Contrastive Analysis

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Let's study! English
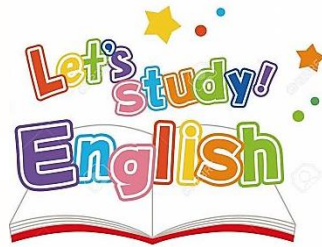
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GOOD MORNING!

We were talking about Donald's concept of error correction. He suggested a model to correct his students' writing. We said that Donald was a teacher, and he proposed some ideas from a teacher's perspective.

A Model of Correcting Writing:

Donald suggests a way for correcting written works through certain questions the teacher has to answer.

Sometimes, the student makes a lot of mistakes, but the main idea is clear, so you can comprehend what your student wants to say. In this case, we have to focus on the *quality* of the words <u>rather than</u> the *quantity* of the mistakes the students make.

1. As far as *comprehensibility* is concerned, teachers should focus on the following points:

a- Can you understand the output?

b- Are there areas of incoherence?

In 'b-', it should be *"Are **there** areas of incoherence?"* instead of *"Are ~~these~~ areas of incoherence?"*.

If the student is talking about a certain idea, then he jumps to talk about another totally different idea, then this is lack of coherence i.e., (لا يوجد ترابط).

c- Do these affect the overall message?

Again, can you understand the message of your student? Can you understand what your student wants to say?

d- Does communication break down?

When your student is writing, do you think he is communicating his ideas in a good way? As you know, writing can be seen as a mean of communication between the writer and the reader. If the message is clear, then communication will be all good.

2. Attention should be paid to *fulfilling the requirements of the task*: "Has the student addressed the task?".

You ask your students to write an essay about a certain issue like, for example, the effects of social media. Your student has to address this issue. The question here is: Did your student address this issue or did he write something different? This is the requirements of the task.

3. On the level of *syntax and lexis*:

a- Are they appropriate to the task?

The vocabulary should be suitable for the task. For example, students should not use literary words in a scientific issue.

b- Are they accurate?

Are they correct? Here, emphasis is placed on accuracy.

Practical Techniques/Ideas for Correcting Writing

The techniques he proposes are divided into two parts:

Training students to correct their errors: this way helps students recognize their errors and correct them through playing specific kinds of games during the lesson:

He proposes games through which students can correct their own mistakes and their classmates' mistakes.

a- Grammar Auctions

Students receive a number of sentences taken from their written work.

Maybe, these words belong to them or to another student.

Some are correct, and some are wrong.

So, we have a text. It contains wrong sentences and correct sentences. I divide my students into groups. For example, I have 5 groups, and each group has 5 students.

Students in groups have to try to buy the correct ones in the auction.

Students have to recognize the correct sentences and buy them from other groups.

They have a limited amount of money. The team with the correct sentences wins.

The group that buys the most correct sentences wins.

b- Mistakes Mazes

Students have a list of sentences. Their route through a maze depends on whether the sentences are right or wrong. They follow white arrows for correct sentences and black arrows for incorrect ones. If they have identified all the sentences correctly, they escape; if not, they have to retrace their steps and find out where they were wrong.

Maze means (متاهة).

It is important to know that Donald was the one who suggested these games.

Now, we will look at techniques that the teacher might follow or adopt in correcting their students' mistakes.

Ways for Correcting Errors by the Teacher

a- Teachers can use a different color pen to underline certain sentences that have appropriate language, so that he can offer them as useful samples for student.

For example, the teacher might use the green color in order to indicate for their students that these sentences are correct, good and appropriate.

b- Also, they can correct errors by writing the correct forms in the same places where errors exist.

For example, the student wrote:

o *I **eat** pizza yesterday. **Ate***

The teacher might underline the mistake and write the correct form.

c- By using the margin, the teacher can write codes to identify the type of error, whether voc for lexical errors, or sync for syntactic. So when the student reviews his work, he can recognize his errors and may try to correct them.

The margin is (الهامش).

The teacher can write codes on the margin like *G* for grammar, *S* for spelling, *P* for punctuation, and *voc* for vocabs.

d- Another method is to put crosses on the margin to indicate the number of errors found in each line. In the same previous way, the student should identify his errors and attempt to make corrections.

For example, if the line has three mistakes, I write ($\times$ $\times$ $\times$) on the margin. The student should correct his errors.

> **e- Divide students into groups, then let each group correct the works of the other by following any of the above techniques.**
>
> **f- The teacher should, from time to time, give his instructions about the frequent errors found in students' works, and how to eliminate them.**

So, it is recommended that the teacher hold sessions in order to discuss with his students their mistakes.

To sum up…

Some ways of correcting errors by teacher are:

1) **Use a different color to identify correct sentences.**

2) **Correct the mistake in the same place.**

3) **Use coeds to indicate mistakes, so students can correct them.**

4) **Put crosses, and students have to correct the mistakes.**

Solution for Avoiding Errors:

> **Donald indicates the role of planning in eliminating many of the following problems:**

He emphasizes the importance of planning so that you can eliminate problems such as the following.

1. Inappropriate layout

This means the form of the written work. When you plan what you want to write about beforehand, you are going to have the chance to get the required form. **Layout** is (الشكل).

For example, as a student, before I start writing, I plan that the first paragraph is an introduction, the second one is about the advantages of something, the third is about the disadvantages, and the last is a conclusion.

2. No paragraphs

This means the division of the paragraph is not clear. The whole essay would look like one narrative paragraph. In this way, the student is ignoring the form of the essay.

When you plan what you are going to write about, this solves the problem of having *'no paragraphs'*.

3. Lack of cohesion

Cohesion is (الترابط). I, as a student, should use appropriate transition words. For example, I start by mentioning the first advantage and its example, then the second advantage and its example, and so on. For instance, I do not mention the example of the first advantage after the second example.

4. Inappropriate style

Inappropriate style is (الأسلوب غير المناسب). It means how you arrange your ideas.

Also he suggests some questions that help in putting the plan of writing:

You should ask yourselves the following questions while you are planning.

1. What am I going to write? (An informal letter… etc.)

What am I going to write? Am I going to write a formal letter, an informal letter, a report, an email, an essay, an opinion essay, an argumentative essay or a descriptive essay?

2. What layout do I need?

How many body paragraphs do I need in order to write about these issues?

3. What information am I going to include?
4. How many paragraphs do I need?
5. What grammar/vocabulary am I going to use?

I should use vocabulary and grammar that suit the genre I am talking about.

6. What linking words (because, and, etc.) am I going to use?

What linking words do I need? Do I need coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, transition words, etc.

The Deviation and Permeation Factors
Howells, in his paper Contrastive Analysis Revisited

His name and his paper's name are important.

A Participative Approach to Improving Language Performance (2003), tries to reveal some factors that lie between the two basic theories used for analyzing students' errors, that is; the Error Analysis theory and the Contrastive Analysis theory.

What is the difference between error analysis theory and contrastive analysis theory?

In the contrastive analysis, I am comparing between two languages.

In the error analysis theory, I am just trying to trace my students' errors.

The two factors he postulates are related to the concept of deviation and the concept of permeation.

Linguists should be interested not only in the type of error or its source,

The type of error means if it is grammatical, lexical, etc.

The source of the error means if it is because we have, for example, something similar in the native language of the student.

but also in its seriousness and the degree of disturbance which they cause to the process of communication and norms.

Some students are really serious, and they prevent you from communicating.

Norms means (أعراف). We have norms of the language like using the suffixes and the prefixes. For example, if I want to change the word 'stress' into an adjective, I can say 'stressful'.

The norms are not only related to pragmatic aspect, but it is also related to other aspects of language like grammatical aspect, lexical aspect, etc.

Some kinds of errors are serious to the extent that they divert the reader from making a direct connection between utterance and meaning.

Sometimes, as a reader, I cannot find the connection between what is written as an utterance (a word) and its meaning. I cannot understand what my students want to say or what the writer wants to say.

In the case of foreign language learners, the ability to write a high quality paper is not easy; there must be errors.

There are always suggestions.

However, it is better for teachers to judge the written work by the quality and the efficiency of its message than by the quantity of the errors found.

لا يجب أن يهتم المدرس بعدد الأخطاء وإنما بجودة العمل المقدم له إذا كان أسلوب الطالب وأفكاره جيدة.

> *The degree of deviation is subject to the relationship between the sentence and its content:*
>
> *1. The sentence may be correct, but its use is ambiguous to divert the meaning from understanding to the opposite meaning.*

The sentence may by correct, but the meaning is not clear. Sometimes, you might get the opposite message that the writer wants to communicate.

> *2. The level of deviation increases because of the resonance which certain types of errors have to the understanding of the native speaker.*

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> *There are other types of deviation that result from the combination of error and context:*
>
> *1. Variant of meaning leading to inaccurate or embarrassing interpretation*

Some words may have several meanings. Sometimes, using a word in a certain context is an error because the meaning may not be clear.

The literal translation may cause misunderstanding. For example, someone might translate (ظروف قاهرة) into Cairo envelopes ☺.

> *3. Indecipherability, where comprehension comes to a dead stop because a phrase is just not interpretable.*
> - *I am walking on the upside of the street.*

The meaning is not clear.

> *4. Familiarity: where the learner produces the cliché errors associated with his mother tongue.*
> - *Do you can see that man?*

You do not have to use an auxiliary verb in your native language, so you make mistakes because you think this is applicable from your mother tongue to the native language.

The examples are important.

> *5. Inappropriacy, be it at the level of socio-linguistic or collocation.*
> - *Please, I am looking for your man (husband).*

It is inappropriate to say ''your man'' instead of ''your husband''.
Deviation means (انحراف المعنى عن سياقه).

> *On the other hand, there is the concept of permeation which means the permeation of one type of error into another.*

For example, an error in pronunciation may lead to an error in spelling. Let us take the example of /p/ and /b/.

Someone says to the policeman:

A: Can I bark here?

The policeman says:

B: Yes, you can bark wherever you want.

The speaker means 'park', but they pronounce it as 'bark'.

> *The non-standard pronunciation leads to non-standard spelling. The following example explains this idea: "a teacher of EFL in Britain was responsible for a group of Saudi Arabian students and received a telephone call from the worried father of one of them, asking how his son was, as the family received no news of him. Having assured the parents the son was well, the teacher asked the latter why he had not written. 'Oh, but I have written every week,' was the reply. 'Where do you put the letters?" asked the teacher. In this box here, marked 'LITTER' The /e/ sound in Arabic is more closed than the English equivalent and his student was hearing a sound similar /lit/. It is not surprising then, that he should relate his perception of what he had heard to what he read on the box marked 'LITTER".*

/lit/ is more closed to Arabic than /let/. The teacher hears 'litter' instead of /letter/.

> *This indicates that there is a relationship between the receptive area and the productive area of the learner.*

This sentence is important. There is a relationship between the receptive area (reading and listening) and the productive area (writing and speaking).

Solutions for Learners' Errors

It is not enough to study the errors that learners commit during the process of learning, rather there should be solutions for correcting these errors, and even for avoiding committing them. Otherwise, studying language will be insufficient and the problems of learning will not be eliminated.

Do not you think that, at some point, you need to understand why the learner keeps making the same error over and over again? You have to trace the source of the errors or the mistakes. Maybe, you need to make a

little research on the mother tongue of the student. Actually, the mother tongue is responsible for most of the students' mistakes because learners often compare between their native language and the target language. Sometimes, it is good to identify the source of errors.

Student: Sometimes, we translate English text in an Arabic style.

Professor: You think in Arabic. Maybe, a way to prevent your students from thinking in Arabic is to increase the period of time the students are exposed to the target language.

> *Error Correction and Motivation:*
>
> *When searching for ways of correcting errors, it becomes important to see the relationship between error correction and motivation, that is "the possible effects that may have on students' motivation and willingness to take risks".*

Take risks means here the ability to use the language.

If I correct each and every mistake my students do while speaking, they would never ever speak again.

For example, my student needs to learn English, but he makes a lot of mistakes. Let us say that my student wants to go there in order to work or that my student is a female and she wants to pass a certain exam so that she can travel to a certain country in order to meet up with her husband. What I should focus on as a teacher is speaking.

If a student wants to go, for example, to Germany to study and become an engineer, I need to pay attention to the academic language, to the grammar, and to certain issues. The focus is different.

If I, as a teacher, do not differentiate between a student who wants to go there in order to study and a student who wants to go there just to get married and have a family, then this will affect the motivation of my student. They would feel that they are in a mess and that they are not going to learn that language ever.

Correcting each and every mistake that is not related to the student's objective of learning that language would make the student does not want to learn that language ever.

<div dir="rtl">من المهم أن نأخذ حاجة الطالب بعين الاعتبار ونستخدم أسلوبًا يلائمها.</div>

> *The factors that should be considered in this field are:*
>
> I.   *At what level of error does the teacher correct?*

Is the student familiar with the grammar rule, or not? If they are not, I should not correct them. First, I should teach them the grammar rule. Then, if they fail to use it, I have to extra work on it. For example, I have to provide them with extra exercises, extra worksheets and extra time to practice. If the mistake is advanced; beyond their level, I should not correct it. It would be wasting my time correcting mistakes that my students are not familiar with.

II.	*What methodology should be used to correct?*

The second factor is about the way that should be used in correcting errors and mistakes. Sometimes, it is within your students' level.

But sometimes, you embarrass your student. You correct them in a harsh way like (كم مرة بدنا نحكي؟! مو قلنا هيك لازم تكون!). This affects your students negatively.

Let us say that you are doing a fluency test to your student. You should not interrupt them while they are speaking to say, *"No! It should be 'is' not 'are'. No! After 'may', it should be 'work' not 'works'"*. Rather, you should write down their mistakes, and when they finish speaking, you tell them their mistakes.

Another way to correct the student's errors is to resay the sentence correctly with a rising intonation to show the error.

> ***The reason behind concentrating on this relationship is that there are degrees of correctness of the part of the various attitudes and purposes which learners have in different countries.***

Sometimes, we have some things that are acceptable in British English but unacceptable in American English, and vice versa.

For example, in British English, the past of the verb 'learn' is 'learnt' only.

In American English, it can be 'learnt' or 'learned'.

Also, we have differences in spelling like in 'colour' and 'color'.

We have differences in pronunciation.

The word	*UK*	*US*
Student	*/ˈstjuː.dənt/*	*/ˈstuː.dənt/*
New	*/njuː/*	*/nuː/*

<div align="center">***</div>

> ***In Anglophone countries that have adopted the US-inspired student-centered culture that advocates fluency over accuracy,***

What is the difference between fluency and accuracy?

Student: Fluency means you can speak the language, but it is not necessarily the correct way of speaking it.

Professor: So, your speech is fluent, and there are no pauses. Sometimes, you make mistakes, but I can understand your language.

Accuracy means you have to say each and every word correctly even with hesitation or pauses, but the output is correct.

Accuracy means (الصحة؛ الدقة).

Fluency means (السرعة في الكلام مع وجود منطقية). There is no hesitation or pauses here. Features of connected speech should be here in fluency.

If someone wants to travel to get married, then they would be focusing on fluency rather than accuracy.

If someone wants to travel to study, then they would be focusing on accuracy rather than fluency.

Now, we are talking about differences that exist between schools that teachers belong to.

> ***In Anglophone countries that have adopted the US-inspired student-centered culture that advocates fluency over accuracy,***

So, the teacher is <u>not</u> dominating the class. The student is the center of the learning process. Teachers here think that they should focus on the fluency more than the accuracy.

> ***Teacher are reluctant to adopt a consistent scheme of error identification and correction based on a knowledge of standard grammar.***

يتحفظ المعلمون على تبني خطة ممنهجة لتصحيح الأخطاء بالاعتماد على (*standard grammar*).

> ***This reluctance is due in part to the doctrine of 'communicative ability' and partly to the fact that the younger generation of teachers was itself trained, during a period of decreased emphasis on grammar...***

This is like a reaction of the teachers because they, themselves, where in an environment that focuses on grammar.

> ***English second language students are in a different situation from that of American students. In a study on students' preferences for error correction in spoken English, English second language students very much wanted to be corrected.***

So, usually, second-language learners want to be corrected in each and every mistake they do.

Sometimes, in our native language, we do some mistakes, but we do not care about it because we are not speaking standard Arabic.

Look at this question now.

Decide whether the following sentence is true or false.

- **English second language students do not care about being corrected.** *(False)*

Of course, this sentence is false.

Another point is derived from an experiment made by a teacher on the purpose of demonstrating the effect of correcting errors on students. The teacher tends to correct every single error in the papers of her students, also having in mind the desire "to find a medium between the extreme action of that teacher and the laissez-faire activities of those who allow errors to become fossilized, permanent markers of the non-native speaker's English.

We have a teacher that teaches the language in fun ways, through games and activities and in open air. *Laissez-faire activities* means free-time activities.

The other teacher corrects each and every mistake of her students.

Now, what are the results of that experiment on the two teachers?

The result shows that extensive practice in developing communicating strategies in the early stages of second language learning will lead students to acquire permanent and irreversible errors in their interlanguage.

Interlanguage is a language developed by the learner. It is half way between the mother tongue and the target language. It is not exactly his native language and not exactly his target language.

هي لغةٌ يطورها المتعلم خلال تعلمه اللغة الثانية.

The learner tends to develop the communication (التواصل) in the early stages of learning. They focus on the fluency. The result of this is that students will acquire permanent and irreversible errors in their interlanguage. What does *irreversible errors* mean?

Student: It means (أخطاء لا يمكن تصحيحها).

Professor: Exactly! Again, *the interlanguage is a language developed by learners during the process of acquiring the target language*.

I will stop here for today.

Thank you