

Error Analysis: Examining Written Errors of English as a Second Language (ESL) Spanish Speaking Learners

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Abstract : After the acknowledgment of contrastive analysis, Pit Coder's establishment of error analysis revolutionized the way instructors analyze and examine students' writing errors. One question that relates to error analysis with speakers of a first language, in this case, Spanish, who are learning a second language (English), is the type of errors that these learners make along with the causes of these errors. Many studies have looked at the way the native tongue influences second language acquisition, but this method does not take into account other possible sources of students' errors. This paper examines writing samples from an advanced ESL class whose first language is Spanish at non-profit organization, Learning Quest Stanislaus Literacy Center. Through error analysis, errors in the students' writing were identified, described, and classified. The purpose of this paper was to discover the type and origin of their errors which generated appropriate treatments. The results in this paper show that the most frequent errors in the advanced ESL students' writing pertain to interlanguage and a small percentage from an intralanguage source. Lastly, the least type of errors were ones that originate from negative transfer. The results further solidify the idea that there are other errors and sources of errors to account for rather than solely focusing on the difference between the students' mother and target language. This presentation will bring to light some strategies and techniques that address the issues found in this research. Taking into account the amount of error pertaining to interlanguage, an ESL teacher should provide metalinguistic awareness of the students' errors.

Keywords : error analysis, ESL, interlanguage, intralanguage

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