Novelist Calls Out Poemist: A Psycholinguistic and Contrastive Analysis of the Errors in Turkish EFL Learners' Interlanguage

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Abstract—This study is designed to investigate errors emerged in written texts produced by 30 Turkish EFL learners with an explanatory, and thus, qualitative perspective. Erroneous language elements were identified by the researcher first and then their grammaticality and intelligibility were checked by five native speakers of English. The analysis of the data showed that it is difficult to claim that an error stems from only one single factor since different features of an error are triggered by different factors. Our findings revealed two different types of errors: those which stem from the interference of L1 with L2 and those which are developmental ones. The former type contains more global errors whereas the errors in latter type are more intelligible.

Keywords—Contrastive analysis, Error analysis, Language acquisition, Language transfer, Turkish

I. INTRODUCTION

THOUGH there may be other minor reasons for learning a foreign language, almost all learners are motivated primarily by their desire to communicate in that target language. Thus, the learners' satisfaction with the learning of that target language must be in correlation with the communicative power they perform in a linguistic interaction in a meaningful situation.

Errors, especially global ones, in the production of a foreign language learner constitute one of the strongest obstacles in the phenomenon of communication; erroneous language imposes too much load to the mind and brain of the hearer or reader that the interlocutor of an erroneous learner soon loses his desire to maintain the communication.

What you want to communicate strictly depends on how you say it [1]. Nevertheless, erroneous language in the process of learning a new language is inevitable. Learners of a foreign language produce language that is not identical to the "hypothesized corresponding set of utterances which would have been produced by a native speaker of a target language (TL) had he attempted to express the same meaning as the learner" [2]. That is, the language produced by the learners of a foreign language is almost always erroneous in some aspects of the target language even if it can be native like in others.

There are various factors that cause errors in the process of learning and especially, producing a foreign language.

Over generalization of a newly learned rule, failure in the setting of the parameters of the TL, narrowness of the semantic and functional scope of newly learned linguistic entities, the interference of the first language or other known languages with the TL, interference of the lexicon known well with the

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ones just learned and some idiosyncratic, attitudinal and aptitudinal features of the learners are some of them.

In the literature, a much more studied topic among them is the topic of interlingual interference; mostly the interference of the mother tongue with the target language. Whether errors in foreign language learning are merely transfers of the structural and functional features of linguistic units in the first language to the target language, or they are the indicators for the underlying hypothesis testing in the setting of the parameters of the target language by learners has been debated for decades [3]. Supports the latter claiming that errors are the result of the active process of testing the hypothesis that the second language operates on similar principles to the first language, rather than as the transfer of first language habits. So, "errors are not aberrant target language utterances or merely the result of mother tongue interference. They are, rather, sentences of this intermediary language which are as valid in their own right as any dialect"[4].

This understanding of foreign language learning imposes the idea that the deviant forms of TL produced by learners should not be considered as *errors* to be eradicated in the immediate teaching environment as long as that deviant language fulfills its communicative function; instead, the learners should be given the chance to converge the deviant part to the standard through their own experiences. Although he does not totally oppose [3]'s hypothesis, [5] states that there is compelling evidence that language transfer plays a substantial role in the process and outcome of L2 acquisition. Reference [6] supports this suggestion claiming that networks constructed in the process of the learning of a new language cannot be independent of the conceptual networks already established in the learners' mind.

As for the studies conducted to investigate errors in the language of L2 learners, [3] attempted to locate the learner errors both in the process of learning an L2 and in the field of the study of second language acquisition. Introducing the term *interlanguage*, [2] changed the understanding of and approach to *error* by proposing that the language developed by an L2 learner should be conceived of a language in its own right which has its own dynamics that are different from both those of L1 of the learner and those of L2. Reference [7] attempted to 'develop a framework for describing the field as it existed in the 90s and to use that framework to provide an extensive account of what was known about L2 acquisition and L2 learning. (p. 3)'.

In this study, [7] described learner language, explained the factors effecting second language acquisition and discussed individual learner differences in details. Reference [8] questioned the ownership of English. His argument about the English to be taken as *standard* contributed to language teaching in that it accelerated the shift in the placement of *effective communication* before *perfection* in the use of the

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target language. Along with these studies, which set up the framework of the field, there are more specific studies which investigated errors in different languages and teaching environments for various purposes.

References [9] and [10] documented the types and frequency of errors emerged in Chinese learners' written language with a general perspective and found that errors such as the transfer of notion in L1 into English and developmental errors that emerge in the form of ungrammatical structures predominate intralingual errors.

They also suggested solutions to problems in the field of teaching a foreign language. Reference [11] investigated Chinese learners' abilities in the use of collocations and idiomatic expressions in English by analyzing a corpus consisting of student essays. They concluded that Chinese learners fall far behind the native speakers of English in the usage of collocations and idiomatic chunks in their writing. Reference [12] investigated how cohesive devices are used by Chinese learners of English in expository writing and found that Chinese learners have difficulty using reference cohesion, followed by conjunction and lexical cohesion with both a descriptive and explanatory perspective.

Reference [13] conducted a study to identify quantitatively prominent syntactic errors at the sentential level and how immature or vague conceptualization manifests itself in the grammar-meaning relationship in the written texts produced by Arab learners of English. The most frequent error types they identified in their findings are related to vague tense-time mapping, finite-nonfinite confusion, sentence-clause confusion, voice-related errors, incorrect embedding and verbless clauses or sentences. Reference [13] commented that these errors emerge in Arab learners' language because of underdeveloped levels of English knowledge, overgeneralization of L2 rules and transfer of the rules from their mother tongue into English.

Reference [14] investigated the errors related to the use of prepositions in written texts produced by Jordanian EFL learners. His study reveals that errors stemming from the transfer from Arabic to English are most frequent. Qualitatively Reference [13] stated that "Arab Jordanian EFL students use the proper prepositions providing equivalents are used in their mother tongue (MT); select the improper prepositions if equivalents are not used in their MT; omit prepositions if equivalents are not required in their MT and add prepositions if equivalents are required in their MT."

The errors that emerged in the essays of Taiwanese EFL learners were reported to show slight differences from those of Arabic EFL learners. Reference [15] found that the most frequent errors made by Taiwanese learners are word choice, verb form, missing subject and verb tense. Reference [15] states that limited vocabulary, poor grammar knowledge and interference from first language are the factors which underlie the errors that emerged in their English language production.

Reference [16] examined grammatical errors of conjunctive adjuncts in written texts produced by Korean college freshmen. Their study yielded three significant results: "First, learners tend to use sentence-initial coordinators even when the sentences before and after the coordinators are not long enough to warrant such usage. Second, sentence fragments occur much more frequently than run-on sentences with the 10 most frequent conjunctive adjuncts found in the corpus. Finally, learners often add unnecessary punctuation marks or omit necessary ones after conjunctive adjuncts." They stated that these errors are the result of the lack of grammatical knowledge in the use of conjunctions in English.

The aim of the present study is to investigate the underlying reasons for the errors made by Turkish EFL learners with a descriptive and explanatory perspective. Although some statistical values are given for some error types, our primary focus is on the quality of the errors rather than their quantity. So, we attempt to answer the questions *'What errors do learners make?'* and *'Why do learners make those errors?'*, which are directed by [7]. In this attempt, we will analyze the errors which emerged in our data only. Thus, this is a data driven analysis rather than a general one looking for solutions to all universal errors appear in the phenomenon of SLA.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

Participants are 30 first year students (11 boys, 19 girls) studying in an ELT department. They range in age from 21 to 23 except for two students who are 26. In the brief interview, they all reported to have begun studying English- four hours a week- in fourth grade. In eighth grade their English studies increased to six hours a week and then twelve hours a week from ninth to twelfth grade. To be accepted in ELT department, they took a multiple choice English language exam, which tests reading skills and grammar knowledge of learners. Along with this exam, they took another exam testing the basics of other general topics. The participants are enrolled in ELT department courses such as Contextual Grammar, Advanced Reading and Writing, Oral Communication Skills, and Listening and Speaking, which are all taught in English.

B. Data Collection

Written data were collected from the exams given in the first year of study, including mid-term exams, quizzes and final exams in both fall and spring terms. Questions related to the topics they have learned in our classes were asked. Reference [17:420] emphasizes the discrepancy between learners' achievement in a test and their using TL in a meaningful situation. Providing appropriate instructions and via the nature of the subjects they have learned during the classes, the participants were asked to answer the questions by focusing more on the content than the form. That is, students were informed beforehand that grammatical mistakes on their exam papers were not to be evaluated. Thus, the language they produced during the tests was directed more to express their thought about the topic than to the linguistic form per se. Along with the analysis of the exam papers, each participant

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was asked to write two essays on certain topics. The errors in these essays were also identified and interpreted.

Spoken data are composed of the samples we collected in or outside the classroom while the students were speaking to teachers or to their class mates. We took notes of mispronounced words describing the context in which the word was used.

C. Data Analysis and Writing Convention

The data were analyzed qualitatively with an explanatory perspective. The structural features of the errors themselves, the structural and semantic context in which the errors occurred and the previous studies carried out on the topic were primary sources of interpretation. First, all of the erroneous sentences were listed and they were given to five native English speakers, who are teaching English to Turkish learners in an ELT department in Turkey, as a grammaticality judgment task. Then we held a short meeting to discuss the differences in the judgment of some of the item. Some of the items were also checked by Turkish teachers who are teaching English in the same ELT department.

As for the writing conventions, when an ungrammatical sentence is marked with an asterisk (*), this asterisk refers to the ungrammatical part that is under the focus of analysis in that specific part only. The ungrammatical parts under the focus of analysis are typed as *italic*. If there are any, other ungrammatical parts in the same sentence are dealt with under relevant subtitles. In cases where ungrammaticality stems from the relationship between different components of a single sentence, all related components are marked (e.g. *She *went* to school *tomorrow*.)

In morphological analysis of the sentences, we used the abbreviations used by [18].

III. FINDINGS

The total number of the words used in the texts in our data is 15242, Mean=508.07, Sd=92.72, n=30. Differentiation of the errors stemming from the inaccurate usage of words and those from the ungrammaticality of the sentence was not possible because most of the sentences that were identified as ungrammatical were ungrammatical because of the wrong usage of words. For instance it might seem to be easy to interpret the sentence "Binka is fence climbing", which was corrected by native speakers as "Binka is climbing a/the fence" or "Binka is climbing the fences" (though one of the speakers dropped a not saying that this sentence is conceived of fully grammatical in some localities in Texas). Are we to evaluate this sentence as ungrammatical because of the inaccurate ordering of the words on the syntagm or should we take the lack of the article before the noun *fence* into consideration as well? If either one is excluded, our interpretation itself would be erroneous. Thus, we do not present statistical findings related to the analysis of the sentences that were evaluated as ungrammatical. We deal more with the underlying reasons for their emergence rather than with their frequency.

We also analyzed the relationship between the text length and the frequency of erroneous words and it was found out that there is not a significant relationship between the two. This finding is consistent with those of [14].

A. Language Proficiency: Competence and Performance

Although possessing the potential knowledge, capacity and required skills about anything refers to competence, it is not as easy to measure it as to define it. Especially, when it is language to be measured, it is really a thorny path because one cannot access the language in one's mind directly. Thus, the researchers try to find ways to make a person reflect her/his linguistic potentials and how these potentials are organized in the mind indirectly. Reference [19] complicates the situation by saying "If learners are tired or uninterested, or misunderstand what they are expected to do, or if we construct a test badly, then they may produce language that does not represent their knowledge." However, what is conceived of as language proficiency refers more to the linguistic performance of a learner in meaningful situations than to our assumptions about what the learner bears in his mind. The underlying reason for this is mostly phenomenological; learners are conceived of in the way their performance makes changes in our minds via the signals they emit to our five senses. Since our study is a data driven one, we take the learners' performance as their proficiency rather than their assumed competence (see [20]).

In some cases it is difficult to identify whether the source of an error is the proficiency of the learner in the target language or not. Another paradox in the understanding of competence is that whether the term *competence* is to be conceived of, holistically, as one monolithic entity that resides as an abstracted form in the mind of the learner or analytically, as *competencies* in individual linguistic elements which are in such an interaction as to construct the total competence (see [21]).

Another issue that makes the phenomenon more complicated is the discrepancy between competence and performance even in the simplest forms of language; although a learner proves to be competent in a particular structure by producing a fully grammatical sentence, she may fail to produce grammatical sentences using the same structure in the sentences that follow the grammatical one within the same text. For instance, a learner demonstrates that she is competent to use the suffix –s at the end of a third person singular verb in The Simple Present affirmative sentence but the same learner is observed to fail to use that same suffix in a successive sentence.

(1)   She wants to be a woman. *She *want* new clothes.

The question whether this case is a problem of competence or performance remains unanswered (see [22:24]) because although the learner seems to be competent regarding the acquisition of structural features of English Simple Present Tense, the sentence following (1) reveals that the learner is not *competent* in the *performance* of the structure. In other words, *performance* itself is a kind of competence. Thus, within the limitations of this study, it is extremely difficult to come up

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with propositions stating that the source of an error is solely lack of competence in the learner.

Reference [23] classifies errors in two categories: global errors and local errors. The former are errors which hinder communication significantly and the latter are, as [23] defines, those which effect single elements in a sentence. Local errors do not hinder communication. The analysis of the data we collected reveals that a great majority of the errors made by the participants of this study are local errors because the five native speakers of English stated that the data can be understood but sound a bit strange.

IV. INTERFERENCE

In the specific field of learning, *interference* refers to the dynamic interaction between already assimilated, thus, well established mental entities and the entities that are in the process of constructing a web of relations within its schemata and with those already existing ones (see [24], [25]. In this dynamic interaction, usually, the already assimilated entities are the ones which prepare the ground which lends support to the construction of the new ones. If this definition is to be extended to the field of foreign language learning, then interference refers to the impact of the operational power of assimilated linguistic entities on the learner's process of setting the parameters of the target language. In most cases, the influence is almost unidirectional in the sense that it is the first language which interferes with the target language (see [26] for a contrary argument) but there are also cases where linguistic units in the target language interfere with other linguistic units in the target language. The former is called *interlingual interference*, whereas the latter is called *intralingual interference* [6]. This interference occurs at different levels of acquisition of the target language.

After Chomsky pronounced it, several studies were conducted on the proposition stating that first language acquisition is governed by UG [27], [28], [29:2-3 and 22-30]). Reference [25] states that "when writing or speaking the target language (L2), second language learners tend to rely on their native language (L1) structures to produce a response" (see also [17:89]. Second language learners' reliance on their first language while producing in the L2 they acquire or learn is a universal phenomenon. However, the extent and the form of the learners' insertion of the structures of L1 into L2 must differ according to the structural and lexical relationship between the two languages. In (2) and (3), the way Turkish learners insert the rules of Turkish as L1 into English as L2 is exemplified. In the grammaticality judgment tasks we applied, (2) was corrected as "Menenius resembles Squealer." by all of the five native speakers.

(2) *Menenius *is* resembl*ing to* Squealer.

If this sentence were uttered in Turkish, it would be as (3).

(3) Menenius Squealer'- a benze(i) - yor.
    Menenius Squealar- DAT. resemble – 3.sg.PROG.

The comparative analysis of (2) and (3) reveals that this Turkish learner of English relies on the structure of her L1in the production of the sentence (2) in L2. The Turkish sentence requires both dative case -*a* attached to *Squealer* and progressive marker –*yor* agglutinated to the verb *benze (resemble),* where the final *e* turns out to be *i* for phonological reasons, if one desires to express the similarity of Menenius to Squealer in The Present Progressive tense (see also [30] . The application of the structure of the Turkish sentence to English one makes the English counterpart ungrammatical.

Another sentence which supports [25] aforementioned proposition is (4).

(4) *While the boy *is* robbing, Oliver *couldn't* escape.

The sentence (4) was marked as ungrammatical by all of the five native speakers of English. The first ungrammaticality they mentioned is that the verb *rob* is transitive and thus it requires an object (though some of the dictionaries (e.g. Random House Webster's Unabridged dictionary) refer to it as both transitive and intransitive).The second ungrammaticality they identified is that the tense of the subordinate clause must be past, that is, the auxiliary *is* must be *was* to agree with *could*. The reason for the emergence of this error in Turkish learners' production lies in the subordinator postclitic -(E)RKEN (or verb-r *iken*) in Turkish. The subordinate clause containing –(E)RKEN, which functions as *while* in English, is a tenseless structure in Turkish in that it takes its tense or aspect from the tense of the verb in the main clause.

(5) Ben kitap oku-rken,   bebek uyu-yor-du.
    I book read-while   baby sleep-Prog.-Past
[While I was reading a book, the baby was sleeping.]

In Turkish, 'Ben kitap okurken,' does not denote any information about the tense although it denotes the aspect that the action is durative. After this subordinate clause, the main clause can be constructed in any tense such as 'bebek uyuyacak' [the baby will sleep], 'bebek uyur' [the baby sleeps], 'bebek uyurdu' [the baby would/used to sleep], 'bebek uyumuş' [the baby has slept], 'bebek uyumuştu' [the baby had already slept] etc. The reason why the tense of the subordinate clause 'While the boy is robbing,' does not agree with that of the main clause is the Turkish learner's relying on her subconscious knowledge of Turkish subordinator –(e)RKEN in the construction of the subordinate clause in (4). Similar errors were observed in the sentences containing other subordinators or relativizers in Turkish. The sentences '*The food you cooked at home is cheaper than the food you ate in a restaurant.*', '*Dog salivates before it saw the meat powder or it salivates before it heard the bell ringing.*' and '*When we died, we will return to our own place.*' were constructed by different participants under the impact of the Turkish tenseless relativizer morpheme –*DIK* [The one(s) which/that ...] (See [18:59].

The errors in (3) and (4) are governed by the L1 of these Turkish learners. Thus, it is highly expected that errors made by learners of English having different L1s would stem from

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different reasons and they would be different in form. Similar reasons are the source of errors in (6) and (7), whereas (8) is difficult to explain when the structures of both Turkish and English are considered. The producers of (6) and (7) are different learners. After the pilot analysis of the data, we asked them, individually, why they constructed each sentence in the active form rather than stative one, both of them came up with the answer stating that the persons they refer to in their sentences do that action every time rather than just at the deictic time of their utterances. In Turkish, the phrase *to be afraid* can be constructed without or with the progressive marker attached to the verb. For instance, 'kork-ar' [he/she/it is afraid), where *kork* is the root and *–Ar* is aorist encoding suffix, is used to refer to the fear as a general attitude of a person whereas 'kork-uyor' (fear-Progressive marker) refers to the fear of a person in a specific situation and time for a specific thing or it bears some clues of complaint about the situation.

    (6)   *She afraids*.

    (7)   *She *doesn't* interest in anything.

In (6) and (7) the learners refer to the general attitude of the person they are writing about. Thus, they use active structure in English which would be in accordance with their notion of this structure in Turkish.

B. Word Order and Articles

Some errors Turkish learners make were observed to stem from the interference of Turkish word order with that of English. The sentence (8) was identified as ungrammatical by all of the five native speakers stating that *anymore* is not used sentence initially. They all noted that it can be corrected as 'There is no brutality to him, anymore.' if the words in the sentence were to be preserved (otherwise, they stated, it can also be corrected as "He is no longer brutal". The native speakers evaluated (9) and (10) to be ungrammatical and they stated that the adverb *anymore* is never used in affirmative sentences.

    (8)   *Anymore*, there is no brutality to him.

As a response to the instruction "Explain why he might have worked for ever." a learner wrote

    (9) *Because *anymore* he is old.

and another learner wrote

    (10) *Dog is old *anymore*.

as a response to the question 'What is the significance of Carlson's shooting Candy's old dog?'

The underlying reason for the emergence of erroneous sentences (8), (9) and (10) is that Turkish is flexible regarding the positioning, both at morphemic and lexical level, on the syntagm. With some slight differences in emphasis, all of the

sentences containing "artık" are grammatical. English translations for the sentences (11), (12), (13) and (14) are given in the word order that corresponds with the word order in Turkish.

    (11) Artık köpek yaşlı. [*Anymore*, the dog is old.]
    (12) Yaşlı artık köpek. [Old *anymore* the dog is.]
    (13) Köpek artık yaşlı. [The dog is *anymore* old.]
    (14) Köpek yaşlı artık. [The dog is old *anymore*]

This flexibility urges the learner to be flexible in the positioning of "anymore." When (10) is analyzed comparatively with (14) in Turkish, it is not ungrammatical for a learner who approaches English with Turkish parameters. Another problem in (10) is the lack of the definite article *the* before the noun *dog*. There may be two reasons for the omission of the mentioned definite article in (10). Structurally, there are two forms in the assignment of definiteness in Turkish: First, by suffixing the accusative case to the noun that is the object of a transitive verb, as shown in (15),

    (15) Köpek-i gör-dü-m. [I saw the dog.]
        Dog-Acc. see-Simp.Past-1.sg.

Second, it is realized by using the nominative case of the noun as the subject of a verb (both transitive and intransitive) or an adjective. In this case the sentence should take place in a context that would help the hearer identify the specific dog which is the subject of the speech.

    (16) Köpek geldi. [The dog came (somewhere)] or [A dog came (somewhere]
    (17) Köpek yaşlı. [The dog is old.]

If (16) is uttered in a context to refer to a known dog, it would require *the* but if it does not refer to a dog that is known by the hearer (see [31:345]), it would require the indefinite article *a* to modify the noun *dog*. As for (17), it would never require a context to necessitate the definite article *the* to modify *dog* because of the existence of the adjective as the predicate of *köpek*. This sentence can only be constructed in the cases where the speaker and hearer know the dog that is mentioned.

So, the reason for Turkish learners' producing (10) without modifying the subject *dog* with the definite article *the* stems either from the structural imposition of the accusative case marker, which exists in Turkish, as exemplified in (15), but lacks in English, or from the notional dominance of the usage of the nominative case of a noun to refer to a known entity (see [12]. The latter is a kind of analogical simulation of the Turkish structure in the process of the construction of the English counterpart. Of course, these two reasons may be in an interplay to urge the learners to construct (10) without using the definite article *the* before the subject noun *dog*. The sentences (18), (19) and (20) were also produced by the subjects participated in our study.

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(18) Lennie killed *the dog*, but he didn't want to do this.
(19) Killing *the dog* was like this event.
(20) Lennie kills *the woman* accidentally.

If (18), (19) and (20) were in Turkish, all of the nouns that are objects of the verbs in them would be in the accusative case. The fact that they used *the* to modify the objects of the verbs in these sentences implies that the imposition of Turkish accusative case marker plays an important role in the usage of the determiner *the* by Turkish EFL learners.
The sentences (21), (22) and (23), produced by a ten-year-old student, reveal how Turkish interferes with the sentences constructed in English.

(21) Binka is sniffing.
(22) Binka is running.
(23) *Binka is *fence climbing*. [Binka çit-e tırman-Iyor]
   Binka fence-Acc. climb-3.sg.Progr.

In (21) and (22), the learner does not make any errors because the structure of (21) and (22) is available in Turkish in the same order that it is in English. However, ungrammaticality begins when the verb takes a direct object. (23) was corrected as 'Binka is climbing the fence', 'Binka is climbing a fence.' or 'Binka is climbing (the) fences' by five native speakers. The sentences (21), (22) and (23) reflect that this young learner of English relies strongly on the syntactic rules of Turkish while producing sentences in English (see [23], [32], [33]).

1. Semantic Level
Interference of the first language with the second language is not only on the structural level. Our study yielded results showing that Turkish learners of English transfer the semantic content and the function of the words in their L1 into their L2. Turkish and English are non-cognate languages. Thus there are not many verbs in Turkish which are cognates of English verbs. In this case, the problems related to semantics in the English sentences of Turkish learners stem from the discrepancy in the semantic scope each word covers in each language (see [34]). The subjects participated in our study used some English words to the extent its Turkish counterpart would cover. For instance, *bekle-mek* [wait-infinitive] means *to wait*. This verb is used to mean '*to expect*', '*to watch* or *to attend (something which needs care)*' or '*to be required*'.

(24) *The students are *waited* to memorize the dialogues.

The five native speakers acting as grammaticality checkers came up with differing evaluative statements on (24). One of them marked it as 'unintelligible as is' and two of them corrected the verb as *waiting*. Two of them deleted the auxiliary *are*. We asked five Turkish teachers to evaluate the grammaticality of (24) and we told them to correct it if possible. They all stated that there is no syntactic problems with the sentence but the verb *waited* should be replaced by

the verb *expected*. The differences in this cross-check imply two things: First, this error is global to the native speakers because none of the native speaker accessed the meaning the writer intended to convey. Second, Turkish mind is different from the mind of the native speakers of English in this evaluation in that Turkish speakers make use of their knowledge on the semantic scope of Turkish verb *beklemek* in the process of the evaluation of English verb *waited* (See [35]). Thus an error's quality of being global is not universal; it depends strongly on the first language of the evaluator. The words in bold type in (25), (26), (27), (28) and (29) are the errors which stem from similar underlying reasons. We interpreted only the erroneous words in bold type in these sentences here because our focus is on semantics rather than misspellings or structural features. Other types of errors were discussed in other parts of the article.

(25) *Injustice things and events are always *behind* Oliver Twist. (to mean *after)*
(26) *He needs to his team *friends* to play football. (to mean *mates)* (This error emerged in the forms of 'class friend' and 'room friend' as well.)
(27) *Usually, children play computer games in leisure time, but it is not *true*. It can be dangerous for them. (to mean *advisable* or *right*)
(28) *After his adoption, he *survives* a comfortable life. (to mean *lives or lived)*
(29) *We can see *comfortably*. (to mean *well*) (One of the checkers noted 'OK', but four of them marked as 'unintelligible'.)

Along with the transfer of the semantic scope of Turkish words into the scope of English counterparts, Turkish learners constructed sentences that are structurally English but notionally Turkish (See [36]). The sentences (30), (31) and (32) were evaluated as 'unintelligible' by the five native speakers. The native speakers noted that (30) and (32) may be meaningful if they are placed in a context. The same sentences were evaluated by Turkish teachers as 'intelligible', providing Turkish translations for them. Nevertheless, they noted that none of the sentences contain the intended message when they are approached with the mind of a native speaker of English.

(30) *Justice *found its place*. (To mean *Justice was done.)*
(31) *The poor seemed as a *second citizen*. (To refer to class distinction)
(32) *They *evaluate* their short lives in the best way.

Although the native speakers noted that (32) means '*They discuss their past life and they bring forth what they have done, as good or bad.*' the intended meaning by the Turkish learner is '*They enjoy their short life in the best way.*'

2. Case Marking Discrepancy and Use of "with"
If lexical representations are not universal but relative, and if the L1 lexicon constitutes the initial state of the

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interlanguage lexicon, then L2 lexical acquisition involves the relexification of the entire L1 lexicon, with all the syntactic information it contains [28]. Our findings support what [28] proposes in that Turkish learners of English need to be satisfied with the syntactic functions of Turkish case markers when English phrases do not have those case markers. It was observed that there is a systematic tendency in the use of certain prepositions with certain words (see [17:19], [37]). So, a great majority of errors in Turkish learners' texts are related to *case marking satisfaction*.

(33) *Hektor liked *from* Lady Utterword but later he hated *from* her.

(34) *Derivational morphemes comes before *from* inflectional morphemes.

(35) *Candy's dog was shot by Carlson *from* its head.

(36) ?People don't die *from* hunger. (This was marked as "possible by the native speakers.)

(37) *George can't leave *from* him.

(38) *A person is responsible not only *from* his family but also *from* other people.

(39) *They are against *to* patricians.

(40) *They try to play without harming *to* others.

(41) *Toward *to* the end of the story.

(42) *They tried to be near *to* him.

(43) *We focus *to* the bell.

(44) *Smoking causes *to* various forms of cancer.

(45) *Smoking damages *to* human health.

(46) *It damages *to* him.

(47) *He may be against *to* other countries.

(48) *Then she wanted to marry *with* Mangan.

(49) *Smoking in closed areas will be penalized *with* money.

(50) *All characters struggle *with* them.

If the first clause of (33) were in Turkish it would be (51).

(51) Hektor Bayan Utterword-den hoşlan-dı ...
    Hektor Lady Utterword-Abl. like-Past ...

That is, the ablative case marker *-DEn* after the object of the verb *like*, which is Bayan Utterword in this case, is mandatory in Turkish in sentence (51). All other sentences containing nouns, prepositions, noun phrases or prepositional phrases that are modified by ablative case marker *from* are the results of the same underlying hypothesis developed by Turkish learners. If (39) were in Turkish, it would be (52).

(52) Onlar soylu-lar-a karşı.
    They patrician-pl.-Dat. against

As (52) demonstrates, the word *karşı* requires dative case marker *–A* when it functions as *against* does in English. However, since the preposition *against* accommodates the directive power that a dative case marker in Turkish contains the entity which the subject of the sentence is against does not require a directive linguistic element. Turkish learners of English want to be sure about where *being against* is directed.

Thus they insert the dative case marker *to* before the entity pointed by the preposition *against*. All of the sentences containing dative case marker *to* in (38)-(48) are the results of the same underlying reasons (See [38], [14]) for such errors by Arab learners). Sentence (40) is different from others which contain *to* in that it requires an accusative case marker instead of a dative case marker. Since there is not a pre or post positional element to mark accusative case in English, the learner used dative case marker because dative case marker is the closest one to accusative case marker in Turkish. In certain regions of Turkey, accusative case marker is used instead of dative case marker without violating the communication at all. The use of dative case marker after the preposition *toward* in (41) can be interpreted in the same way as the usage of *to* after the preposition *against* in (39). The sentence (42) requires locative case marking instead of dative case marking. The learner used dative case marker after the preposition *near* in (42) for the same reason *to* is used in (41); he must have mistaken the verb *be* as an action verb rather than a stative one. If the verb were *go* instead of *be,* there would be no difference between the underlying reasons for the errors in (41) and (42). The use of the preposition *with* renders problems since Turkish learners transfer the function of the postclitic linking word *ile* (see [17:214, 227 and 228] to the function of *with* in English. The sentences (48) and (49) were evaluated as 'intelligible but they need to be corrected'. All of the five native speakers corrected (48) by crossing out the preposition *with,* and (49) by replacing the word *money* by *a fine, fines* or *by paying a fine.* All of them noted (50) to be grammatically correct but two of them noted that the word *against* would be better than *with* in this sentence because the verb *struggle* connotes an adversary or opposing force. Our containing (50) in our data set as an erroneous sentence because of the use of *with* is significant in that it shows how delimiting non-native speakers of English may be in the use of certain words or larger linguistic elements that are used with a wider semantic content and function by native speakers of English. The study shows that some word combinations are really difficult to master for Turkish EFL learners. These combinations are the ones which are versatile in that they take various prepositions with almost the same frequency in similar contexts. Because the mind of the learner is already familiar with these different occurrences of the same word thus their familiarity to the structure of that combination might prevent the learner from arriving at a refined judgment regarding the contextual accuracy of that structure. For example, "***in** the end of the novel ...*" vs "*at the end of the novel*": such structures are quite fuzzy in the mind of the learner since the clausal or sentential context in which the preposition is used provides no further clues about the choice between "in" and "at". Another reason for this ungrammaticality might be the possibility of the usage of both prepositions as locative markers. The learning mechanisms of such structures have been discussed for decades. The debate is on whether such versatile structures are acquired through an associative process as listings of words or by forming rules in the process of hypothesis testing in L2 learning (see [39], [40:348]).

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3. Third Person Singular -s

There are many reasons why English language learners from different L1s fail to add the third person singular agreement suffix –s to the verb in The Simple Present Tense. In cases where the subject of the sentence does not present explicit clues about its number such as *my family*; an object which itself is singular but consists of two parts such as *eye glasses* or *scissors*; and a relative clause whose object does not comply with the number of the subject of the whole sentence is inserted between the subject and the verb such as '**My friend who has many horses **walk** rather fast'*, the participants in our study were observed to fail in adding or omitting the person agreement suffix to the verb. For Turkish learners of English, along with universal psychological and pedagogical factors, the omission of third person singular agreement suffix *-s* in English might stem from the interference of Turkish morphological structure of its counterpart. While other subjects, in Turkish, impose an extra morpheme to the stem *gelir*, as it is shown in (53)-(59), to agree with the subject, third person singular does not take an extra morpheme.

(53) gel –   come (root; imperative form)
(54) gel-ir –   come-aorist (She/he/it comes)
(55) gelir-im –   come -1.sg. (I come)
(56) gelir-sin – come-2.sg. (you come)
(57) gelir-iz -   come-1.pl. (we come)
(58) gelir-sin-iz –   come-2.sg.-2.pl. (you come): plural
(59) gelir-ler – come-3.pl. (They come) "Onlar   gelir" is also used as often as "onlar gelirler."

(53) is the root and imperative form. *-Ir* in (54) functions to encode aorist in Turkish. The third person singular in simple Present Tense does not take a person agreement marker in Turkish. Starting from (55), which is first person singular, all other persons take the relevant person agreement marker. Since the aorist marker *–Ir* is common to all of the persons, the learner might not need to analyze this marker as an *extra* element and, holistically, *gelir* must be conceived of as the base for all other suffixes to be agglutinated. Thus, the nonexistence of a person agreement suffix after the third person singular in Turkish may impose some kind of avoidance in the attachment of the third person singular suffix *–s* to the verb in English. In the same way, the existence of the person agreement suffix *–lEr* at the end of the verb must urge the learner to add the person agreement marker *-s*. There is another strong relationship between *-lEr* and *–s*: They are both plural markers. If the words in L2 are stored in long term memory in relation to the words in both L1 and L2, then the two suffixes must have the power to activate one another. This hypothesis is supported by the emergence of structures such as "They comes." in the learners' production in ELT.

(60) *They come*s*   Onlar gelir-ler
                          They come-pl.
(61) *Marcius and Napoleon always think*s* ...
(62) *They think*s* that they are the leader of the animals.

The predicate in (60), (61) and (62) could be either plural or singular in Turkish with slight differences in emphasis.

V. Developmental errors

At the outset, it should be noted that the term *developmental* does not refer to some internal non-environmental schedule in the unfolding of cognitive stages (see [41:68]). Instead, it refers to the gradual improvement in the setting of the parameters of the target language. It is difficult to propose that the errors which stem from the interference of L1 are not developmental errors. Indeed, all errors must have something to do with the developmental stages of an L2 learner; otherwise to talk about an *interlanguage* would be meaningless. Only mistakes may not be considered developmental because they are observed in native speakers' linguistic production as well. However, some errors, as classified by earlier studies [3], [7:15-21], [27], [42], [43], [2], [44]) are more related to the building blocks of proficiency of an L2 learner than to the social, cultural or linguistic background of that learner. Such errors appear in four different forms in our data. The first form of these errors stems from the competition of similar words in the lexicon. The second one is related to *analogy*: the inaccurate application of an already known feature to a newly learned item inaccurately; the third form is *overgeneralization*: the application of a rule to all similar situations; and the fourth type is the *misapplication of rules or features* which have just been or are being learned. Although we mention four types of errors, it should not be conceived as each error falls into only one of these categories; there are many erroneous sentences or words in our data which stem from the interplay between all of the four types or at least two of them. For instance, both competition between words and analogy play roles in the emergence of the error in (63). In such errors, the word that is uttered or written shows strong morphophonemic similarities with the word which is taken as the model.

(63) *Although the aim of the compare and *contest* essay is ... (instead of *contrast*)

The analysis of (63) reveals that the learner possesses at least the phonological form of the word *contrast* in her mind even if we cannot speculate about the possession of the orthographic form. Each of the words appears in two different forms depending on whether it is a noun or a verb. /konÆtrast/ and /konÆtest/ are nouns; /kÃn trastÆ/ and /kÃn testÆ/ are verbs. In (63), her placement of the word *contest* is due to the fact that both words have common features: Phonologically, both words have /kÃnt-/ and /kont/ parts in common. Orthographically, although English is not a shallow orthographic language, the parts that are alike in both words are shallow orthographic. Thus there is no difference in their orthographic forms. Intonationally, each word has an alternate as a verb or a noun marked by the same stress placement. Semantically, the act of contrasting connotes some degree of rivalry in certain contexts. In the intake of new input, the learner must first associate the new input with already existing

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ones to place that new input into a schema to assimilate it, and then dissociate the input from all similar ones in that schema so as to draw the borders of its unique semantic scope and extensions. At the initial phases of this process, similar items in the mind are in a competition during the activation phase. In this competition, more familiar ones come out earlier than others and this stronger probability of emergence prevents all the rivals from emerging ([45], [46]). So, in the competition of similarities between *contrast* and *contest*, the winning word must be *contest* for some reasons which we cannot identify within the scope of this study.

Overgeneralization is observed in both first and second language acquisition very often. It is also common in FLA. (64) is the product of morphophonemic analogy and overgeneralization of the suffix -*ist*.

(64) *The *poemist* expresses his love.

If a person who writes novels is called a *novelist* why can we not call a person who writes poems a *poemist?*

Learners were observed to overgeneralize the use of morphological units. However the overgeneralization is not arbitrary. Certain morphemes are affixed to some certain words systematically even if they are used erroneously.

(65) *Because of her *patiency*, she stays in the hospital.

'*Patiency*' in (65) is used to mean *illness*. The learner used the noun making morpheme –*cy* because her morphological knowledge on the affixation of this suffix tells her that it can be attached to words such as *affluent-affluence, emergent-emergence*, patient – patience. The problem emerges here because the adjective *patient* is a homograph and homonym when it refers either to *a person who is under medical care or treatment*; or to *a person with fortitude and calm and without complaint or anger*. The former does not have the form *patience* although the latter does. However, the morphological possibility that the latter can take the same suffix the former takes urges the learner to transfer the rule to the former. So, the word *patiency* emerged in her writing as an *accidental gap*. The sentence (66) is the result of both overgeneralization ([47], [48]) and competition of similar words during the activation process in the mind. However, the nature of this error suggests that priming is also a factor in its emergence (see [49]).

(66) *Mr Sowerberry *beated* Oliver and *knocked* him in the cellar.

Along with great phonological and orthographic similarity, is it possible to deny the semantically priming effect of the verb *beat* in the emergence of the verb *knock* instead of *lock*? Within developmental errors, those related to plurality and singularity are the most frequent ones in our data (see also [50]). Plurality-singularity errors appear in three distinguishable forms. In the first form, the number of the subject and the auxiliary verb are not cohesive.

(67) *In two stories, *the reason* why the rebel occurred *are* the same.
(68) *There *is factories* in this city.
(69) *There *are* two *rebellion* in two stories.
(70) *There *was similarities* between two stories.
(71) *Divorce *causings is* not simple.

The second form appears as the pluralization of an uncountable noun in a context where it should be singular, such as *informations* in (72) or singularization of nouns, such as *childrens* in (73), which are naturally plural in English.

(72) *He had a lot of *informations*.
(73) *Other *childrens* are hungry, too.
(74) *He took so *few education*.
(75) *Do not pollute *waters*.
(76) *They work in difficult *works*.

The nouns in sentences (75) and (76) can be plural in specific contexts such as if *water* refers to water samples of different quality or water in different containers; and *works* to artistic products of a person. However in the contexts they appear in our data, these nouns cannot be pluralized.
The third erroneous form in plurality and singularity emerges as the inaccurate use of quantifiers or coordinating conjunctions.

(77) *Another countries* don't accept him, so he stays in his country.
(78) *One of the group* supports him.
(79) *In *both story*, poor people are in bad conditions.
(80) *Oliver can't say no because he hasn't got *any gun*.

In (77), because of the existence of '*other countries*' in grammatical sentences, the learner ignores the singularizing morpheme *an* prefixed to *other*. The fact that the learner uses '*don't*' implies that the learner has a *plural notion* in the construction of her message. Considering (78), (79) and (80) as well, it is difficult to propose that these errors are the result of one single factor such as proficiency or psychology of the learner. They are the products of hypothesis testing by the learner in the process of learning a second or foreign language. Thus they are likely to emerge in learners from different L1s (see also [51], [50], [52:44], [10], [12], [14]).
In our data, some learners produced sentences containing verbs *want* and *need* which were followed by the preposition *to* even in cases when it is followed by a noun.

(81) *At first, neighbors look like as if near the Kino but in fact they *want to pearl*.
(82) *The man doesn't *want to the baby* but the woman addicted to the baby.
(83) *I *want to nothing* but stand out of my sunlight.
(84) *Because they *need to each other* just as a flower needs to soil.

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(85) *They *want to freedom* and they want to live comfortably.

The priming effect of some specific words calls to certain other words when context plays a fostering role at the sentential level (see [49]). In order to support our hypothesis, we administered a sentence completion task orally. We asked 34 students to utter the first word that comes to their mind right after we utter the initial part of a sentence. The phrase we prompted was *'The most beautiful ...'*. 27 of the students (79.41%) completed the phrase with the word *girl*. This is because of the higher frequency of the occurrence of the modifier *beautiful* and the modified *girl* in the combination of *(a/the) beautiful girl* than any other combinations containing only one of these two words, such as *(a/the) beautiful house* or *(a/the) tall girl*. The structure *want/need to + noun* appears in sentences (81)-(85) can be explained on this basis of the frequency of the usage of these two verbs as preceding infinitive form of verbs in sentences such as *'He wants to buy a car.'* When we typed each structure in Google's search box, we encountered samples such as *'She want to pearl necklace.'*, *'If you want to pearl jewelry offers the beauty and simplicity of a pop gem.'*, *'You want to pearl two stitches past the center of the work which in this case will be 11 stitches'*, where *pearl* was used as a verb in this case, and *'So many Suppliers worldwide who want to pearl bangle suppliers found their buyers on our site.'* Our internet search shows that this error emerges in the language of English language learners other than Turkish ones. Thus, we do not think that this error is specific to Turkish learners. However, no results related to this type of errors have been presented in the previous literature we have revised.

Another error which emerged in our data was rather idiosyncratic in that it emerged repeatedly in only one of the learners production.

(83) *Animals have to obey *rules which is* taken by people.
(84) *These are the *sentences which is* not completed.
(85) *There are also *sentences which is* not in the order of normal way.
(86) *The writer use the *words which is* related to death

As the sample sentences reveal, this learner uses *'is'* after the relative pronoun *which* regardless of the subject's being plural or singular. Although we analyzed other participants' papers for the same error, we did not observe any one to produce such a systematic idiosyncratic error. When we attempted to have a discussion with the learner herself on the reason for this error, she could provide an explanation.

VI. CONCLUSION

Although we had categorized the errors in more detailed subcategories while designing this study, in the process of the analysis of data, we noticed that it was not easy to draw clear cut borders for error categories since an error falls in different categories with at least its one feature. Thus, contrary to previous studies, this study foregrounded only two major types of errors: those which stem from interference and developmental errors.

It was observed that proficiency level in a target language is influential in the emergence and quality of errors. Not surprisingly, less proficient learners are more prone to produce erroneous sentences than more proficient learners. However, there are errors which cannot be eradicated even from the interlanguage of proficient learners. Failure to add the person agreement marker –s at the end of the verbs of third person singular subjects is one such error observed in our study.

Case marking satisfaction seems to be the source of a great majority of errors in Turkish learners' texts. This implies that, if Turkish learners tend to mark English words which do not need a case marker such as *against* in 'I am against the use of nuclear power' with a preposition, this dissatisfaction of the learner may stem from the typological features of the L1 of learners which would have different consequences in teaching and testing in international classes. The strategies of the use of prepositions are consistent with those of [14] although the prepositions that are replaced by one another differ. The differences stem from the parametric and semantic differences between Arabic and Turkish.

An error's being conceived as global or local is not universal; rather, it depends strongly on the first language of the evaluator. For instance, the sentence *'The students are waited to memorize the dialogues.'* was not evaluated as 'unintelligible' by Turkish evaluators whereas native speakers of English marked it as 'unintelligible'. This finding implies that, along with the *interlanguage as idiolect*, which develops in an individual learner's mind, there is an *interlanguage as sociolect,* which is shared with other members of a discourse community who are learning the same L2 (see [53]). Although the written texts produced by Chinese, Arab, Korean, French, Italian, Japanese, Taiwanese and Turkish learners have common error types, there are differences as to why those errors emerge depending on the L1 of the learners of English. Thus, in the evaluation of an error, the underlying reasons must be taken into consideration as much as the error itself.

A learner's translating *season* into Turkish as *sebep*, which means *reason,* whereas *season* is translated as *mevsim* in the specific context it emerged, is significant. There are no similarities between the Turkish words *mevsim* (season) and *sebep* (reason). In this phenomenon, the phonologic similarity of *season* to *reason* activated the word *reason* which activated the Turkish counterpart *sebep* because it is the strongest candidate to be activated in the mind of the learner. This finding implies that words in a target language are stored not only in relation with other words in the target language, but also in relation with the words in the L1 of the learner.

Turkish EFL learners were observed to have a tendency to overgeneralize his phonologic features of a learned word to other similar words. This tendency gets stronger when the learners are provided with explicit metalinguistic explanation on the pronunciation. A learner pronounced the word *snow* as /now/. When we asked the student why she pronounced it as /now/, she replied saying that her teacher had explained that the letter *k* occurring before the letter *n* is not voiced at all and she exemplified the word *know*. Although the teacher limited

her explanation only to the words which contain *kn*-combination word initially, the learner's mind overgeneralizes it because of the great orthographic and phonological similarities between the words *know* and *snow* (see also [54]). Reference [55]: 280) proposes that 'every word is directed toward an answer and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates'. If we minimize [55]'s proposition to the mutual governing of linguistic elements in a sentence, it can be proposed that no linguistic element can be given the final form without taking the linguistic elements that succeed it, the final message intended by the sum of all linguistic elements in the sentence and the context in which the sentence is located into consideration. Basing our argument on this proposition, most of the errors are the result of the linguistic choices available in both languages and the constraints imposed by discourse dynamics, psychological state of the learner and the developmental stages of the learner in the interlanguage.

As implications for further research, the emergence of *want to + noun* structure in the production of learners from different L1s needs to be studied in details. Especially, how English children acquire this structure while they acquire their mother tongue should be investigated to understand whether UG functions in the emergence of this error in L2 learners or not.

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