behaviorist accounts of SLA. In the case of similarities of two languages it is a positive transfer; in the case of differences it is a negative transfer. An error is likely to arise in L2 because the learner will transfer the realization device from his L1 into L2.

An example can be given as follows:

In French

"J' ai froid"

"I have a cold"

(NEGATIVE TRANSFER)

In German

"Ich bin kalt"

"I am cold"

(POSITIVE TRANSFER)
3. IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

The first thing the foreign language teachers should consider is that they should know their students well. The teachers should be aware of their learners' needs and interests in order to make the learning effective.

Our specific problem area covers the ways of talking about present events, actions and activities. When actions are to be put in present situation, present tense must be used. Thus, learners should often practice the related tense in order to be familiar with the form and the use of tense as well.

The teachers should know that errors are a part of teaching according to contemporary linguists. As Chomsky (1978) says that errors are inevitable. He says that in the case of no mistake, there will be no learning.

Errors are useful for teachers to understand the nature of the learning process and it indicates in which part of the second language learners have difficulty. We use errors to refer to any deviation in t.2.

One of the ways to overcome errors is to reward learners during the learning process. We can do it by giving them concrete reinforcement or we can reward them by using such positive words as "Good", "Nice", and "Excellent."

Three basic rules of the procedure to help learners use the language effectively are
1. We must try to bring the target culture into the classroom,
2. We should not tell that "That is definitely wrong."
3. We must take such variations into consideration as dialects.

RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

There are two different views on correction of this type of error such as the following:

A. Correction is necessary
   1. Approximately 87% of the teachers claim that correction should be through practice. Those teachers suggest that we use oral and written practice during the learning process. This can be realized through a variety of exercises such as repetition, problem-solving activities and abundant drills.
   2. Approximately 33% of the teachers claim that correction should be through an explanation of the rule. Those teachers suggest that we write the example sentence on the board and explain the rule to the learners. The explanation can, if necessary, be in Turkish. They suggest direct or indirect or oral or written types of explanation during learning process.

B. Correction is not necessary
   1. Approximately 13% of the teachers claim that
correction is not necessary. That is, learners can correct their errors themselves during the learning process. This can be realized through self-correction and a long time process.

Most of the five-year and less experienced teachers claim that correction should be through practice and explanation whereas two of the six-year experienced teachers claim that there should be no correction if the error is of performance.

I have assumed that this specific problem area is one of the errors these 15 teachers of English often run across in their teaching. This problem area is usually seen in speech and writing performances. In the speech process, the common view of teachers is that learners make this type of error unconsciously. The teachers help the learners by repeating the same sentence but stressing more on the "-s" ending so that students can understand that they should have used it with the related verb.

An example such as the following can be given:

Salih (student): Ali want to go to Istanbul.
Teacher: Salih, Ali wants to go to Istanbul.
Salih: Ali wants to go to Istanbul.

(After the feedback the student corrects it)

In the second process, learners make errors in the writing process. After the exams most of the teachers suggest giving exam papers of the students back so that the students can see their errors to be aware of them. Then, the teacher should write some example sentences on
Then, the teacher should write some example sentences on the board to make students aware of the rule to use the "s" ending only for third person singular in the present tense. To do this, the common view of teachers is to have more exercises in the classroom. In another words, the students should be given more opportunities to practice.

Role-play and problem solving activities are the best kind of activities to be held in the classroom situation.

We can draw a number of conclusions from the analysis of data obtained by the questionnaire given to 15 different teachers of English at different universities in Turkey. The survey, first, will have a considerable value for teachers of English as the investigation sheds light on the specific problem area. We have no doubt that this specific problem area needs to be taken into consideration by English teachers.

Second, the survey accounts for some aspects associated with the attitudes of adult learners towards learning English, the teacher, the method, visual aids, exercises, homework, and textbooks.

Finally, the outcome of the investigation has justified our predictions about the teaching style and use of techniques to overcome this specific problem area.

Table 1 illustrates the results of the questionnaire given to the teachers of English at different universities in Turkey.
### DATA PRESENTATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>1-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11+</th>
<th>correction is necessary</th>
<th>self-correction</th>
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Table 1: Data presentation
Input and interaction in the classroom setting are likely to be different from what is in a natural setting. There is often a general assumption that natural and classroom settings differ particularly when the classroom environment involves the form of teaching of L2.

The comparison between the classroom and natural setting as sources of input for SLA depends on the frequency of different types of interaction which occur in each setting. In particular, it depends on the type of educational setting in which the L2 learners find themselves.

Input and interaction in classrooms have been investigated by means of interaction analysis, the study of teacher talk, and discourse analysis. Interaction analysis sheds little light on input and interaction in classrooms from the perspective of SLA. In teacher talk studies the same modifications occur. Discourse analysis shows that many classroom interactions follow IRF (initiate-response-feedback) which restricts the opportunity to negotiate meaning.

Considerable differences between natural and classroom settings arise when the focus is on form in language lessons. These differences are not absolute; they vary in degree according to the type of classroom and also the types of teaching (Ellis, 1985). Learner-centered teaching can lead to examples of interaction
similar to those found in natural settings.

TECHNIQUES

The aim of this study is to explore the degree to which accepted techniques of correction may contribute to poor student performance and suggest modifications of current practices.

Current teaching practices are based largely on the assumption that children learn languages by repetition and that this process can be produced in the classroom through repetitions of dialogs and pattern drill.

I strongly believe that the view in second language teaching is almost the repetition that is considered as the most important component in the second language learning.

Holley and King (1965) state in their article that Cazden followed the verbal development of two groups of lower class Negro children, each of which received different verbal support from adult teachers. In one group the teacher consistently expanded (thereby correcting) the children's utterances; in the other the teacher consistently modeled new structures for the children. The second group progressed more rapidly.

In attempting to analyze whether there is a general pattern or correction procedure involved, we adduce the following features (Holley and King, 1974):

1. Hesitation on the part of the learner is met with
teacher,

2. Student responses deemed incorrect by the instructor are cut off before completion; frequently in mid-sentence.

Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) suggest that after the initial silent phase most of the classroom time should be devoted to communicative activities. This means that when a learner is producing language or attending to what a classmate is saying, that language sample functions as input which can be used to reinforce.

Teachers of English should provide opportunities for their learners to assist one another and to experiment what they know about the structure of the new language.

The below mechanical drills should be used to emphasize the use of "s" ending for the third person singular. One of the ways of overcoming the specific problem area is the use of "if clauses." According to Ersoz (1986), we have two different and at the same time effective types of "if clauses" to do so.

A) Fill-in the blank

It is a semi-controlled exercise. This type of exercise guides the learners to find the correct tense for the condition by the help of prompts. The learners are required to fill in the blanks in present tense according to the clues given such as "if she......, I......."

1. If ..................today, I ......................

2. She .................if they ..................today.
3. If he ..............now, he..................
4. If she.............him, she..............him.
5. If they.............Ayse, they..................

* This type of exercise will be most effective and useful if it is applied as pair work study.

B. Snow-balling

First the teacher should divide the class into two groups. The teacher should write the sentences which indicate the situation on slips of paper. Then teacher gives them to each group. Each group makes "if clauses" linkink each paper according to the situation which should follow each other; time is limited. The teacher should point out the sentences which will be used as conditional ones by the letter (I).

Ali does not have a cycle.

I: Ahmet has a cycle.
Ahmet rides to the school.
I: Ahmet rides to the school.
Ahmet visits his math teacher.
I: Ahmet visits his math teacher.
Ahmet wants to learn his grades.
I: Ahmet wants to learn his grades.
He learns whether he succeeds or not.
I: He learns whether he succeeds or not.
He learns that he fails.
I: He learns that he fails.
His father gets angry with him and never gives him
money again.

Here, the aim is to have students practice the present tense through the use of "if clauses." The first group is expected to start the conversation by using the first sentence above "Ahmet does not have a cycle" and the second group is required to put the second sentence in "if clause" type to respond and the conversation goes on to the end like this.

C. Repetition

The teacher asks students to repeat the answer given by another student in the classroom. This type of exercise should be done after the learners have mastered the verb "want" and the structure of "S + "want to do something + ...."

T: Ali, what do you want to do now?
A: I want to go to Istanbul.
T: Ali wants to go to Istanbul.

(pointing to Ali and asking students to repeat after him)

This type can also be done in groups of three learners by creating the same situation above. One of the learners plays the role of the teacher to direct the other learners and the other learners play their own roles. To do this, the student teacher should be given the situations they are expected to perform before the activity begins. The situations
can be given on a sheet of paper. The student teacher is asked to start the activity as follows:

ST: Ahmet, what do you want to be?
Ahmet: I want to be a teacher.
ST: Ahmet wants to be a doctor.
(pointing to Ahmet and asking the other student to repeat after him)

* All three students play the role of teacher in turn. So, they will act as a teacher starting the activity and the role of the student who is directed.

Another type for the same activity is that the teacher asks one of the learners general questions and directs another to follow such as:

T: What do you want to be, Aysegul?
Aysegul: I want to be a doctor.
T: Kerim, what does Aysegul want to be?
Kerim: Aysegul wants to be a doctor.
T: Thank you.

The same situation is repeated among three learners, one playing the role of the teacher again. The learners are given the situations on a sheet of paper beforehand and they are asked to start the activity. The one who plays the role of teacher is expected to start the activity and the others are expected to follow the activity. Each learner is given their cards such as the following:

Act. 1
A) Role: The teacher

Ask: What do you want to be, X?

Act. 2

Role: The student

Respond: I want to be ......

Act. 3

B) Role: The teacher

Ask: What does X want to be?

(pointing to X and asking another student to answer)

Act. 4

Role: The student (the third)

Respond: X wants to be .......

D) The use of DO

The most suitable way to distinguish the use of DO as a verb in a sentence is that the teacher should divide the class into pairs. Each pair should be given a list of sentences. The sentences include the main verb DO. They are asked to put the sentence into negative and question forms. During this process, the learners can be aware of both the main verb DO and the helping verb DO. The sentences can be as follows:

1. He likes to drink beer.
2. She comes late everyday.
3. We do the exercises in the class.
4. Ayse studies at home.
5. They do homework everyday.
7. Ahmet does the house work alone.
8. Ali cleans his car every morning.
9. They listen to the radio.
10. Ayse does the cleaning at home.

Here, the learners are expected to put these sentences first into negative and then question form in order to practice the use of DO. The aim is to improve the student's ability to use DO as a helping verb with the main verb DOES in the sentences such as "Ayse does the cleaning at home."

E) Filling out a chart

The last technique will be using a chart in which the learners are required to fill in the Subject part of a sentence by using the members of the family. If a person in the family does a certain job at home, the learner is required to write his name in the section of Members of the family?

Members of the family? ________________________ JOBS

......................... cleans the house.
......................... makes the beds.
......................... cleans your room.
......................... looks after the baby.
looks after the animal.
prepares breakfast.
cooks dinner.
washes dishes.
washes clothes.
does repairs.
........................ pays the bills.
paints the house.
........................ decorates the house.
........................ waters the flowers.
........................ cuts the grass.

The learners are required to exchange charts with a partner and use information on the new chart to write a paragraph. Learners are asked to begin with a sentence that makes a generalization about the details on the chart such as the following:

Arif's mother does the most of the household jobs.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has shown that knowing the types and causes of errors may be of considerable use to the teacher in analyzing his instruction and students' interlanguage and to be able to explain why certain errors occur and how the teacher can overcome them. We should keep in mind that native speakers also make errors in their speech.

We, as teachers of English, can get clues about what
has already been learnt and what remains to be learnt through the use of error analysis. Error analysis gives clues about the effectiveness of teaching English through some materials such as audio-visual aids, textbooks, and the syllabus.

On the other hand, error analysis has the value of forming a basis for error correction. In the case that learners are not able to recognize their errors, error analysis helps the learners discover the function of the forms of the target language. The most crucial point is that teachers must tolerate most of the errors during communicative practice if the error does not break down the communication.

The classroom teacher will have a systematic evaluation of the language learners' difficulties and valuable insights about the language learning process by means of error analysis.

We should point out that Turkish learners learning English are not aware of the rules of the target language. They cannot master the target language rules easily. To do this, they need a long time to acquire those rules. More exercises are needed. They should often use the language to practice the rules of the target language.

We, as teachers of English, should carefully apply different techniques and approaches which are appropriate to the learners' learning style.

As Lombardo (1985) states, error correction is an
integral part of the teacher's role in the classroom setting. The real issue is to know when and how it is to be accomplished. She claims that errors should be treated as a normal part of learning and even welcomed as an opportunity to grow one's understanding of the language, then learners are able to have a positive experience toward the target language. The most crucial point is that teachers of English must tolerate most of the errors if the error does not break down the communication.
5. REFERENCES


Newbury House Publishers, Inc.


6. APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

.* TO THE TEACHER(S) *

1. Name:
   Surname:
   Title:
   Date:

2. How long have you been teaching English to beginning level (adult) learners?

3. Is the misformulation of 's' ending for the third person singular one of the errors you often run across? If yes, how do you help overcome this problem? What kind of approaches or methods do you use or suggest for other teachers to help overcome this problem? Please explain below and on the back if necessary.

   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................
   ..........................................................

Thank you!
7. CURRICULUM VITAE

I was born in Samsun in 1964. After I completed my primary and secondary education in Samsun, I did my undergraduate studies in the Department of English Language Teaching at the Faculty of Education, Ondokuzmayis University in Samsun. I graduated with my B.A. in 1986.

I worked as an English teacher at a private language school for one year. I have been working as a Research Assistant at the Faculty of Science and Letters, Yuzuncu Yil University in Van since 1987.