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INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**INCONGRUENCE BETWEEN TURKISH AND ENGLISH IN THE
COMPOSITION PAPERS OF THE STUDENTS STUDYING IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AT
KAFKAS UNIVERSITY**

A THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER

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Turgay HAN'a ait “Kafkas Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Öğrencilerinin Kompozisyonlarındaki Türkçe ve İngilizce Arasındaki Uyumsuzluklar” konulu çalışma, jürimiz tarafından Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Anabilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans tezi olarak oy birliği ile kabul edilmiştir.

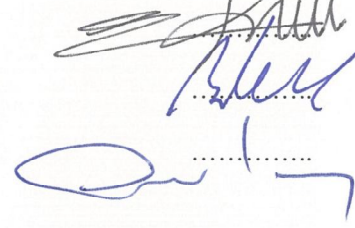
Öğretim Üyesinin Unvanı, Adı ve Soyadı

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ÖZET

Tezin Çeşidi	Yüksek Lisans Tezi
Tezin Adı	Kafkas Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Öğrencilerinin Kompozisyonlarındaki Türkçe ve İngilizce Arasındaki Uyumsuzluklar
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Bu çalışma Kafkas Üniversitesi Fen Edebiyat Fakültesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı öğrencilerinin yazılı çalışmalarında anadilden kaynaklanan sık yaptıkları hataları incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Türkçe ve İngilizce farklı dil ailelerinden oldukları için, başka bir deyişle, farklı genetik özellikler taşıdıkları için sık yapılan bu hatalar Türkçenin karışım özelliği üzerinden açıklanmaya çalışılmıştır. Söz konusu denekler orta düzeyde İngilizce yeterliliğe sahip olduğu sayılan hazırlık sınıfı öğrencileridir. Çalışmada, 30 hazırlık sınıfı öğrencisinin (8 erkek ve 22 kız) 160 kompozisyon kâğıdı incelenmiş ve hatalar tanımlanarak karışım(interference) bakımından tasniflenmiştir. Analiz sonunda 338 hata bulunmuş ve morfolojik, leksik, sentaktik ve mekanik olarak kategorilere ayrılmıştır. Analizde elde edilen sonuçlar dil öğreticileri ve materyal hazırlayıcılar için önemli ipuçları vermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Hata, yanlış, hata analizi, dil transferi, karışım

ABSTRACT

Type of Thesis	Master's Degree Thesis
Title	Incongruence between Turkish and English in the Composition Papers of the Students Studying in the Department of English Language and Literature at Kafkas University
Author	Turgay HAN
Supervisor	Yrd.Doç.Dr. Gencer ELKILIÇ
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This study aims to examine the most frequent errors, stemming from L1, which students commit in their written productions who study in the Department of English Language and Literature at Kafkas University. These frequent errors are tried to be explained by exploring the interfering characteristics of Turkish since both English and Turkish are from different language families, that is to say, they carry different genetic characteristics. The participants in question are from the prep-class and have considered intermediate level of proficiency in English. In the study, 160 compositions of 30 prep-class students (8 males and 22 females) were focused and errors were identified and classified in terms of interference. 338 errors were marked and put into categories as morphological, lexical, syntactical and mechanical at the end of the analysis. The results got at the end of the analysis give important clues for the language instructors and for material developers.

Key Words: Error, mistake, error analysis, language transfer, interference

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Incongruity is the key word for this study. Incongruity refers to differences between two typologically different languages. So, language typology refers to the structural similarities such as syntax, morphology, phonology, etc. between two languages. There are some sorts of different structural peculiarities in a language when compared to other languages of different language families. Moreover, as Gass, Susan, Selinker (2008) emphasize, geographical neighbourhood plays one of the key roles for the language interaction, that is to say; if two different languages are spoken in geographically close places, they always interact each other in terms of vocabulary, idioms, gestures, mimics, greetings, etc. and also culturally. Hence interaction is inevitable if societies are near, even they have different languages. Another important issue is that language typology depends on genetic relation between two languages. In that, if L1 and L2 are of the same language family, it is usual to see some structural similarities between L1 and L2. Also, it must be noted that a deep insight into typological universals can be found in one of the studies of the linguist Greenberg (1963): "... In this approach to the study of universals, linguists attempt to discover similarities/differences in languages throughout the world. That is, the attempt is to determine linguistic typologies or what "types" of languages are possible. One of the most important discoveries of this approach is that one can generalize across unrelated and geographically nonadjacent languages regarding the occurrence and cooccurrence of structures." (Cited in Gass, Susan, Selinker, 2008, 191) But in this study two different languages of two different societies are taken into consideration. And also the countries where these languages are spoken are not neighbours. Gani (2004) maintains that "[...] unlike most European languages, Turkish does not belong to the Indo-European family. It derives from the Altaic group of Central Asian tongues" (p.170). Turkish belongs to Altaic language family whereas English belongs to Indo-European language family, hence it is very natural to observe many grammatical errors in the writings of English learners. What is more, as defined in Colombia Encyclopaedia (2007) (www.questia.com 22.01.2009), a distinctive feature of Turkish is that "[...] like the

other Uralic and Altaic languages, Turkish is characterized by vowel harmony and agglutination. Thus suffixes added to the stem of the verb may indicate passive, reflexive, causative, and other meanings. Postpositions are used instead of prepositions. Both the definite article and grammatical gender are lacking” (p.49033). The most eye catching difference between English and Turkish is word order. Turkish is free word order language with agglutinate word structures. Hoffman (1994) indicates that “Turkish, like Finnish, German, Hindi, Japanese, and Korean, has considerably freer word order than English. In these languages, word order variation is used to convey distinctions in meaning that are not generally captured in the semantic representations that have been developed for English, although these distinctions are also present-in somewhat less obvious ways in English” (p.117).

Another difference is in using adjectives before plural nouns. These are some specific differences and I would like to analyze whether this sort of grammatical difference is the dominant source of the errors committed by the Turkish on their compositions.

On the other hand, incongruity can be easily found in rhetorical usage between these two different language speakers. Culture is embedded to the language. It is irrational to consider languages by excluding their own unique cultures. Culture is very important from the communication viewpoint. You may be very skilled at grammar but if you are unaware of the cultural dynamics and fact of the target language you cannot communicate well. Or, sometimes, very fatal communication errors can occur between the communicators of two different societies. At this point, misunderstandings may happen. Moreover, apologizing and suggesting for something may differ in different societies (in different cultures); besides, sign languages maybe very different among cultures.

Consequently, incongruity between languages are very natural but through this naturalist view, analyzing differences both cultural and grammatical with a typological approach will put forward the reasons of the errors and create an awareness of these sorts of the facts in the foreign language learners.

1.2. Problems

The students who study at English Language Department have a very low level of proficiency in written English as they are not enough trained on how to compose till they begin to study at English Language Departments. This means that while students are preparing for the examinations, they are only trying to learn how to give answers to the test questions and they just focus on reading comprehension, grammar and vocabulary test questions. Therefore; when they start to write composition, they commit so many errors. The errors mostly consist of spelling, usage of preposition, etc. So, whether the L1 background may easily block L2 learning is investigated.

As known Turkish, a member Altaic language, has a flexible word order whereas English as a member of Indo-European language has an inflexible one. Moreover, Turkish language does not always require an overt subject in a sentence. So it can be hypothesized that word order errors may be a lot in the papers of L2 learners. These typologically different languages have different article system; while Turkish language has not got a formal article category that comes before a noun or a noun phrase. So, omission of articles in English sentences of the students may be abundant.

Another argument is that as English language propositions are very complex, and also typologically these different languages have different pre/post propositions whether L1 background is ineffective in committing prepositional errors.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

This study sets out to examine the source of errors from an incongruity perspective between English and Turkish. The idea of this study uncovers most of the grammatical errors in the compositions written in English by Turkish students based on the facts and dynamics of these two different languages. So, while investigating the roles of the grammatical structure of first language in second language development and the results in L2 writing, this study develops a perspective from the genetic basis of two different languages that Turkish as L1 and English as L2. With this in mind, the typological differences between Turkish and English are evaluated and it is tried to come into a conclusion that genetic differences play an important role in L2 development and L1 results in language transfer into L2 writing.

1.4. Limitations

This study is limited to get some ideal results. So, firstly this study deals with the student's L2 writing skills in English. The participants group includes only prep-class students who study at English Language and Literature Department at Kafkas University. The group of participants in this study consists of the students who took a proficiency exam before starting studying as first year students. The mentioned exam is a test that includes grammar, reading and writing skills. According to the results of the exam, if they got scores above the specified level, the students did not need to attend preparation class, so they are exempted from the preparation class at Kafkas University English Language Department. 160 compositions of the prep-class students are examined in this study. Finally, only grammatical errors are evaluated by the perspective of the facts of the genetic differences between English and Turkish that playing language transfers. Consequently, this study is specific for the errors committed only by the English Language Department students of Kafkas University.

1.5. Assumptions

According to the scores that the students got in prep-class proficiency exam, they are accepted to study as prep-class students at English language and Literature department. So, the assumption is that learners of English are homogeneous- that is to say, the learners' L2 backgrounds related to the proficiency are similar to each other. And their transfers from L1 to L2 indicate similar characteristics as they have nearly same L2 background. On the other hand, to study English language at a university in Turkey, the students take a Foreign Language Examination Test (abbreviated in Turkish as 'YDS'), and this general test does not measure the active skills (Writing and Speaking), hence, till starting academic education, their competences in writing are similar to each other and they mostly commit many errors in linguistic category in their compositions.

Such a study aiming at putting forward the facts of mother tongue and foreign tongue will urge that the teachers at high schools and academics at universities should pay more attention to contrasting these two languages and have their students be aware of their grammatical errors because of their mother tongue interference.

The data got at the end of the study will give you an idea about the lack of writing skills of the students, and consequently, a typological look will be reflected to the issue of how to teach writing.

CHAPTER 2 THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2. Introduction

In this chapter of the study, the writing phenomenon is explained and it is also tried to give the effects stemming from difference between languages, that is, reflections in at least both languages are outlined in terms of typology.

2.1. General Background to L2 Writing

Writing as a productive skill is always considered one of the most difficult and important skills especially at universities. Since conveying ideas through signs on a piece of paper is very intricate, it requires some sorts of skills. Reading and writing skills may be considered as advanced phases of language learning process. The usual sequence for both first and second language acquisitions is: listening, speaking; reading and writing. So, “writing is the productive skill in the written mode. It, too, is more complicated than it seems at first, and often seems to be the hardest of the skills, even for native speakers of a language, since it involves not just a graphic representation of speech, but the development and presentation of thoughts in a structured way” (cited in <http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/LANGUAGELEARNING/OtherResources/GudlnsFrAlnggAndCltrLrnngPrgrm/WritingSkill.htm> 19.09.2008). But, paradoxically, until studying at universities, none of the students maybe pays attention to this productive skill, mostly because of the agenda of high school teachers.

The students who begin studying at English Language Department lack of the knowledge about how to organize a paragraph or rhetorical and discourse features of a written language, also the language tools that the students have been equipped with by the English teachers at high schools fall short. On account of these lack of abilities, when they begin their academic training they devote great time energy and time to their compositions to produce coherent and grammatically true paragraphs or compositions. During the four-year education at English language Departments in Turkey, the academic staffs always require essays, compositions, and an undergraduate thesis in the last year. Throughout the academic year, students have to take notes and have to write on their examination papers at least, so they have to

challenge with the problems that they come across while conveying their ideas by composing.

2.2. Effects of L1 in L2: Differences and Similarities between L1 and L2 Composing (L1-L2 Relationship in Writing)

Krapel (1990) says that second language writing sometimes depends on first language experiences in terms of organizing, content, and topic, etc. While composing in English most of the L2 students are prone to utilize their first language writing strategies related to the level of their proficiency in English. The more they improve their English, the less they begin to rely on their L1 (cited in Woodall, 2002).

Cumming (1989) and Jones (1987) maintain that “although L2 writing researchers have identified some differences between writing in one’s mother tongue and writing in a second (or subsequent) language, these differences tend to be quantitative, rather than qualitative” (cited in Woodall, 2002, p.7). Such quantitative differences exemplified as writing shorter texts depending on L2 background in some studies. Woodall (2002) emphasizes that less skilled second language writers spend more time pausing while writing, write shorter texts and spend more time re-reading their texts than they do while writing in their mother tongue” (pp.7-8).

So, there is evidence for the contribution of L1 writing background to the second language composition strategies. In this context, while L2 learners develop their compositions, they evaluate the topic according to their L1 and then organise his/her paragraph according to the strategies of his/her L1. According to the study of Hirose (2006), “the participants with higher writing abilities in both languages tended to choose different organizational patterns, whereas the lower participants used similar patterns in L1 and L2. The results of protocol analysis showed that the low group participants used similar organization planning strategies in L1 and L2, implying that they drew on L1 organization strategies while writing in L2. Thus, the results of the low group’s L1/L2 texts and writing processes hinted at L1 writing influence on their organizational patterns.” (p.144) That is to say, they tend to think in their L1 norms and then they translate their ideas into English. Moreover, while conveying their ideas through idioms in L2, they struggle with choosing appropriate

vocabulary and importantly ideal rhetoric. These sorts of problems appear because of the cultural dynamics of their own first languages. Most of the students assume that there are parallel sayings in the target language. As Friedlander states that: “[...] more complex situations, which would be culture- or language- specific and not easily translatable or experienced in other setting, would remain encoded in the language of acquisition and would be retrieved best in that language...”(Cited in Kroll, 1990, p.112)

Also, it is argued by some linguists that L1 language proficiency enhances L2 skills. Brisk et al (2000), Cummins (1991) and Krashen (1997) maintain that “We know that developed literacy skills in a student's first language have a significant and positive impact on his or her development of literacy in English.”(Cited in Matthews, 2004, p.20)

Woodall (2002) considers second language writing with another standpoint and maintains that while learners of L2 are composing L2, they think in L1 norms and switch to L1. What’s more the linguist explains that “[...] In spite of teacher admonitions to ‘thinking in your second language,’ second language writers sometimes switch to their native language during the writing process, something the monolingual writer does not do. L-S¹ in L2 writing may be defined as any non-instructed use of the first language during the L2 writing process. This point requires some clarification. The act of translating a previously written L1 text into an L2 text might be constructed as an instance of using the first language during the production of L2 text ...”(p.8)

In sum, first language may contribute to the development of second language compositions. Because writers tend to think in their native languages while writing their compositions and they use L1 composing strategies to compose in L2. But the trouble is that the norms of first language cannot be translatable and L2 writers with a low level of proficiency in L2 are prone to come across potential challenges in conveying their thoughts through idioms or sayings, as they mostly assume that their mother tongue culture is not specific to the its own society (Woodall, 2002).

¹ L-S : Language Switching

2.2.1. The Transferability of L1 Composing Strategies into L2 Writing

While writing composition in L2, most of the learners tend to utilize their mother tongue experiences. Hence, except from structural language transfers from L1 to L2 writing, they exclude other features of language skills and transfer other first language skills. In the writing process, most of the L2 learners organize their compositions according to their native language skills (Hirose, 2006). Also, punctuation, capitalization, etc are the most eye catching examples of this sort of transferring. Hirose's (2006) study on the relation between L1 and L2 writing systems put an emphasis on the transferability L1 writing strategies into L2 writing: "Arguments were made as to what factors possibly influenced their organizational choices; these factors included students' L1/L2 writing instructional backgrounds, L1/L2 writing experiences, developmental levels in L1/L2 writing, and the writing task variables, including topic, expected readers, and time conditions. Although it is dangerous to be conclusive about these findings, they imply that the same writer can choose different organizational patterns regardless of language, and the chosen patterns may differ depending on many variables such as the task and writer/reader relationship, not solely on his/her L1 background" (pp.144-145).

2.2.2. L1 Writing Process from the Perspective of L2 Writing Process

The discrimination for the writing systems of L1 and L2 relies on the some language characteristics particular to both L1 and L2. In other words, every language has its own writing system such as punctuation, capitalization, organization, writing route as in Arabic (from right to left), etc. Even though there are differences in writing phenomenon of each language, there are many similarities between L1 and L2 that contribute L1 writing skill or vice versa. The factors that contribute L2 writing to develop or retard will be evaluated under this sub-topic from the perspective Turkish and English as L2. In the research of Hirose (2006), Turkish and English writing styles are compared in terms of how ideas are conveyed and realized that "publications in English tend to have more information on capturing different approaches and then situating yourself as a writer. Turkish is freer, old fashioned perhaps, where you just went on with your argument, you didn't

have to describe the field and situate yourself. Turkish is full of impressions and thoughts, arguments, and on the way you might mention another author” (cited in Buckingham, 2008, p.7).

Another important issues in L2 writing is that the mutual interaction of both language writing facts. In that L1 and L2 writing skills affect each other and may contribute to the development each other as well. In the study, Buckingham (2008) looks for the writing competence of Turkish and concludes that: “Although L2 writing problems are often ascribed to First Language (L1) interference, Shi (2002) and Hirose (2003) have also discussed the influence of L2 writing skills on L1 writing ability. These authors conclude that scholars who undertake the majority of their research in a second language (e.g. English) may find that their scholarly writing in their first language is influenced by second language writing norms”(p.3).

Buckingham (2008) in the study indicates that the most important drawback that Turkish learners of English come across is due to the syntactic features of Turkish as they are transferred to their L2 writings. Also the paragraphs, articles, essays, etc. fall in short to convey their ideas fully and as a result their writings lack of satisfying the readers. The interviews with Turkish students on their writing problems in the study of Buckingham (2008) put forward the striking problems of Turkish writers and further explain that:

“All interviewees admitted that writing professionally in English involved difficulties. This is of interest as the majority of the respondents enjoyed a bilingual education system since their youth; nevertheless, writing in English did not come automatically and all interviewees described specific difficulties they experienced. Other than the basic issues of grammar, article use, and punctuation that almost all identified, three main issues were widely mentioned: the greater amount of time that composition requires in English (as opposed to NS), the perceived lack of sophistication in their” (pp.5-6).

In sum, L1 writing process from the perspective of L2 writing process may come up with some mutual problems. L1 writing may develop in terms of organization, topicilization, etc depending on the level of L2 knowledge of Turkish learners. Nevertheless, as there are some structural differences between English and Turkish such as article use, punctuation, etc it is inevitable to come up with some difficulties while developing their articles, essays, compositions, etc.

2.2.3. Language Typology

Language typology is a term related to classifying languages according to their similar characteristics (related to genetic, structural, etc.) to identify the nature of languages. Tercanlioğlu (1999) makes clear that “Languages are classified genealogically according to their life history. The ancestors of the language are specified, including the source or mother language. Sisters and cousins which all sprang up at different points in time from the original source language are noted in a family tree. The languages of the world belong to the families. The languages of the world have similarities and differences among them that provide further evidence for the genetic relatedness” (p.13). Then, according to the linguist Greenberg (1974), “**Language typology** is based on the assumptions that the ways in which languages differ from each other are not entirely random, but show various types of dependencies among those properties of languages which are not invariant differences storable in terms of the ‘type’. The construct of the ‘type’ is, as it were, interposed between the individual language in all its uniqueness and the unconditional or invariant features to be found in all languages”(cited in Malmkjær, 1995, p. 366).

Croft (2003) maintains that “the term typology has a number of different uses, both within linguistics and without. The common definition of the term is roughly synonymous with ‘taxonomy’ or ‘classification’, a classification of the phenomenon under study into types, particularly structural types. This is the definition that is found outside of linguistics, for example in biology, a field that inspired linguistic theory in the nineteenth century” (p.1).

Linguistic definition of typology has two types as called *typological classification* and *typological generalization* in which languages are classified according to their linguistic features (Croft, 2003).

Croft (2003) puts in plain words that “the most unassuming linguistic definition of typology refers to a classification of structural types across languages. In this definition, a language is taken to belong to a single type, and a typology of languages is a definition of the types and enumeration or classification of languages into those types. We will refer to this definition of typology as **typological classification**. The

morphological typology of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is an example of this use of the term. This definition introduces the basic connotation that the term typology has in contemporary linguistics: typology has to do with **cross-linguistic comparison** of some sort....” (p.1).

2.2.3.1. Language Families’ Aspect: Cognate/Non-Cognate Languages

To get an idea about the relation among languages, a systematic comparison is required. This sort of comparison puts forward the aims to find out whether the languages under examination have the same family characteristics. This sort of systematic comparison looks for the relation between sound and meaning. (Malmkjær, 1991). Malmkjær (1991) calls attention to “the systematic comparison of two or more languages may lead to an understanding of the relationship between them and whether or not they descended from a common parent language. The most reliable criteria for this kind of genetic relationship are the existence of systematic phonetic congruencies coupled with semantic similarities. Since the relationship between form and meaning of words in any language is arbitrary, and since sound change is reflected regularly throughout the vocabulary of a given language, concordances between related languages, or lack of them, become discernible through comparisons. Languages that are genetically related show a number of **cognates**, that is, related words in different languages from a common source, with ordered differences”(p.284).

If at least two different languages have similarity in terms of meaning or spelling, then this relation may be questioned to generalize the relation between languages. Here, the root form of the language that is called ‘proto-language’ must be taken into consideration; Malmkjær (1991) further explains this investigation as: “when the existence of a relationship has been determined, the investigator may then wish to reconstruct the earlier form of the languages, or the common parent, referred to as the proto-language, in order to extend the knowledge of the language in question back in time, often even before written documentation. Reconstruction makes use of two broad strategies: (1) the phoneme that occurs in the largest number of cognate forms is the most likely candidate for reconstruction in the proto-language; (2) the changes from the protolanguage into the observable data of the languages in question

are only plausible in the sense that such changes can be observed in languages currently spoken” (p.284).

The basic features of Turkish are that being a member of Ural-Altai language family with 29 Latin letters. According to Johanson (2001) “The Turkic languages are commonly considered interesting because of their vast geographical distribution, their contacts with many different types of languages, their relative stability over time, and their regularity in morphology and syntax”(p.4).

When compared to English, Turkish is a phonetic language as letter- sound correspondence is available whereas English is not a phonetic language. As Makedonski (2005) states that: “[...] another important feature of the Turkish language is vowel harmony. Vowel harmony is basically described as a ‘progressive sound assimilation’ phenomenon. In simple words, the features of a vowel depend on the features of the preceding vowel” (pp.7-8).

Turkish and English are very different in terms of sentence structure. The word order in Turkish is flexible and mostly in Subject-Object-Verb order but English sentence structure based on Subject-Verb-Object order. Hoffman (1994) indicates that “the most common word order used in simple transitive sentences in Turkish is SOV (Subject-Object-Verb), but all six permutations of a transitive sentence can be used in the proper discourse situation since the subject and object are differentiated by case-marking”(p.117).

Hoffman (1994) explains that the above mentioned six permutations in Turkish are as in the followings:

“a. Ayşe Fatma’yı arıyor.

Ayşe Fatma-Acc seek-Pres-(3Sg).

“Ayşe is looking for Fatma.”

b. Fatma’yı Ayşe arıyor.

c. Ayşe arıyor Fatma’yı.

d. Fatma’yı arıyor Ayşe.

e. Arıyor Fatma’yı Ayşe.

f. Arıyor Ayşe Fatma’yı” (p.117).

When considered above examples, an important issue must be emphasized that even though Turkish has free word order structure, the content of each permutations are different from each other. Consequently, word order in Turkish is free but content of every sentence is bound to the types of each permutation (Hoffman, 1994).

Hoffman (1994) explains that “the propositional interpretation assigned to all six of these sentences is *seek*’ (*Ayşe*’,*Fatma*’). However, each word order conveys a different discourse meaning only appropriate to a specific discourse situation. The one propositional interpretation cannot capture the distinctions in meaning necessary for effective translation and communication in Turkish. The interpretations of these different word orders rely on discourse-related notions such as *theme/rheme*, *focus/presupposition*, *topic/comment*, etc. that describe how the sentence relates to its context” (p.117).

Another distinctive characteristic of Turkish from English is that its being an agglutinative language, that is, suffixes are added to words to make new forms through inflection such as numbers, tenses, etc. These sorts of differences put forward the notion being cognate and non-cognate. Turkish and English languages are very different in terms of typologically, sentence structure, proposition usage, etc so they are non-cognate languages. Geoffrey (1989) gives examples to frame out the inflectional characteristic of Turkish:

“Turkish is an agglutinative language from the family of Turkic languages. A Turkish word consists of a root (base form) and a number of suffixes attached to it, each extending its meaning or changing its word class:

bilgi – knowledge

bigisiz – without knowledge

bilgisizlik – lack of knowledge

bilgisizlikleri – their lack of knowledge

bilgisizliklerinden – from their lack of knowledge

bilgisizliklerindenmis – I gather that it was from their lack of knowledge” (cited in Makedonski, 2005, pp.7-8).

Another important issue in learning English is mastering English grammar. English has a very different tense aspect system, in that, when compared to Turkish, it has a very complex and a number of tenses even though English has basically two groups of tenses such as present and past ones. Especially, perfect tenses in English are considered one of the challenging grammatical structures to be mastered for Turks as Turkish grammar does not involve perfect aspect of tenses. According to the study of Celce, for non-native speakers the English tense-aspect system is the most difficult grammatical topic. She maintains that “experienced teachers will agree that the English tense-aspect system (hereafter ETAS) is one of the most difficult areas of English grammar for the non-native speaker to master” (cited in Bouchard, D.L., Spavebta, L.J., 1994, p.85).

Celce further tries to explain the possibilities cause the above mentioned tense aspect system difficulty of English for learners: “

1. The ETAS is difficult to acquire to the degree that is different from the system used in the native language of learner.
2. The ETAS is so complex and unique that it will be difficult for any second-language learner to acquire regardless of his/her native language.
3. The ETAS is so complex that several generations of linguists and grammarians-although they have uncovered some interesting facts- have not been able to provide or agree on semantically complete and accurate description.
4. Most ESL teachers and textbook writers do not understand how the ETAS operates; therefore they cannot explain it or teach it effectively.
5. Even in cases where the teacher or textbook writer understands and can verbally explain the workings of the ETAS, the students (or readers) still have problems because effective classroom materials, exercises, and strategies are not presented to them” (cited in Bouchard,D.L., Spavebta, L.J, 1994, p.85).

An important emphasis given on the study of the linguist Celce is that Japanese and Chinese native speakers come across difficulties with the ETAS whereas native speakers of French and German do not have difficulty in mastering ETAS as much as French and German do. Here, one must note that both groups of native speakers’

languages are the member of different language families. Celce puts forward according to the study that “[...] native speakers of Japanese and Chinese in my classes have tended to have greater difficulty with the ETAS than native speakers of French and German”(cited in Bouchard, D.L., Spavebta, L.J, 1994, p.85).

2.2.3.2. Universals Based on Word Order

The linguist Greenberg (1963) suggests the universals based on word order in his study on typology. He maintains that “in languages with prepositions, the genitive almost always follows the governing noun, while in languages with postpositions it almost always precedes the noun” (cited in Greenberg, pp.77-113).

According to this approach, Gass (2008) explains that defining the language is finding out what type a language is through generalizing some structures pertaining to some languages, that is if they share some specific grammatical structure they are put in same type. In this context, Gass (2008) tries to make some correlation between languages which share some grammatical features such as preposition and exemplify that: “for example, in languages with prepositions, like French, Russian, and Italian, we expect to find the noun representing what is being possessed preceding the possessor. In fact, this is the case. All three languages form genitives in the same way: *French*

(7-1) le chien de mon ami
the dog of my friend

Russian

(7-2) sobaka moego druga
dog my GEN friend GEN

Italian

(7-3) il cane di mia madre
the dog of my mother

In languages with postpositions, such as Turkish, what we call prepositions follow the noun, as can be seen in 7-4 and 7-5, where the morphological markers follow the noun:

Turkish

(7-4) (From Jannedy, Poletto, and Weldon, 1994, p. 153)

a deniz = an ocean

b denize = to an ocean

c denizin = of an ocean

(7-5) Example of genitive (from Comrie, 1981)

ev- in pencere- s- i

house possessor window separates vowels possessed “the window of the house”
English is somewhat exceptional in that it allows not only the predicted order (*the leg of the table*), but also the unpredicted word order (*my friend’s dog*)” (pp.191-192).

When compared with some other languages, Turkish has a word order that it is freer than others as there are six possibilities in the word order system of Turkish. As Hoffman (1994) states that “Turkish, like Finnish, German, Hindi, Japanese, and Korean, has considerably freer word order than English. In these languages, word order variation is used to convey distinctions in meaning that are not generally captured in the semantic representations that have been developed for English, although these distinctions are also present-in somewhat less obvious ways in English” (p.117).

2.2.3.3. Cross-Linguistic Similarities

Cross-linguistic study is comparison of linguistic structures of different languages that may be neighbouring languages to generalize some structures. Also, to determine the effect of theoretically relevant or different linguistic structures affect the performance of learners. Bates (2001) et al draw an attention to the necessity of cross-linguistic studies to identify the universal process of language acquisition. Bates (2001) puts forward further explanations by comparing Chinese, English, Italian and Russian: “We assume that psycholinguistic universals do exist. Languages such as English, Italian, and Chinese draw on the same mental/neural machinery. They do not “live” in different parts of the brain, and children do not differ in the mechanisms required to learn each one. However, languages can differ (sometimes quite dramatically) in the way this mental/neural substrate is taxed or configured, making differential use of the same basic mechanisms for perceptual processing, encoding and retrieval, working memory, and planning. It is of course well known that languages can vary qualitatively, in the presence/absence of specific

linguistic features (e.g. Chinese has lexical tone, Russian has nominal case markers, English has neither)” (p.369). Here, one must note that Turkish lacks of articles, and according to the consideration of Bates (2001) Turkish speakers use different basic mechanisms for perceptual processing, encoding and retrieval, working memory from English speakers. Bates (2001) also indicates that “In addition, languages can vary quantitatively, in the challenge posed by equivalent structures (lexical, phonological, grammatical) for learning and/or real-time use. For example, passives are rare in English but extremely common in Sesotho, and relative clause constructions are more common in Italian than in English. To the extent that frequency and recency facilitate structural access, these differences should result in earlier acquisition and/or a processing advantage.” (p.369)

Croft (2003) maintains that “the first question that may be asked of typology is, what is the role of cross-linguistic comparison-the fundamental characteristic of typology – in linguistic analysis? Cross linguistic comparison places the explanation of linguistic phenomena in a single language in a new and different perspective. For example, the distribution of definite and indefinite articles in English is fairly complex:

- (1a) He broke **a vase**.
- (1b) H broke **the vase**.
- (1c) The concert will be on **Saturday**.
- (1d) He went to **the bank**.
- (1e) I drank **wine**.
- (1f) The French love **glory**.
- (1g) He showed **extreme care**.
- (1h) I love **artichokes** and asparagus.
- (1i) Birds have **wings**.
- (1j) His brother became **a soldier**.
- (1k) **Dogs** were playing in the yard.

The eleven sentences given above characterize eleven types of uses of the articles (or their absence) in English, given as follows:

- (a) Specific (referential) indefinite;
- (b) Specific and definite;
- (c) Proper name;
- (d) Specific manifestation of an institution/place;
- (e) Partitive of mass noun;
- (f) Generic mass noun;
- (g) Specific manifestation of an abstract quality (mass noun);
- (h) Generic of a count noun;
- (i) Generic of an indefinite number of a count noun;
- (j) Predicate nominal;
- (k) Specific but indefinite number of a count noun” (p.6).

Here Croft (2003) generalizes the possible distribution of two articles in English. He goes on comparing articles in French and realizes that the distribution of these two articles is very different. “Examining even a relatively closely related language. French produces difficulties for those generalizations. In the exact same context, illustrated here by translation equivalents of the English sentences, the distribution of definite an indefinite articles *le/la/les* and *un/une* respectively (and their absence) is quite different:

- (2a) Il a cassé **un vase**.
- (2b) Il a cassé **le vase**.
- (2c) Le concert sera **samedi**.
- (2d) Il est allé à **la banque**.
- (2e) J’ai bu **du vin**. (du=de+le)
- (2f) Les Français aiment **la gloire**.
- (2g) Il montra **un soin** extrême.
- (2h) J’aime **les artichauts** et les asperges.
- (2i) Les oiseaux ont **des ailes**. (des=de+les).
- (2j) Son frère est devenu **soldat**.
- (2k) **Des chiens** jouaient dans le jardin” (p.7).

Croft (2003) further explains that the distribution on articles in English alters completely when the same examples are applied in French as the articles in French have widespread usage. “It is quite likely that the analysis of the distribution of the English articles would have to be drastically altered if not abandoned and a new one developed for the distribution of French ones. In French, we find a more widespread use of both the French definite and indefinite articles, the appearance of the partitive marker *de* plus the definite article, and the absence of the French indefinite article in the predicate nominal construction.” (p7)

By considering Croft’s (2003) analysis, the Turkish which has not such articles as in the possible distribution of two articles in English. As an important feature of Turkish is that being lack of the definite article and grammatical gender. So, the distribution of articles is completely incomparable. It may be understood that “the fact that analyses of linguistic phenomena ‘one language at a time’ cannot be carried over from one language to the next is somewhat disturbing for the search for language universals. Intricate interactions of internal structural generalizations are proposed by linguists to ‘predict’ grammatical patterns that do not apply even to neighbouring languages” (Croft, 2003, p.8).

2.3. Mutual Drawbacks between Mother Tongue and Foreign Language

One of the challenging issues in second language learning is focusing on the grammatical structures of both L1 and L2. Here, Turkish must be evaluated as its morphology and being agglutinating. As known, Turkish exhibits agglutination. Minett and Wang (2005) state that it is not meaningful to consider the complexity of a language as a whole; rather, one should consider the complexity of a particular subsystem. Also the linguist indicates three types of morphological complexity. First, a language may exhibit agglutination, in which multiple affixes are attached to a single root, as in Turkish. Although there is evidence that such complexity poses no problem for first language learners, borrowing of this feature does not occur. Second, a language may exhibit fusional morphology, in which multiple semantic oppositions are fused into a single morpheme. This can be observed in Italian, for example, where no separate suffices to adjectives can be identified that encode number and gender...Third, a language may exhibit morphological irregularity. For

example, German specifies several mechanisms for formation of the plural... (pp.16-17).

Another fact is that “while some linguists argue that ‘languages differ in terms of what you *can* say,’ LaPolla prefers the position that ‘languages differ in terms of what you *have* to say.’ For example, English requires explicit mention of the subject of a sentence due to grammaticalization of a set of obligatory constraints on referent identification that have come to be associated with ‘subject’. Chinese, however, has not conventionalized these same constraints on referent identification, so the identification of the referent is not obligatory. Such conventions force particular interpretations of sentences, constraining what a language must say” (cited in Minett, Wang, 2005, pp.15-16).

2.3.1. Transfer: Positive & Negative

Transfer phenomenon can be divided into two sub-categories as positive one and negative one. Brown (1994) maintains that

“transfer is a general term describing the carryover of previous performance or knowledge to subsequent learning. Positive transfer occurs when the prior knowledge benefits the learning task-that is, when a previous item is correctly applied to present subject matter. Negative transfer occurs when the previous performance disrupts the performance on a second task. The latter can be referred to as interference, in that previously learned material interferes with subsequent material- a previous item is incorrectly transferred or incorrectly associated with an item to be learned” (p.90).

According to one study of Gilbert (1983), learners of a language would find it easier if the target language includes equivalent grammatical feature as in their own. So Gilbert searches for the occurrence of definite article in the production of Spanish, Greek, Italian, Portuguese speakers whose languages include equivalent definite article as in English. On the other hand, Gilbert also looked for the production of Turkish and Yugoslavs who learn German as L2 (cited in Romaine, 2003, p.419).

2.3.2. Interference

Interference is a term that can be taken into consideration together with overgeneralization and language transfer. The term states a language production as if

it is a web consisting of mother tongue and target language. Brown (1994) explains that

“it has been common in second language teaching to stress the role of interference—that is, the interfering effects of the native language on the target (the second) language. It is of course not surprising that this process has been so singled out, for native-language interference is surely the most immediately noticeable source of error among second language learner. The saliency of interference has been so strong that some have viewed second language learning as exclusively involving the overcoming of the effects of the native language. It is clear from learning theory that a person will use whatever previous experience he or she has had with language in order to facilitate the second language learning process” (p90).

According to Archibald another important issue is that error patterns may change with the proficiency level of the second language learner. That is to say, the more the learner develops in L2 skills, the less dependent on L1 he or she becomes (cited in O’Grady, Dobrovolsky, Katamba, 1997, p.506). Archibald also emphasizes that

“it is possible that the processes of transfer and overgeneralization in L2 learning are the result of a single cognitive strategy that could be informally stated as ‘use what you know’ or ‘go with what you have’. This predicts that the kind of errors made by second language learners will be dependent on their level of proficiency. Beginning learners may have nothing to draw on but their L1. However, more advanced learners have acquired a certain amount of knowledge about the L2 and this knowledge becomes a potential source of errors” (cited in O’Grady, Dobrovolsky, Katamba, 1997, p.506).

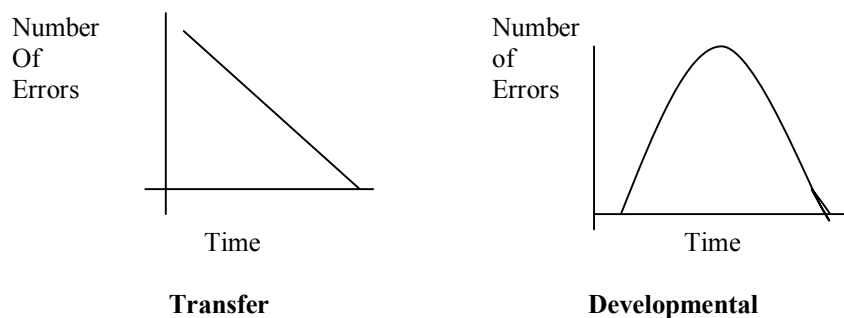
The illustration of the variation of the errors according to the level of proficiency is in the below table: “

Table 2.1. Error Patterns in L2 acquisition.

Level of proficiency	Transfer errors	Developmental errors
Beginner	High	Low
Intermediate	Medium	High
Advanced	Low	Low

Note: The source is Archibald, J. *Second Language Acquisition*, cited in O’Grady, W., Dobrovolsky, M., Katamba, F. *Contemporary Linguistics-An introduction*, Wesley Longman Ltd., UK, 1997, p.506.

Archibald also illustrates the errors of transfer and developmental types as graphically:



Note: The source is Archibald, J. *Second Language Acquisition*, cited in O’Grady, W., Dobrovolsky, M., Katamba, F. *Contemporary Linguistics-An introduction*, Wesley Longman Ltd., UK, 1997, p.506.

Table 2.1 explains the variation of error types depending on the level of proficiency of second language learners. If the proficiency level is very low, a high number of transfer errors is expected to be committed but a low number of developmental errors will be committed. On the other hand, learners who have intermediate level of proficiency may commit less transfer errors but high number of developmental errors when compared to beginner level learners. Moreover, advanced learners will commit very few developmental and transfer errors. When the graphical illustrations above are taken into consideration, it can be said that when the level of proficiency increase the number of errors decrease.

2.3.2.1. Cultural Interference in Learning a Foreign Language

In language teaching field cultural norms of a society play a negative role as it varies among societies. Culture, in fact, is a complex phenomenon because there is nothing which formulates it. Rivers (1981) indicates that: “Children growing up in a social group learn ways of doing things, expressing themselves, ways of looking at things, what things they should value and what things they should despise or avoid, what is expected of them and what they might expect of others” (p.316). One of the important issues in learning foreign language is that L1 culture is being transferred to L2 communication medium. As each society or language has its own

culture and while communicating in L2, learners mostly assume that there may be similar cultural norms between their own societies and target one. Thus, L1 cultural norms are transferred to L2 communication strategies. Yet, this sort of transferring must be called negative transfer because it may cause some prejudice and misunderstanding between L2 learners and native speakers. The nature of different norms of different societies must be taken into consideration by L2 learners; otherwise, by depending on native language norms, it is probable that L2 learners will face some communicating difficulties such as being misunderstanding; rude, etc. consequently, L2 learners must be aware of the possibility of being some cultural distance between societies. Trivedi (1978) indicates misunderstanding resulted from cultural interference by the cross-cultural viewpoint that: “it is evident that relevant situations in which the linguistic items operate would be those which vitally pertain to the cultural ethos of the language under use. Difficulties arise when the same item operates in more than one cultural pattern. Cross-cultural misinformation arises because the L2 learner will grasp the same meaning in a FL as he does in his own. An interesting cross-cultural misunderstanding arises if a person from an alien culture misinterprets a complex pattern when it has a different meaning across culture” (p.93).

In the patterns of cultural interference, the chains in a language, those are culture and thought, also have a big impact on communication. In second language communication, L2 learners convey their ideas by translation to L2, here, one must note that thinking varies according to the paradigms of both language. That is to say, that L2 thinking is predicted to be very different from L1. This may be named as language mind. The term *thought* refers to the ability of thinking. People can only think with the help of vocabulary, as to name things and make relations between incidents. Then, L2 thinking ability can be accomplished by some level of vocabulary in L2. The relation between language and thought is related to the vocabulary known in a language. Human beings need words to think. Images in mind can be created by words and thinking mechanism begins. Another emphasis to the relation between language and thought comes from Saussure (1980); language may be compared to paper: thought is the front surface of the paper, and voice is the back side. If you cut the front side, then, you cut back side also. This is the same

situation in language: neither voice may separate from thought nor thought may separate from voice” (p.105).

The relationship between language and thinking can be evaluated in many points. “Language and thought interact in many significant ways. The question ‘How close is the relationship between language and thought?’ has fascinated a lot of people. The idea that different languages may influence thinking in many different ways has given rise to many philosophical treatises” (Tercanlioğlu, 1999, p.18).

2.4. Analyzing Errors

To investigate second language acquisition, outlining the data of the output of learners is very important. Using of the outputs of the second language learners, their developments may be assessed. In this context, eliciting the learners’ errors come into being as the focus. Errors are the proofs of learning process and by diagnosing learners’ errors, some of the important data may be got concerning what causes errors, and what sort errors are frequent.

So, under this sub-topic firstly some concepts will be explained related to the error analysis and then Error analysis will be criticized.

2.5. Behaviourist Theory

In language acquisition field, linguistic and psychological bases led to the behaviourist theory. Freeman (2000) explains that “it was thought that the way to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language was through conditioning-helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement. Learners could overcome the habits of their native language and form the new habits required to be target language speakers” (p.35). Namely, great amount of contribution to the language learning relies on linguistic and psychological parameters.

Behaviourist theory argues that learning is habit formation. To trigger learning two important things must be in interaction. They are stimulation and respond. Ellis (2001) indicates that “[...] language learning is like any other kind of learning in that it involves habit formation. Habits are formed when learners respond

to stimuli in the environment and subsequently have their responses reinforced so that they are remembered. Thus, a habit is a stimuli-response connection” (p.31).

2.5.1. Error

In second language learning, error means that lack of the ability in producing correct form of a grammatical usage. Simply, a second language learner may not know the correct grammatical usage and, instead, produce a dialect that do not obey the rules of grammar, as a result, the output of the learner come into being something erroneous (Ellis, 2001). Ellis (2001) explains that “[...] Errors reflect gaps in a learner’s knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct....” (p.17). Consequently, errors are made systematically.

Corder (1981) categorizes errors as systematic which implies lack of competence in L2: “The use of the term systematic in this context implies, of course, that there may be errors which are random, or, more properly, the systematic nature of which cannot be readily discerned” (p.10).

Shridar (1980) evaluates errors from the perspective of ‘interlanguage’, and the linguist “[...] points to a newer interpretation of ‘error’ in the light of interlanguage studies. He argues that the learner’s deviations from target language norms should not be regarded as undesirable errors or mistakes; they are inevitable and a necessary part of the learning process” (Şimşek, 1989, pp.13-14).

Studies on language learning process deal with the errors which give clue for the learning system. Corder (1981) maintains that “a learner’s errors, then, provide evidence of the system of the language that he is using (i.e. has learnt) at a particular point in the course (and it must be repeated that he is using some system, although it is not yet the right system)” (pp.10-11).

2.5.2. Mistake

Mostly, mistakes occur because of physical conditions such as low light, tiredness, etc. So, Corder (1981) evaluates them as non-systematic: “[...] we are all aware that in normal adult speech in our native language we are continually committing errors of one sort another. These, as we have been so often reminded recently, are due to memory lapses, physical states such as tiredness, any psychological conditions such as strong emotion. These are adventitious artefacts of

linguistic performance and do not reflect a defect in our knowledge of our own language. We are normally immediately aware of them when they occur and can correct them with more or less complete assurance...” (p.10).

In the study of language learning, mistakes are unimportant as they do not give clue related to the learning process. Corder (1986) maintains that “mistakes are of no significance to the process of language learning. However, the problem of determining what a learner’s mistake is and what a learner’s error is one of some difficulty and involves a much more sophisticated study and analysis of errors than is usually accorded them” (p.10).

2.6. Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive analysis firstly was proposed by Charles C.Fries (1945). He sustains that the most effective materials for foreign language teaching are based on a scientific description of the language to be based on a scientific description of the language to be learned carefully compared with a parallel description of the learner’s native language.

Contrastive analysis depends on structural linguistic theory. Davies (2004) emphasizes that “prior to the emergence of applied linguistics in the late fifties/early sixties, the combination of structural linguistics and behavioural psychology led to contrastive analysis approaches in language acquisition study and to behaviouristic methods of language teaching (repetition, habit formation, translation)”(p.249). That is to say, CA requires comparison of at least two languages in terms of linguistic structures and by doing this; it diagnoses structural differences between two languages, especially, the differences between learners’ native language and target language. Davies (2004) puts in plain words the contrastive analysis as “teaching methods and techniques were developed by focusing on the similarities and dissimilarities between the learners’ native language (in general, English) and the language that was to be taught” (p.401). In this context, contrastive analysis looks for the errors that stem from different grammatical structures between L1 and L2. The L2 learners tend to transfer some grammatical structures from their native language to L2 by assuming that there are similar structures in both languages. Then, according to Gass and Selinker (2008) that “contrastive analysis is a way of

comparing languages in order to determine potential errors for the ultimate purpose of isolating what needs to be learned and what does not need to be learned in a second-language-learning situation” (p.96).

Lado (1957) indicates that finding structural similarities and differences between two languages by comparing nearly all types of linguistic features and dynamics will help instructors to diagnose the difficulties in the learning process. Also, Lado (1957) points out the learning difficulties by considering any parallel structures in L1 and L2: “Those elements that are similar to the (learner’s) native language will be simple for him, and those areas that are different will be difficult” (p.2). Through this perspective Lado (1957) focuses on a research: “Since even languages as closely related as German and English differ significantly in the form, meaning, and distribution of their grammatical structures, and since the learner tends to transfer the habits of his native language structure to the foreign language, we have here the major source of difficulty or ease in learning the structure of a foreign language. Those structures that are similar will be easy to learn because they will be transferred and may function satisfactorily in the foreign language. Those structures that are different will be difficult because when transferred they will not function satisfactorily in the foreign language and will therefore have to be changed” (p.59). Then, diagnosing the systematic errors caused by learners’ mother tongues can be explained by such a hypothesis. Kröll and Schafer (1978) indicate that “the systematic nature of errors was explained by the ‘contrastive analysis hypothesis’: students will err in the TL where it differs from their NL. Contrastive analysis discovered systematicity in errors, but there was little tolerance for error in contrastive analysis pedagogy was a marriage of structural linguistics and behaviourism” (p.242).

By considering the above detail, contrastive analysis will be helpful for the Turkish learners of English. Turkish and English are the members of different language families and, therefore, learners come across many structural differences that is to say, morphologic, syntactic, and cultural, etc. are proofs of language fact. As every language has its own culture that represents the traditions of its own society. Also, linguistic characteristics of a language represent social paradigm.

Hence, when a Turkish speaker decided to learn English as a second language, it is unavoidable that transferring similar linguistic structure through learning process.

To sum up, according to Gass and Selinker (2008) the assumptions that the contrastive analysis based on are:

1. Contrastive analysis is based on a theory of language that claims that language is habit and that language learning involves the establishment of a new set of habits.

2. The major source of error in the production and/or reception of a second language is the native language.

3. One can account for errors by considering differences between the L1 and the L2.

4. A corollary to item is that the greater the differences, the more errors will occur.

5. What one has to do in learning a second language is learn the differences. Similarities can be safely ignored as no new learning is involved. In other words, what is dissimilar between two languages is what must be learned.

6. Difficulty and ease in learning are determined respectively by differences and similarities between the two languages in contrast (pp.96-97).

Contrastive analysis also depends on two views: *strong version* and *weak version*. As Susan Gass and Selinker (2008) explained that “[...] in the strong view, it was maintained that one could make predictions about learning and hence about the success of language teaching materials based on a comparison between two languages. The weak version starts with an analysis of learners’ recurring errors. In other words, it begins with what learners do and then attempts to account for those errors on the basis of NL–TL differences. The weak version, which came to be part of error analysis, gained credence largely due to the failure of predictive contrastive analysis. The important contribution of the former approach to learner data (i.e., error analysis) was the emphasis it placed on learners themselves, the forms they produced, and the strategies they used to arrive at their IL forms” (p.97).

Contrastive analysis depends on *behaviourist and structural* theories which try to explain the errors because of the transfers from L1 to L2.

1940s were the heyday of applied linguistic studies. In these years, contrastive analysis took many criticisms, so there were many controversies. One of the criticisms came from Di Pietro (1978). Di Pietro criticizes structural basis of contrastive analysis, and he claims that to renew it on the basis of transformational grammar. So, propose the idea that a CA preoccupied with the levels between deep and surface structures. His approach depends on rule-oriented teaching. This sort of teaching implicates that analysing sentences in the target language through explicit grammar rules (cited in Şimşek, 1989, p.10).

Consequently, for some linguists, contrastive analysis falls in short. As mentioned before this sort of analysing depends on comparing learners' native language and target language in terms of grammatical structures such as phonetically, syntactically, etc. to infer the learners' errors. CA advocates that errors mostly occur because of the different grammatical structures between L1 and L2. In this context, while language learners mastering target language structures they tend to transfer similar structures in their mother tongue. But while this sort of language transfer happens, it is easy to get an idea about the language acquisition. But later there came into being some controversies that agree that CA is not enough informative and CA fell in short to explain and predict all types of errors (Mergen, 1999, p.9).

2.7. Error Analysis

Contrastive analysis was developed according to behaviourist and structural learning theories which were the prominent theories during 1950s and 1960s. But later there was controversy to contrastive analysis as it couldn't analyze and predict all the errors committed by the learners. "The instant and widespread appeal of error analysis (EA) stemmed perhaps from the refreshing alternative it provided to the then prevailing but more restrictive 'contrastive analysis' approach to errors. The contrastive analysis (CA) treatment of errors, which was popular up through the 1960's, rested on a comparison of the learner's native and target languages. Differences between the two were thought to account for the majority of an L2

learner's errors" (Dulay, Burt, Krashan, 1982, p.140). The main criticisms against contrastive analysis come from Rod Ellis (1986): "First, there were the doubts concerning the ability of contrastive analysis to predict errors. These doubts arose when researchers began to examine language learners' language in depth. Second, there were a number of theoretical criticisms regarding the feasibility of comparing languages and the methodology of contrastive analysis. Third, there were reservations about whether contrastive analysis had anything relevant to offer to language teaching" (p.27).

As behaviourist approach to the L2 learning was harshly questioned, cognitive process was examined and argued that L2 acquisition might be explained by L1 acquisition by linguist Chomsky. This was called Chomskian Theory. But there isn't any consensus (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, 1982, p.140). Error Analysis movement, therefore, look for accounting learners' errors which cannot be explained or predicted by CAH. Also, EA propose a theoretical view for the field of applied linguistics. So, EA must be considered successful as it made contribution to the theoretical consciousness-raising of applied linguistics and language practitioners (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, 1982, p.141).

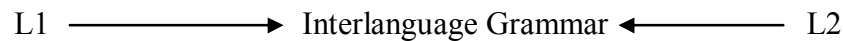
However, there are some weaknesses of EA which impede the potential contributions to the field of applied linguistics. According to Dulay, H., Burt, M. and Krashen, S., (1982) these weaknesses of EA can be outlined as followings:

1. The confusion of error description of errors with error explanation(the process and product aspects of error analysis)
2. The lack of precision and specificity in the definition of error categories
3. Simplistic categorization of the causes of learners' errors. (The discussion of these weaknesses is fairly technical. Some readers may, therefore, wish to skip to the next section.)(p.141).

2.8. Interlanguage

As some studies (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, 1982 and Corder, 1981) show that interlanguage happens in accordance with L2 knowledge. As Archibald (1997) states that interlanguage is in somewhere between learner's native and second language.

Interlanguage is a systematic grammar composed of both L1 and L2. Archibald (1997) explains interlanguage by a diagram:



“This diagram illustrates the fact that second language learners have a systematic interlanguage (IL) grammar- so-called because it is influenced by both the first and second language and has features of each” (cited in O’Grady, Dobrovolsky and Katamba, 1997, p.504).

To understand it some of the theoretical basis must be taken into consideration. Earlier studies on L2 acquisition fell in short such as behaviourist theory. ‘Interlanguage’ firstly introduced by the linguist Larry Selinker (1969) in 1970s and Selinker proposed that

“an ‘interlanguage’ may be linguistically described using as data the observable output resulting from a speaker’s attempt to produce a foreign norm, i.e., both his errors and non-errors. It is assumed that such behaviour is highly structured. In comprehensive language transfer work, it seems to me that recognition of the existence of and interlanguage cannot be avoided and that it must be dealt with as a system, not an isolated collection of errors” (cited in Altunkol, 2005, p.24).

New tendencies to explain the stages of learning depend on explanations through mentalist theories which frame out the language learning by a psychological structure called Language Acquisition Device (LAD). As White explains that

“in the late 1960s and early 1970s, several researchers pointed out that the language of second language (L2) learners is systematic and that learner errors are not random mistakes but evidence of rule-governed behaviour. (Adjemian, 1976; Corder, 1967; Nemser, 1971; Selinker, 1972) From this developed the conception of ‘interlanguage,’ the proposal that L2 learners have internalized a mental grammar, a natural language system that can be described in terms of linguistic rules and principles. The current generative linguistic focus on interlanguage representation can be seen as a direct descendent of the original interlanguage hypothesis” (Doughty and Michael, 2005, p.17).

According to the mentalist theory of 1960s and 1970s which explains the L1 acquisition, there are five matters of mentalist views and Ellis (2001) explains these as in the followings:

1. Only human beings are capable of learning language.
2. The human mind is equipped with a faculty for learning language, referred to as a Language Acquisition Device. This is separate from the

faculties responsible for other kinds of cognitive activity (for example, logical reasoning).

3. This faculty is the primary determinant of language acquisition.
4. Input is needed, but only to 'trigger' the operation of the language acquisition device (p.32).

The American linguist Larry Selinker recognizes the fact that the learners of L2 depending on their native language knowledge construct a new language which is between learners' native language and target language. Hence, it is a new and different linguistic system except from L1 and L2 that Selinker introduces.

Then, the concept of 'Interlanguage' depends on the following assumptions that Ellis (2001) maintains:

1. The learner constructs a system of abstract linguistic rules which underlies comprehension and production of the L2. This system of rules is viewed as a 'mental grammar' and is referred to as an 'interlanguage'.
2. The learner's grammar is permeable. That is, the grammar is open to influence from the outside (i.e. through the input). It is also influenced from the inside. For example, the omission, overgeneralization, and transfer errors....
3. The learner's grammar is transitional. Learners change the grammar from one time to another by adding rules, deleting rules, and restructuring the whole system. This results in an **interlanguage continuum**. That is, learners construct a series of mental grammars or interlanguages as they gradually increase the complexity of their L2 knowledge. For example, initially learners may begin with a very simple grammar where only one form of the verb is represented (for example, 'paint'), but over time they add other forms (for example, 'painting' and 'painted'), gradually sorting out the functions that these verbs can be used to perform...
4. Some researchers have claimed that the systems learners construct contain variable rules. That is, they argue that learners

are likely to have competing rules at any one stage of development. However, other researchers argue that interlanguage systems are homogeneous and that variability as an aspect of performance rather than competence. The premise that interlanguage systems are themselves variable is, therefore, a disputed one.

5. Learners employ various **learning strategies** to develop their interlanguages. The different learning strategies. For example, omission errors suggest that learners are in some way simplifying the learning task by ignoring grammatical features that they are not ready to process. Overgeneralization and transfer errors can also be seen as evidence of learning strategies.
6. The learner's grammar is likely to fossilize. Selinker suggested that only about five per cent of learners go on to develop the same mental grammar as native speakers. The majority stop some way short. The prevalence of **backsliding** (i.e. the production of errors representing an early stage of development) is typical of fossilized learners. Fossilization does not occur in L1 acquisition and thus is unique to L2 grammars (pp.33-34).

2.8.1. The Effect of Universals on Interlanguage

Universals are thought to affect acquisition of L2 by linguists. In this context linguist Gass and Selinker (2008) outlines the effect of universals on second language learners' grammar. "There are many ways in which universals can be expected to affect the development of second language grammars:

(a) They could absolutely affect the shape of a learner's grammar at any point in time. If this is correct, there would *never* be any instance of a violation of a given universal evident in second language grammars.

(b) They could affect acquisition order, whereby more marked forms would be the last to be acquired, or, in the case of implicational universals, one could expect fewer errors in the less marked forms.

(c) They could be one of many interacting forces in determining the shape of learners' grammars." (p.196)

Gass and Selinker (2008) make further explanation and say that some universals may be thought of as having greater influence than others. For example, English word order with regard to noun–adjective order is not consistent with the prediction made by knowing that English is a verb–object language (196).

2.8.2. Markedness & Unmarkedness (Less marked forms)

Archibald defines these terms through language typology. Markedness is an approach which must be taken into consideration with language typology. Because, this notion refers to the similarities and differences between languages that are the concern of the comparative study (cited in O'Grady, Dobrovolsky, Katamba, 1997, p.512).

In broad terms, according to Archibald, these two notions are on the subject of the structures to question whether some of them are easier or more complicated to be acquired by learner of a L2. "When linguists try to deal with the notions of ease or simplicity, they make use of the notion *markedness*. Structures that are simple and/or especially common in human languages are said to be **unmarked**, while structures that are complex or less common are said to be **marked**. So, we might say that a sound that is found in relatively few of the world's language (e.g., [θ] is marked while a sound that occurs in many of the world's languages (e.g., [t]) is unmarked" (cited in O'Grady, Dobrovolsky, Katamba, 1997, p.512).

It must be noted here that Turkish learners of English maybe prone to mispronunciate the [θ] sound as it is marked. Such word as 'author', 'think', 'thought', etc. which contain this phonetic sign are challenging to pronounce for Turkish learners of English.

2.9. Error Analysis Process

Ellis (1997) indicates that by analyzing errors some clues about the feature of language of learners, the reasons lying under the committed errors, what errors

learners make and also learners may utilize self correction method to help their problematic areas. So, Ellis puts errors into four major linguistic categories:

1. Identifying errors
2. Describing errors
3. Explaining errors
4. Evaluating errors (pp.15-20).

2.9.1. Identifying Errors

Ellis (1997) considers identifying errors as the first step of analysis. He also emphasizes that analyzing errors is a very difficult task and uses two terms to identify learners' errors. Errors are the sign of faulty and incomplete learning, that is to say, they reflect gaps in a learner's knowledge whereas, and the reasons may be counted for mistakes vary. They may be the result of slip of tongue, careless, stress, etc. and reflect occasional lapses in learners' performance (p.17).

Ellis (1997) also highlights how to diagnose errors and mistakes. There are two ways for this subtle difference between them: to check the consistency of the learners' performance. That is to say, sometimes learner may inconsistently use a form then it is a mistake. But if a learner always produces incorrect forms, then it is an error. The other way to distinguish mistakes and errors is that asking learners to try to correct their own deviant utterances. If the learner cannot correct the deviations, they are errors; however if learners able to correct the deviations, then, they may be labelled as mistakes (p.17).

2.9.2. Describing Errors

As mentioned before that most of the errors in L2 appear because of the mother tongue interference. Languages differ in terms of word order, syntactically, phonologically, semantically, and etc. when we contrast English grammar system and Turkish, then it is inevitable to see many erroneous production of L2 learners.

There are different categories to describe errors. One of the categorizing of identified errors comes from Corder (1973). Corder describes errors in four categories related to differences between learners' utterance and the reconstructed version (cited in Erdoğan, 2005, pp.263-264): "...*omission* of some required element; *addition* of some unnecessary or incorrect element; *selection* of an incorrect element; and *misordering* of the elements. Nevertheless, Corder himself adds that this classification is not enough to describe errors. That is why he includes the linguistics level of the errors under the sub-areas of morphology, syntax, and lexicon" (Cited in Erdoğan, 2005, pp.263-264).

Alternatively, Ellis (2001) points out that there may be several ways of classifying of identified errors: "[...] one way is to classify errors into grammatical categories. We could gather all the errors relating to verbs and then identify the different kinds of verb errors in our sample- errors in the past tense, for example. Another way might be to try to identify general ways in which the learners' utterances differ from the reconstructed target-language utterances. Such ways includes 'omission' (i.e. leaving out an item that is required for an utterance to be considered grammatical), 'misinformation' (i.e. using one grammatical form in place of another grammatical form), and 'misordering' (i.e. putting the words in an utterance in the wrong order)" (p.18).

2.9.3. Explaining Errors

Different kinds of errors are judged by different explanations of sources of errors. Interlanguage errors, intralingual errors and developmental errors are the one of the views to seek out the sources errors according to Richards. Richards categorized the sources of errors into three types and explains them as: "[...] interlanguage errors; that is, errors caused by the interference of the learner's mother tongue" (cited in Robinett, Schachter, 1983, p.198). On the other hand, there are also errors caused by apart from mother tongue interference. According to Richards, "[...] a different class of errors is represented by sentences such as *did he comed, what you are doing, he coming from Israel, make him to do it, I can to speak French*. Errors of this nature are frequent, regardless of the learner's language background. They may be called intralingual and development errors. Rather than reflecting the learner's

inability to separate two languages, intralingual and development errors reflect the learner's competence at a particular stage, and illustrate some of the general characteristics of language acquisition" (cited in Robinett, Schachter, 1983, p.198).

Richards further explains that Intralingual and developmental errors can be put into sub categories to state varieties and sources of such errors. So, errors may be evaluated as *overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized* (cited in Robinett, Schachter, 1983, p.198). Some errors come about on account of *overgeneralization* of a grammatical structure. Wilkins (1968) indicates that many errors are of overgeneralization of a pattern, to interference between forms and functions of the language being learnt, and to psychological causes, such as inadequate learning (cited in Duskova, 1983, p.215).

Also, it is emphasized that overgeneralization stem from raising knowledge of learners on L2. "With increased proficiency in the target language, they rely proportionately less frequently on their native language grammar and rely more frequently on their ever-increasing knowledge of the target language, coping directly with it and overgeneralizing its rules" (Taylor, 1975, p.391). Another definition comes from Jakobovits (1969), and the linguist maintains that: "the use of previously available strategies in new situations... In second-language learning... some of these strategies will prove helpful in organizing the facts about the second language, but others, perhaps due to superficial similarities, will be misleading and inapplicable"(p.32). Briefly, according to Richards, it must be noted that "overgeneralization covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures in the target language. For example, ..., *he can sings, we are hope, it is occurs, he come from*. Overgeneralization generally involves the creation of one deviant structure in place of two regular structures. It may be the result of the learner reducing his linguistic burden. With the omission of the third person -s, overgeneralization removes the necessity for concord, thus relieving the learner of considerable effort" (cited in Robinett, Schachter, 1983, p.199).

According to Richards another type of intralingual error is *ignorance of rule restriction* which simply means that "[...] the application of rules to contexts where

they do not apply. *The man who I saw him...* violates the limitation on subjects in structures with *who*. *I made him to do ...* ignores restrictions on the distribution of *make*. These are again a type of generalization or transfer, since the learner is making use of previously acquired rule in a new situation. Some rule restriction errors may be accounted for in terms of analogy; other instances may result from the rote learning rules” (cited in Robinett, Schachter, 1983, p.200).

Richards states one another category of intralingual error types point to “the occurrence of structures whose deviancy represents the degree of development of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances. For example, across background languages, systematic difficulty in the use of questions can be observed.... Classroom observation suggests that the use of questions may be unrelated to the skills it is meant to establish. Here are some examples:

<i>Teacher's Question</i>	<i>Student's Response</i>
Do you read much?	Yes, I read much.
Do you cook very much?	Yes, I cook very much.
Ask her what the last film she saw was called.	What was called the last film you saw?

...

As the above sample illustrates, when a question is used to elicit sentences, the answer often has to be corrected by the teacher to counteract the influence of his question. Some course books proceed almost entirely through the use of questions: others avoid excessive use of questions by utilizing signals to indicate the type of sentence required. These may reduce the total number of deviant sentences produced” (cited in Robinett, Schachter, 1983, pp.2002-2003).

As Richards states that the last category of intralingual errors is *Flase Concept Hypothesized*. It is defined as “[...] faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language...” (cited in Robinett, Schachter, 1983, p.2003). The following examples may be counted in this category: “[...] The from *was*, for example, may be interpreted as a marker of the past tense, giving *one day it was happened...* and *is* may be understood to be the corresponding marker of the present tense: *he is speaks French.*” (cited in Robinett, Schachter, 1983, p.2003).

2.9.4. Evaluation Errors

Error evaluation is very important to investigate the learning problems and as a result, teachers or learners may get rid of them by giving a special attention to them (Ellis, 2001). Ellis (2001) evaluates errors as *global* and *local* ones. The linguist explains these terms as: “some errors, known as **global errors**, violate the overall structure of a sentence and for this reason may make it difficult to process. Jean, for example, says:

The policeman was in this corner whistle...

which is difficult to understand because the basic structure of the sentence is wrong. Other errors, known as **local errors**, affect only a single constituent in the sentence...” (p.20).

2.9.5. Classifying Errors

As there are many error types stemming from different sources, there is a need to classify them for diagnosing exact problematic areas of learners. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) classify errors through four types of taxonomy named as *Linguistic Category Taxonomy*, *Surface Strategy Taxonomy*, *Comparative Taxonomy*, and *Communicative Effect Taxonomy*.

Syntactic, morphological, and lexical errors are described in Linguistic Category Taxonomy. Surface Strategy Taxonomy is related to the altering surface structure by learners through reconstructing a new language. It also direct researcher to focus on the reasons of learners' errors based on some logic. The scope areas it deals with are omission, addition, misinformation and misordering. Comparative Taxonomy depends on comparing errors of L2 learners with the errors committed native language learners who acquire the same language that the L2 learners target. Under this taxonomy there are two main error categories and two sub-categories. The main categories yielded developmental and interlingual errors; on the other hand the sub-categories derived from developmental and interlingual errors are ambiguous errors and other errors (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, 1982, pp.150-197).

The developmental and interlingual errors are examined in preceding chapters. Therefore, only ambiguous errors and the other ones will be discussed. Ambiguous errors are those that can be considered as interlingual and

developmental, whereas the other errors do not fit any one of the two main categories and their sub-categories (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, 1982). The last taxonomy, Communicative Effect Taxonomy, deals with the error types that have a negative effect or not. That is, the distinction between the error types that cause miscommunication or not is emphasized.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3. Introduction

This chapter will cover the design and the subjects of the study.

3.1. Participants of the Study

The participants were preferred from the prep-class students studying at English Language and Literature Department of Kafkas University. Their written productions were taken into consideration as mentioned before. At the beginning of the academic year a proficiency test was given to the students and who succeeded in the Proficiency Exam started to study as first year students. The failed students in the above mentioned test and began to study as prep-class students. The Proficiency Exam includes grammar test, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and also composing on one of the given topics. The scores got from this exam are the criteria to let the students start as first year students or not. The unsuccessful students have to attend preparatory courses till they are doing well in the exam given at the end of the year. So, English Proficiency levels of the prep-class students at the beginning of the academic year are considered in this present study.

3.2. Design of the Study

The students who study at English Language and Literature Department take the same test before accepted to the universities in Turkey. As mentioned before, the general test is roughly composed of reading comprehension questions and grammar questions, but lack of testing listening, speaking, and writing skills of the students. This is one of the rationales behind the abundant errors committed by the students. On the other hand, errors of Turkish speakers may stem from translation from Turkish to English as students, mostly, think in their native language and assume that English and Turkish languages resembles both grammatically and culturally.

The compositions of the students were analyzed by two raters in terms of grammatical and lexical errors only and other types of errors are disregarded. The errors were identified and counted by the raters. As a result, the numbers of the grammatical errors were found the same.

3.3. Data

The data consisting of only grammatical errors got from compositions 8 male 22 female students. Written productions of the students are chosen to deal with the frequent errors committed by the student of English.

3.4. Method and Procedure

The present study comprises 160 compositions of prep-class students consisting of 8 males and 22 females in 2008-2009 academic years. The survey started 23th of February and ended 20th April. The examined papers were written as assignments in class hours. They were required to compose not more than 200-250 words. Also, at the beginning of the task, they were warned to be cautious on grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and other composing skills such as consistency, unity, and organization.

160 compositions were analyzed carefully in terms of grammatical errors by two raters. While identifying errors efficiently, they used *error codes*.

Table 3.1 Error Codes

Error Type	Abbreviation/Code
Word Choice	wc
Verb Tense	vt
Verb form	vf
Word form	wf
Subject-verb agreement	sv
Article	art
Noun ending	n
Pronoun	pr
Run-on	ro
Fragment	frag
Punctuation	punc

Spelling	sp
Sentence structure	ss
Informal	inf
Idiom	id
plural	pl

Source: Sample Error codes (From Ferris et al. 2000 research corpus cited in Ferris 2002: p.69)

There are four major linguistic categories for analyzing errors as Dulay, Burt, Krashen (1982, p.146) outlined. These are:

1. Phonology (pronunciation)
2. Syntax and morphology (grammar)
3. Semantics and Lexicon (meaning and vocabulary)
4. Discourse (style)

In this study, syntactical and morphological errors will be focused on. As each category represents different domains of linguistic knowledge, here the second category of the list above will be divided into sub-categories and such common error types as verbs, tense, form, subject-verb agreement, sentence structures errors will be figured out.

Weaver (1996) puts emphasis on the variation of error types that native language speakers and ESL commit (cited in Ferris, 2002, p.51). To focus on the types of errors of the ESL will give important clues about the problematic areas of the learners L2. So, the below sample table for writing errors shows a wide variety of the distribution of errors (Brown, 1994, p. 53). In the present study, percentage of errors will also be taken into consideration.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, DISCUSSION

4. Introduction

This chapter of the present study introduces the results related to the common ESL writing errors because of the mother tongue interference. The analysis of data got through a number of stages to give reliable discussion thanks to classifying them in terms of the error types and total number of errors and ratio of total.

4.1.Results

160 compositions of the participants were analyzed and 338 errors were identified and they were put into categories and sub-categories. The numbers and percentage of total errors marked listed according to the below table adopted from Ferris (2000) et al.

Table 4.1 Common ESL Writing Errors

Error Type	Number of Errors	Percentage of Total Errors Marked
Morphological Errors		
Verbs	47	13.9
Subject-verb agreement	41	12.1
Total Verb Errors	88	26.0
Nouns		
Articles/determiners-	63	18.6
Noun endings	26	7.7
Total Noun Errors	89	26.3
Lexical Errors		
Word choice	70	20.7
Total Lexical Errors	70	20.7
Syntactic Errors		
Sentence structure	42	12.5
Total Syntactic Errors	42	12.5
Mechanical		
Punctuation	39	11.4
Spelling	10	2.9
Total Mechanical Errors	49	14.5
Total Number of Errors Marked:	338	100

Note: Adapted from Ferris, D. R., et al. "Perspectives, Problems, and Practices in Treating Written Error", Colloquium presented at international TESOL Convention, March 14-18, Vancouver, 2000 cited in Ferris Dana R. *Treatment of Error in Second Language Student Writing*, The University of Michigan Press, 2002, P.69

4.2. Classifying ESL Writing Errors

In order to determine most frequent errors from interference perspective committed by Turkish students of English studying at English Language and Literature of Kafkas University in their written works, 8 male and 22 female pre-class participants' 160 compositions taken into consideration. Then, the graphs of the errors according to the categories of morphological, syntactical lexical and mechanical are presented.

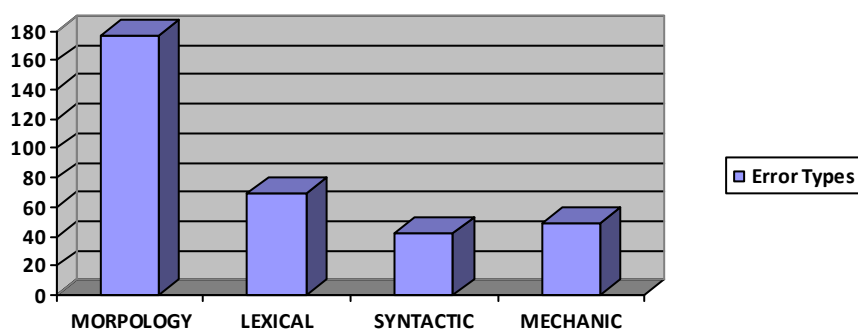


Figure 4.1: Error Numbers according to the types

The figure 4.1 shows the total number of errors committed in morphology, lexical, syntactic and mechanical categories. The number of the total morphology errors is 177, so the errors fall in this category is the biggest in number. Total number lexical errors are 70, and total number of syntactic errors is 42, and the last category mechanical errors are 49.

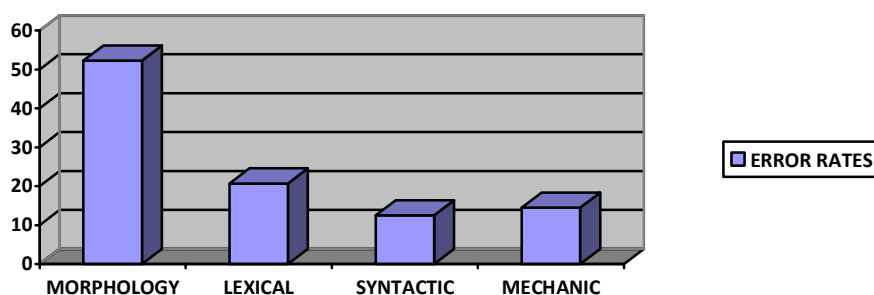


Figure 4.2: Error Rates according to the types

Figure 4.2 shows the rates related to the error types. Morphology errors constitute 52.3 percent, the lexical category is 20.7 percent, the syntactic category is 12.5 percent, and mechanical category is 14.5 percent.

4.2.1. A Detailed Classifying Errors According to Linguistic Category Taxonomy

Morphological, lexical, syntactic and mechanical errors are divided into sub-categories and only such error types identified as tense errors, subject-verb agreement, article/determiner, noun endings; preposition errors; sentence structure and as a last sub-category which includes punctuation and spelling errors respectively. The errors marked in the 160 compositions were explained through interference of NL by giving the percentages and numbers in total writing errors of the participants.

4.2.2. Morphological Category

In this category firstly, tense errors, modal errors, subject-verb agreement, article/determiner errors and noun ending errors will be discussed and will be identified based on NL interference.

4.2.2.1. Errors in Present Perfect Tense

Turkish language has three main times as past, future and presents ones whereas variation of the times in English is a lot. In English, “there are two tenses: present I-pastI and pastI+pastI which are marked by differences in form; that is, the tense means a form change on a verb that usually indicates time...” (Altunkaya, 1997, p.53). Most of the errors committed in this category are in perfect tenses.

4.2.2.2. Errors in Continuous Tense

Another error type stems from usage of non-continuous verbs in continuous tenses, yet Turkish has not got non-continuous verb category as in English. Because the suffix –yor can be added every kind of verb in Turkish. The possible reason underlying for these errors may be the result of absence of equivalent in Turkish.

On the other hand, as seen in the following table this group of errors (Tense) constitutes the lowest number of errors as the students have been taking a tough English grammar courses since high school, they know the rules of tenses in English well.

Table 4.2 Verb Category

Tense Errors	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Continuous tense	I was feeling bad	I felt bad...
Perfect tense	For years, the books are the most...	For years, the books have been...
Past. perfect	In fact, they had come last year..	In fact, they came...
Total Number of Errors:	18	

4.2.2.3. Errors in Simple Past Tense

There is not irregular past category of the verbs in Turkish whereas English has both irregular and regular past category of the verbs. As it is known that by adding –ed to the end of the any regular verb in present form, simply it can be transformed into past form in English. Yet, there is also an irregular category in English verbs in which there are not an exact rule to get past form from present category. Altunkaya (1997) exemplify the explanations above: English has two ways of making the past tense, which is normally indicates past time:

- i) The regular way, which is the most common in modern English, is to add the affix ‘-ed’.

e.g.:

They climbed this mountain last year.

- ii) The irregular way

As a sub-group of verbs, the irregular verbs are restricted in number...

e.g.: sing sang

She sang beautiful songs. (p.54)

However, adding –di (-dı, -dü, -ti, -tı, -tü) to the end of the verb transform it the possible corresponding past form in Turkish.

These error types includes omission of –ed and adding –ed to past already formed in regular verb category whereas in irregular verb category the error types are regularization by adding –ed, substitution of simple non-past and substitution of past participle (Heidi, Burt, Krashen, 1982, p.148).

Table 4.3 Errors in Simple Past Tense

Type of Errors	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Omission of -ed	When people succeed in...	When people succeed in...
Regular Adding-"ed"	They cutted electricity...	They cut...
Total Number of Errors:	24	

In this category, only omission of -ed and regularization by adding -ed types of errors are analyzed.

4.2.2.4. Errors in Subject-Verb Agreement

In this category the errors lack of agreement in number will be discussed (Ferris, 2002, p.113). Incorrect or unnecessary addition of singular third person -s in simple present tense will be analyzed as stemming from mother tongue interference.

Duskova (1969) analyzed Czech students' written production and concluded that "since (in English) all grammatical persons take the same zero verbal ending except for the third person singular in the simple present tense may be accounted for by the heavy pressure of all the other endless forms"(cited in Şimşek, 1989, p.25). Also Turkish students commit parallel errors as seen in the table below.

Table 4.4 Incorrect/Unnecessary Addition of -s in Simple Present Tense

Types of Errors	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Inccorrect Addition of -s	Most of the students magnifys	Most of the students magnifies
Unnecessary Addition of -s	All of these terms means that....	All of these terms mean that...
Total Number of Errors:	41	

4.2.2.5. Errors in Articles

This sort of errors constitutes another problematic field in English grammar for Turks. In this category, unnecessary and missing definite or indefinite article errors which do not go with in nouns will be evaluated. In Turkish there is not such an article system as in English in that articles are used before a noun.

In fact, article errors may be taken into account in two ways. On one way indefinite articles (a/an) that are preceded before singular nouns according to the initial sounds of a word varying consonant and vowel one. When it comes to definite

article (the), omission or redundant use of definite article are frequent in freshman students' compositions in this present study.

Table 4.5 Articles in Noun Category

Types of Article Errors	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Omission	My friend used to be English teacher	My friend used to be an English teacher
Misuse	They gave a wine...	They gave some wine..
Misuse	An unit of..	A unit of..
Total Number of Errors:	42	

4.2.2.6. Errors in Determiners

Turkish language has not the same countable or uncountable nouns system as in English. So, errors related to this category constitute a big problem for Turks. In this study, it is inevitable to come across misuse of this sort of errors.

Table 4.6 Determiners in Noun Category

Determiner Errors Types	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Substitution	Many advancement in science...	Much advancement...
Total Number of Errors:	21	

4.2.3. Lexical Category

Only proposition errors are analyzed in this category as there are a lot of interference errors in the written productions of ESL students.

4.2.3.1. Errors in Prepositions

One of the most frequent errors fall into this sub-category and 20.7 % preposition errors of the total 338 errors may mean that prepositions constitutes a big problem for Turkish learner of English. The preposition category of English does not resemble to the ones in Turkish language as Turkish requires adding them to the ends of nouns to show accusative, dative and genitive forms. On the other hand, the functions of prepositions vary a lot. According to the Longman Dictionary of

Language Teaching (2002) the definition of preposition is that “a word used with NOUNs, PRONOUNs and GERUNDS to link them grammatically to other words” (p.425). Also the functions of this category in English vary: “The phrase so formed, consisting of a preposition and its COMPLEMENT, is a **prepositional phrase**. In English, a prepositional phrase may be “discontinuous”, as in: *who(m) did you speak to?* Prepositions may express such meanings as possession (e.g. *the leg of the table*), direction (e.g. *to the bank*), place (e.g. *at the corner*), time (e.g. *before now*). They can also mark the cases discussed in CASE GRAMMAR. For example, in the sentence: *Smith killed the policeman with a revolver*. the preposition *with* shows that a revolver is in the INSTRUMENTAL CASE. In English, too, there are groups of words (e.g. *in front of, owing to*) that can function like single-word prepositions” (p.425).

Table 4.7 Prepositions in Word Choice Sub-Category

Preposition Errors	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Misuse	He talked with phone...	He talked to...
Addition	They met with turmoil...	They met turmoil...
Missuse	Life in the campus...	Life at the campus...
Misuse	They are bored from book...	They are bored with...
Total Number of Errors:	70	

4.2.4. Syntactic Category

In this category omission of ‘be’ and word order errors are analyzed.

4.2.4.1. Omission of Be

Most of the errors stem from omitting or addition of the verb ‘be’. Turkish language has just one verb which means ‘olmak’ whereas there are three words, become, be and occurs, which have same the meaning but different usage in English. So, Turkish speaker of English learners may not discriminate the differences among them especially in the usage of ‘be’ as it can be used as an auxiliary verb and main verb. Confusing this word is inevitable for Turkish students of English. As it is

known that “[...] there is no independent verb be in Turkish. The use of the simple copula often goes unexpressed as in the following example: The test two hours long” (Şimşek, 1989, p.26).

Table 4.8 Auxiliary in Noun Category

Types of Auxiliary Errors	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Omission	When they at university...	When they are....
Total Number of Errors:	42	

4.2.4.2.Errors in Word Order

In this category, errors stemming from differences in word orders between English and Turkish will be analyzed. Turkish language has a different word order from English and this may cause difficulties in sentences produced by Turks. “The basic word order is SOV (subject-object-verb), although in colloquial speech and for reasons of emphasis (stress) other word orders are possible”(cited in http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Turkish/Word_Order, 18.01.2009). On the other hand, the basic word order in English is SVO. So, Turkish learners of English may commit mistakes but in our study these types of errors were not committed. However, it is very important to get a result which indicates that Turkish students of English did not commit any word order error even though Turkish has a flexible word order. One possible reason that can be counted for this is that during language classes this difference is highlighted and a comparative instruction is given.

4.2.5. Mechanical Category

Punctuation and spelling errors fall in this category. These sorts of errors are explained through tables.

4.2.5.1. Punctuation

English sometimes show a different punctuation characteristic, especially in the usages of comma and full stop. Although many punctuation marks are used in the

same way in many languages, there are of course not typical usages. Furthermore, when we consider that mechanical category is mostly neglected when analysing and evaluating a composition, and just the importance is given to the organization and grammar. In the tables 4.9-4.10-4.11-4.12(cited in Elkılıç, Han, Aydın, 2009) the problems in punctuation are explained.

Table 4.9 Uncommon usage of ‘full stop’ in both languages (English-Turkish)

Full Stop (.)	Example	English Usage	Turkish Usage
Common after abbreviations	Dr. Laura	√	√
Numbers	12.315	X	√
Decimals	5.5	√	X
To separate part of dates	29.05.2007	X	√
Between hours and minutes	11.30	X	√

(Note: The source is Akalın et al.(2005), Swan (2005 and English Style Guide, University of Copenhagen, 2007, p.3, <http://ordbog.ku.dk/pdf/styleguide.pdf>/ cited in Elkılıç, Han, Aydın, 2009, pp.281-282)

Table 4.10 Uncommon usage of ‘comma’ in both languages (English-Turkish)

Comma	Example	English Usage	Turkish Usage
Co-ordinate Clause	Dr. Laura	√	X
Subordinate Clause	If you study hard, you will be successful.	√	X
Numbers	7,827	√	X
Decimals	3,5	X	√
Insert an additional comma before the final ‘and’ (or ‘or’) if needed for clarification (the Oxford comma):	<i>Sugar, beef and veal, and milk products</i>	√	X
<i>Linked sentences.</i> Use a comma to separate two sentences linked by a conjunction such as ‘but’, ‘yet’, ‘while’ or ‘so’ to form a single sentence:	<i>The committee dealing with the question of commas agreed on a final text, but the issue of semicolons was not considered.</i>	√	X

(Note: The source is Akalın, Ş. et al.(2005), Swan (2005 and English Style Guide, University of Copenhagen, 2007, p.3, <http://ordbog.ku.dk/pdf/styleguide.pdf>/ cited in Elkılıç, Han, Aydın, 2009, pp.281-282)

Table 4.11 Apostrophe in English and Turkish

Apostrophe	Example	English Usage	Turkish Usage
<i>Plurals of abbreviation</i> do not take an apostrophe	MEPs, UFOs	√	X
<i>Plurals of figures</i> do not take an apostrophe.	<i>Pilots of 747s undergo special training.</i>	X	√

(Note: The source is Akalın, Ş. et al.(2005), Swan (2005 and English Style Guide, University of Copenhagen, 2007, p.3, <http://ordbog.ku.dk/pdf/styleguide.pdf/> cited in Elkılıç, Han, Aydın , 2009, pp.281-282)

Table 4.12 Punctuation Errors in Mechanical Category

Types of Punctuation Errors	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Misuse	It's result gives a clue...	Its result gives a clue...
Total Number of Errors:	39	

4.2.5.2. Spelling Errors

It is clear that Turkish students are prone to use upper case of “i”(İ) in capitalized writings such as headings or anywhere necessary.

On the other hand, “*Seasons, etc.* No capitals for *spring, summer, autumn, winter*; capitals for weekdays, months and feast-days: *Tuesday, November, Christmas Day*”(English Style Guide, University of Copenhagen, 2007, p.13, <http://ordbog.ku.dk/pdf/styleguide.pdf/> cited in Elkılıç, G., Han, T., Aydın, S., 2009, p.282).

Table 4.13 Capitalization Errors in Mechanical Category

Types of Capitalization Errors	Students' Interlanguage	Expected L2
Misuse	FOCUSİNG ...	FOCUSING...
Total Number of Errors:	10	

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

5. Results and Discussion

The results got at the end of the survey indicate that errors of Turkish learners of English that fall in linguistic category put forward the evidence of interference. As the participants in question are not enough trained in active skills especially in writing skills at high schools till they begin to study at English Language Department, their errors should be treated and related feedback should be given.

Grammatical errors found in the 160 compositions of prep-class students studying at Kafkas University Department of English Language and Literature are analyzed to outline the frequent errors and the reason for the occurrence of them. At the beginning of the analysis grammatical errors are divided into main and sub-categories including the numbers and rates, and errors are evaluated by the perspective of the different structure of both languages (Turkish and English), that is, errors are explained in terms of interference. Consequently, the morphological errors are realized to be the most frequent errors seen on the written productions of the participants; moreover, lexical, mechanical and syntactic errors follow it respectively.

It must be noted that according to the results of the present study, course materials should be reviewed and edited considering the fact that Turkish languages have its own grammatical peculiarities when compared to L2 (English). So, a contrastive approach to the teaching process in writing courses should not be neglected. Furthermore, a direct instruction related to the problematic areas traced in the written productions of the students may be given to catch the students to the point.

This study shows that a contrastive analysis toward the errors committed by the students studying at ELT departments is important to help students to overcome difficulties in conveying their ideas in their writings and not to fossilize, so focusing on errors will give some important clues related to the syllabus designing, authors of course materials and instructors.

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