Analyzing Speaking Errors Made by EFL Saudi University Students

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Abstract
This paper investigates speaking errors made by first-year Saudi university students. It aims to categorize these errors and identify their sources. The researcher follows Corder's (1974) steps in error analysis. Three sources of errors are considered in this paper: interlanguage errors, intralanguage errors, and unique errors. Finally, the researcher seeks to explain why the students commit such errors. Speaking samples of 44 participants are collected. The researcher gave the participants feedback on the errors they made and asked them to comment on those errors. Data analysis shows two major types of errors: pronunciation errors and grammatical errors. The results of the data analysis show that most of the pronunciation errors (91%) are classified as interlanguage errors. These results indicate that the participants relied heavily on their mother tongue in their usage of the target language. The results also show that almost one-third of the grammatical errors made by the participants belong to interlanguage errors. However, more than half of the grammatical errors are attributed to intralingual effects. Unique errors have the lowest frequency of occurrence, with 10.6% of the grammatical errors made. The participants' feedback about their errors reveals that lack of motivation and organization may be among the significant reasons for their errors. More evaluation and recommendations are given in the last two sections of the paper.
Keywords: Error analysis, grammatical errors, L1 interference, Saudi context, speaking errors