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Error Corrective Treatment in Spanish L1 ESL Learners: Suggesting an Empirical Method

Tratamiento correctivo de errores en aprendientes españoles de inglés como L2: Un método empírico

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Abstract: Error Analysis and Treatment seems to be paramount to the success of the learning-teaching process of a second (or further) language as it deals with the very material produced by learners during their learning process. This study aims to propose an error analysis and treatment method that could link the theoretical background of Error Analysis and the daily practice of English as a Second Language in the classroom. To reach the objective we analysed (following and applying the proposed method) 100 different written outputs of learners of different levels of English. The proposed method Discussion, Analysis, and Feedback (ADF) has clear classroom implications that can improve teachers' and learners' performance and, can also help assess and reassess the syllabi of ESL.
Keywords: CEFR; error; ESL; feedback; writing.
Summary: Introduction. Literature Review. Objectives. Methodology. Results. Conclusions.

Resumen: El Análisis de Errores parece ser esencial para el éxito del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de segundas (y sucesivas) lenguas ya que trabaja con el material que producen los aprendientes durante su aprendizaje. El propósito esencial de este trabajo es proponer un método de análisis y tratamiento de errores que sea capaz de vincular el trasfondo teórico de la disciplina con la práctica diaria de la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa. Para alcanzar ese objetivo se han analizado (siguiendo el modelo propuesto) 100 muestras de redacciones escritas por aprendientes de inglés de diferentes niveles. El sistema propuesto tiene claras implicaciones pedagógicas para el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, entre ellas, puede ser empleado como elemento descriptor del éxito y del fracaso de los diferentes planes de estudio.

Palabras clave: MCER; error; inglés como segunda lengua; retroalimentación; escritura.
Sumario: Introducción. Revisión Teórica. Objetivos. Metodología. Resultados. Conclusiones.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, linguistic theory and linguists do not consider errors as simply inappropriate or inadequate use of language material. Errors are treated today like any other linguistic feature to determine or assess, for instance, the acquisition or the process of learning a language (L1, L2 or L3) and to assess the process and its results in all–stages of language development (Ahmad Sheriff et al.).

Corder's seminal work, "The Significance of Learners' Errors," published in 1967, marked a pivotal moment in applied linguistics and the study of second language acquisition (SLA) by introducing the concept of Error Importance. Equally significant is Larry Selinker's notion of Interlanguage ("Interlanguage"), introduced in 1972. Subsequently, the field has witnessed significant expansion and development in the ensuing decades.

Error Analysis focuses on an attentive and close analysis of errors produced and their nature (Richards and Renandya). This discipline and its many and varied approaches to the various natures of errors have produced interesting discussions within Linguistics. However, in this paper, we will focus on what has been defined as L2 Educational Perspective of the Error Analysis or "The role of errors in learning a second language" (Hendrickson 357).

This paper intends to propose a systematic method that can help us apply some of the main principles of Error Analysis in the different stages of the feedback process in English as a second language (ESL). The use of the method could ultimately lead to the elimination of errors produced by learners in their written outputs and obtain better conformity to the rules and norms of the target language, in this case, ESL.

In the last few decades, much has been debated in the fields of Linguistics and Educational Studies about the feedback process and its natures and approaches. Here we have deemed appropriate Delayed Marking (DM) as the feedback method used in the analysis of the samples. DM is characterised by its asynchronicity as it can only happen when the instructor gives the learner feedback and guidance following the correction/revision of the output to improve the written production

(Facullo). DM, as suggested by Cornelius-White "should always be clear and easy to decode for the learner" (118). Hence, time is essential in this strategy: "the instructor cannot delay the process too much or the rules would not be internalised and applied correctly to eliminate the inadequate uses" (Keh 295). Through this systematic approach to feedback, the learner progresses in their learning process and "has a better understanding of the misconceptions and confusions outlined by the instructor" (Keh 299).

Following the DM system and the various theoretical approaches within Error Analysis already mentioned, the analysis presented here will preeminently focus on the errors themselves and the analysis of the different possible reasons behind the most systematically repeated errors made by two groups of ESL university level learners (population group of the study) in their writing outputs (corpus of the study). The errors and their analytical discussions are presented grouped according to their various levels of performance (B1 and B2 students according to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)). By attentively examining the rationale behind learners' perceptions of their written output as valid and meaningful expressions, we will engage in a discourse on the efficacy of the method delineated in this study. The analytical framework utilized herein is predicated on an in-depth scrutiny and discourse of morpho-syntactic and grammatical errors observed in learners' written works during face-to-face sessions between teachers and students. The anticipated outcome is a reduction in the occurrence of grammatical and morpho-syntactic discrepancies in subsequent written outputs.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Errors made by students of English (or any other foreign language) have become widely accepted as a source of information and indicators of the progression of the learning process. As a result, their treatment has been transferred from theoretical discussions into the practice of everyday teaching and learning of languages.

Nowadays, with the emergence and acceptance of generative-transformational linguistics theories and the cognitive movement in psychology being widely taught in ESL specialisations, experts agree that "the attitude towards errors seems to have changed and student's errors are thus treated as a surface phenomenon and are sometimes the learner's own system to approximate to the real system of the target language" (Chiang

10). This approach seems to validate one of the premises of this study: to fully understand the progression of a learner, little or no information is provided by the correctness of the language productions.

The following scheme (adapted from Huang) represents and systematises the role of errors and error treatment in the language learning process:

Try → Error → Effective Feedback (Error Treatment)→ Desired goal
Try → Error → No feedback → Given up → Failure

1.1 Error Corrective Treatment

Introduced by Craig Chaudron in 1977 through the publication of "A Descriptive Model of Discourse in the Corrective Treatment of Learner's Errors" and widely systematised and accepted. This approach to errors committed during the learning process identifies four different possibilities/methods to treat the learners' errors:

- Treatment that can create autonomous ability and self-correction.
- Treatment that elicits the correct response.
- Any teacher comment or request that leads to improvement.
- Approval or disapproval treatment (positive or negative reinforcement).

The theoretical approach to Error Treatment can be thus linked to the DM System mentioned above. DM is characterised by the face-to-face treatment of inadequate outputs to treat it and eliminate it by offering alternatives or corrections in a limited time after the output or product of the exercise of language has been produced (Butler et al; Kulik and Kulik; Metcalfe et al.).

1.2 Interlanguage and Language Learning Implications

Language comparison is of great interest from both theoretical and applied perspectives: "It reveals what is general and what is language specific, and it is therefore important both for the understanding of language in general and for the study of the individual languages compared" (Johansson and Hofland 25).

One of the many interesting results of the discipline, in this analytical Contrastive Linguistics perspective, is what has been defined as the Interlanguage Approach (Selinker, "Interlanguage"; Mahmood and Murad; Rajendran and Yunus). Traditionally, Contrastive Linguistics focused on the influence of the first language, on the emergence of the second language, and on the differences and similarities between the first and second languages. As suggested by Brown, Interlanguage is "a creative process of constructing a system in which the learner is consciously testing hypotheses about the target language from a number of possible sources of knowledge" (162).

However, although we currently understand Interlanguage as defined by Brown, it is essential to mention that Interlanguage, as a Linguistic hypothesis, was introduced by Selinker in 1969 ("Language Transfer") as "the interim grammars constructed by second language learners on their way to the target language" (McLaughlin 60). Nevertheless, this concept is technically connected to the one suggested by William Nemser: "Learner speech at a given time is the patterned product of a linguistic system distinct from Native Language and Target Language and internally structured" (116).

McLaughlin presented a structured vision of Interlanguage and the ways in which it can affect the reality of L2 studies. In this vision, Interlanguage is (i) the system at a single point in time and (ii) the range of interlocking systems that characterise the development of learners over time. Hence, McLaughlin suggests that interlanguage is a system between knowing and not knowing the target language.

In McLaughlin, we can also find the five central cognitive processes of the construction of second language learning and interlanguage: (i) language transfer (transferences from the first language), (ii) transfer of training, (iii) strategies of second language learning (approaches to material taught), (iv) strategies of second language communication, and (v) overgeneralization of the second language material.

However, Powell proposes a second vision of Interlanguage in detail when he argues that much of what had been proposed by other theorists is true. Powell follows the views of William Nemser, who believed that interlanguage was an autonomous system with "elements which do not have their origin in either linguistic system [i.e., nor first nor second language]" (Powell 18). As a result, the Interlanguage is an "approximative system of approximation and emerging of the target language" (Nemser 119).

The different Interlanguage theories and debates have had interesting and remarkable results, some of which are essential features and concepts to understand the process of language learning today. According to Selinker (*Rediscovering Interlanguage*), "the core phenomena that constitutes what we understand today as Interlanguage is the study of transfer (opposed to interference), borrowings (opposed to mistakes), code-switching (opposed to full competence) and fossilisation (opposed to succeeding in treating the wrong output)" (88). All these key concepts can be easily linked to language teaching and learning and Error Analysis, as well as to Error Treatment, as those concepts are closely related to the development of competencies which lead to an expansion of learners' ability to produce more adequate outputs in their L2.

The different visions on interlanguage share a common core idea: interlanguage is an independent language system, lying somewhere between first and second language. An especially important feature of interlanguage is that, due to its descriptive nature, it tries to explain and understand the reasons behind the imperfect language production of a second language learner in reference to the language/s available to the learner. Hence, Interlanguage can be linked with Error Analysis and Language Teaching and Learning.

1.3 Error Analysis as Opposed to Contrastive Analysis

Introduced by Craig Chaudron in 1977 through the publishing of "A Descriptive Model of Discourse in the Corrective Treatment of Learner's Errors" and widely systematised and accepted since then, this approach to errors committed during the learning process identifies four different possibilities to treat the learners' errors:

The following chart (following Corder and Dulay et al.) presents a systematic overview of the two different approaches to Error Treatment and their focuses on different key features:

Table 1. The main differences between Contrastive and Error analysis

Contrastive Analysis	Error Analysis
Understood as a comparison of systems of different languages and predicts the areas of difficulty.	Starts with errors in the second language learning and studies them in detail and looks for sources of significance.
It looks for differences in the whole language system of two languages.	Provides data of actual problems emphasising in pedagogical problems.
Confronts complex theoretical problems.	It confronts realistic problems in SLA. Provides real data of the learning process of the target language: -is it similar to learning L1 and L2? -is the process similar in children and adults?
Focused on language structure and system: the speaker/learner is passive.	The learner is an active participant.
Interlingual importance.	Interlingual and intralingual importance.

1.4 Morpho-Syntactic and Grammar Errors

This paper is primarily concerned with morpho-syntactic and grammar errors. These errors, as indicated by Vosse and Kempen, result from the misapplication of morphological inflection and syntactic and grammatical rules. These errors occur quite frequently in ESL learners' outputs and are considered serious because they are commonly seen as a result of insufficient language competence rather than accidental mistakes (such as typographical lapsus). Therefore, these errors constitute a broad and interesting area in English language teaching (ELT).

This paper mainly deals with two types of morpho-syntactic errors: (i) grammar structural errors and (ii) morpho-syntactic errors because, as pointed out by Purinanda in 2022, these are the most recurrent errors in ESL written productions, and it seems that these errors do effectively

hinder the progression of learners within bands and levels of the CEFR (in relative terms, from B1.2 to B1.3 and, in absolute terms, from B1 to B2).

On the one hand, morpho-syntax, the combination of morphology and syntax, is the study of the forms and rules that govern the formation of words and sentences in any language (Wilmet). Hence, morpho-syntax focuses on all structures that enable language users to build grammatically correct statements in any language.

Thus, it seems unquestionable that morpho-syntax plays a significant role in the formation of words, inflections of regular and irregular forms of nouns, verbs, and adjectives, as well as the arrangement of language patterns, such as those that happen around the nouns, verbs, adjectives, determiners, adverbs, and other discourse and speech elements (Weir 40).

On the other hand, grammatical errors occur in the writing of many non-native language learners (Abdulkareem) and rarely in native speakers' language production. Traditionally, this situation has been attributed to interferences of the L1 rules and structures, negative transference, in the production of the L2 outputs (Kumar). According to Ferris and Roberts and Clark, some of the most common errors among ESL learners include errors that could be allocated within the category of morpho-syntactic errors: (i) noun ending errors, (ii) subject-verb agreement errors, (iii) incorrect use of determiners, (iv) incorrect use of verb tenses, (v) lexical errors in word choice or word form, (vi) word order, and (vii) unidiomatic sentence construction.

2. OBJECTIVES

This paper aims primarily to develop a systematic method or analytical instrument, derived from the analysis and discussion of errors identified within the constructed corpus, for addressing morpho-syntactic and grammatical errors and conducting error analysis. This method seeks to bridge the gap between essential theoretical frameworks and practical applications in ESL classrooms. We posit that a deeper comprehension of errors can facilitate their resolution. Therefore, conducting face-to-face sessions to analyze and discuss errors, as previously suggested, can not only enhance the learning and teaching processes but also provide insights into the effectiveness and relevance of existing syllabi.

Furthermore, the paper seeks to explore the implications of Error Analysis and Corpus Studies within the context of ESL classrooms. To achieve this goal, the proposed methodology is grounded in the theoretical

review conducted in the preceding chapters of this study. By establishing its theoretical underpinnings, this methodology possesses inherent transferability, thereby enabling its replication, validation, and critique by other scholarly inquiries and teaching experiences (Richards and Renandya; Saito et al.; Sani and Ismail).

3. METHODOLOGY

Selecting the most appropriate approach for addressing grammatical errors in the written productions of ESL learners is a decision of considerable significance. Previous research studies (Díaz de Ilaraza et al.; Presada and Badea; Yilmaz and Delmir) have employed similar methodologies, such as questioning the nature of the error and attempting to elucidate it, to detect grammatical errors and prevent fossilization using context-free grammar (CFG) approaches. In this investigation, we build upon prior insights by incorporating contextual factors (intragroup dynamics and CEFR assessments) into the analysis of grammatical and morpho-syntactic errors, guided by the findings reported by Little and Mariappan et al. in their empirical investigations of error analysis.

The main objective of this paper is to propose and apply to an empirical study a systematic methodology (understood as a collection of methods as suggested by Patel and Patel) based on a particular instrument, or method (Viergever), to accomplish the task of error correction and feedback. This procedure is based on Error Analysis and Error Treatment and could be transferable to other similar studies, as well as to the reality of everyday teaching in the classroom of ESL.

The methodology will be implemented on a sample comprising 100 written compositions, equally divided between 50 samples from level B1 and 50 samples from level B2. Consequently, this initiative holds the potential to significantly enhance the writing proficiency of ESL learners through an improved feedback mechanism.

This method, referred to as ADF, entails a structured approach involving face-to-face interactions between the teacher and student for Error Analysis (A), Discussion (D) of the error's nature, and providing Feedback (F) to the learner. This analytical framework has been meticulously devised through a five-step process designed to comprehensively address the implications of the errors encountered.

– Step 1: Identifying the error in its context to create a corpus of samples. The creation of a corpus of written samples helps create

taxonomies of samples that serve the process of analysis; in this case, it helps centre the notion of average and medium. The objective is to extract materials that could be applicable and transferrable to other cases and in these cases selecting the best and worst seldom offer valuable information (Ellis).

– Step 2: Identifying errors within the corpus created. For each error, analyse what was the learner's intention and how it can be reconstructed into a correct English written output. Not only offering a correction but a set of delayed possibilities that can help learners understand their errors (DM as proposed by Facullo) because there is usually more than one possibility of reconstructing an error and the negative evidence presented to the student should depend on the intended message.

– Step 3: Explaining the error according to some basic principles: select recurrent and non-recurrent grammar and morpho-syntactic errors and provide possible causes of those errors: (i) native language transfers, (ii) developmental intralingual errors (not concerned with the first language), (iii) borrowings, (iv) overgeneralization, (v) ignorance of rule restriction - occurring as a result of failure to observe the restrictions or existing structures, (vi) incomplete application of rules - arising when learners fail to fully develop a certain structure required to produce acceptable sentences, (vii) false concepts hypothesised deriving from faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language and/or (viii) error fossilization (intragroup and personal development fossilization).

– Step 4: Levelling within the CEFR. It is important to provide an approximate idea of the ideal performance of each level according to the CEFR. This enhances the feedback process, as it sets the derided objective, and, also, improves the self-assessment process of the learners' and the degree of consciousness of their own development as suggested by Hawkins and Filipović.

– Step 5: Effective feedback given to the learners (in a face-to-face private session). The feedback given to the learners must be error-specific and pay special attention to the nature of the error to provide viable solutions to avoid repeating the error in future written productions.

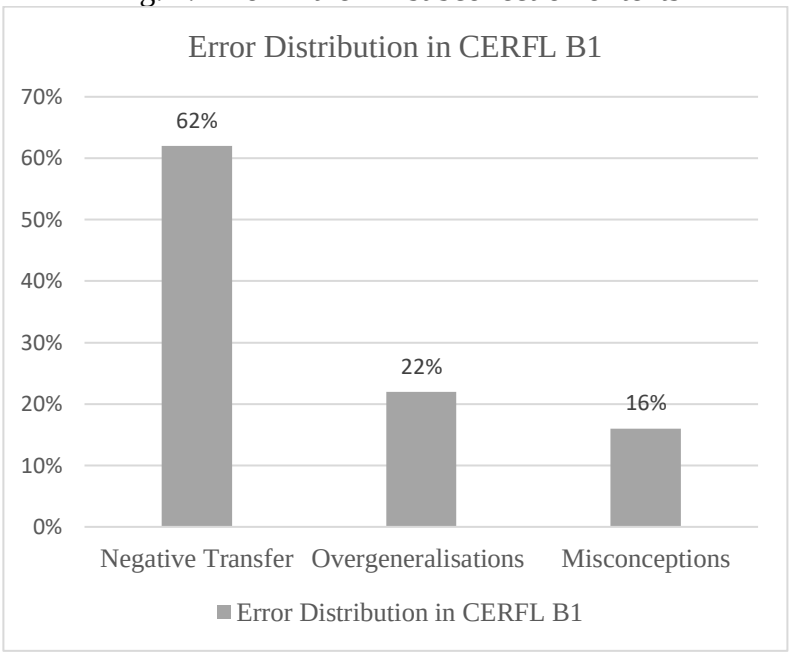
4. Results and Analysis

For the study presented here, we have analysed 100 written output samples by ESL Spanish students of the CEFR levels B1 and B2 (50 of each studied level). These written outputs have been analysed following the explained

original method (ADF) suggested before and inspired by a combination of Corpus Studies methodology and face-to-face teacher-student interaction.

4.1 Errors in the B1 Level

Fig. 1. Error in the B1-subcollection of texts



4.1.1 B1 inside the CEFR

This level is the first of the two levels that are named with the letter B in the CEFR. A learner in the B levels is an independent user of the language. In the case of the B1, the CEFR states that when reaching this learning point, a learner:

– Can understand the main points of clear standard input.
– Can deal with most situations.
– Can produce simple connected texts.
– Can describe first-hand experiences and events.

4.1.2 B1 Common Errors—Analysis, Discussion & Feedback

Detailed analysis of this this (sub) collection of samples demonstrates that even when learners can make themselves understood, these learners seem to encounter several problems when they try to produce complex structures as they tend to replicate the rules and linguistic patterns of their L1 in their L2 written outputs. Thus, at this stage of their learning process, the most frequent natures and sources of errors are negative transfer, overgeneralization, and ignorance of restrictive rules. This frequency in their production, makes errors attributed to these natures to be strongly visible in this stage of learning.

By analysing fragments of the samples collected of written outputs with the suggested method (ADF), it is visible that the written outputs produced by these learners cannot be easily recognised as fully English-written valid material as the number of errors that can be found in these texts distance these samples from valid English-written examples. The following extracts have been selected for deeper analysis as they constitute the core of the most recurrent errors found.

> Error 1. "How I am visiting Poland I stayed in one hotel in Warsaw. I am going to stay . . ."

ADF: As may be observed, there are many deviations from the rules in this extract; learner seems to be confused with the use of verbal tenses (grammar errors) and, as a result, in the analysed extract there is no sense of time or tense sequencing. It seems quite clear that learner intended to produce sentences using the future tense. However, we do find present, past, and future tenses used without a clear distinction. It is also evident that the placement of *how* at the beginning of the sentence represents an example of negative transfer as it may respond to an exercise of translation from their first language and the use of the adverb *como* in Spanish: *Como voy a* . . . By analysing this short piece, it can also be understood that this learner seems to have a problem with the uses of the numeral one, which represents an example of overgeneralization of the rule and use, and at the same time, a failure in the application of a restrictive rule: *one* vs. *a*.

> Error 2. "I heard about the Carlos' accident. I don't believe it."

ADF: In this extract can be seen that the learner's difficulties happen as a result of negative transfer and word order. A detailed analysis of this short piece reveals that in "the Carlos's accident" we do see an example of

negative language transfer because both the use of the definite article and the choice of word order reflect the grammar rules of the learner's L1. If we examine this short piece in further detail we understand that, on the one hand, the use of the definite article *the* in "the Carlos's accident" seem to be an example of negative transfer as the sentence seems to be an exact transposition of the students L1 grammar rules regarding the use of the definite article, these rules transferred from the learner's L1 do not apply in the target language (English). On the other hand, word order also seems to be a direct transposition of the leaner's L1 rules, as it reflects the typically expected order in a Spanish sentence of this kind, but not the correct word order in English (*El accidente de Carlos as opposed to Carlos's accident).*

> Error 3. "Each country has own problems one of the most damage problems is the transport. They are a lot of cars on the world and they are more . . ."

ADF: A detailed analysis of this short extract reveals that this learner's written output seems to be affected by negative transfer and overgeneralisation of grammar rules. Regarding the overgeneralisation problems, this learner is using *they* instead of *there* to create an existential meaning as the pronoun *they* seems to have been placed in substitution of *there*. This error cannot be attributed to L1 transfer as there is no similar rule in the learner's L1; hence, according to Chaudron, it could only be regarded as a developmental intralingual grammar error and an overgeneralization of a known grammar rule; in this case the rule would be that all English sentences need a subject.

This extract has been problematic during the analysis because it could be a simple mistake, the learner may know the rule and failed to apply it to this sentence for reasons that may have nothing to do with the learning process.

However, what really constitutes an error, and, as a result is part of their learning process, is the problematic syntactic construction "each country has own problems one of the most damage problems is the transport"; closer analysis of this sentence reveals another example of negative transfer: the English word own (*to own)* is commonly translated into Spanish as a possessive meaning word; by considering this, we can see that this learner has not used the correct possessive in the produced

output (*its*) because in their understanding of the English rules, *own* seems to convey the same meaning as the structure *its own*.

Further analysis of this short extract reveals another error, which appears in the phrase "most damage problems"; in this case, the incorrect inflection of the word can be understood as another case of negative transfer.

At this point of the learning process, L1 negative transfer seems to play a significant role in the process of approximation to the target language. Consequently, grammar rules are not equally fixed; some rules are never broken while others are constantly violated, and others seem to be neither consistently fixed nor broken. Table 2 shows further examples that illustrate and complement the error discussion and analysis at this learning stage.

Some of the main errors that have been analysed are also strongly connected to more classroom-oriented linguistic features like verbal tenses, word morphology, collocations, prepositions, and word order inside the sentence.

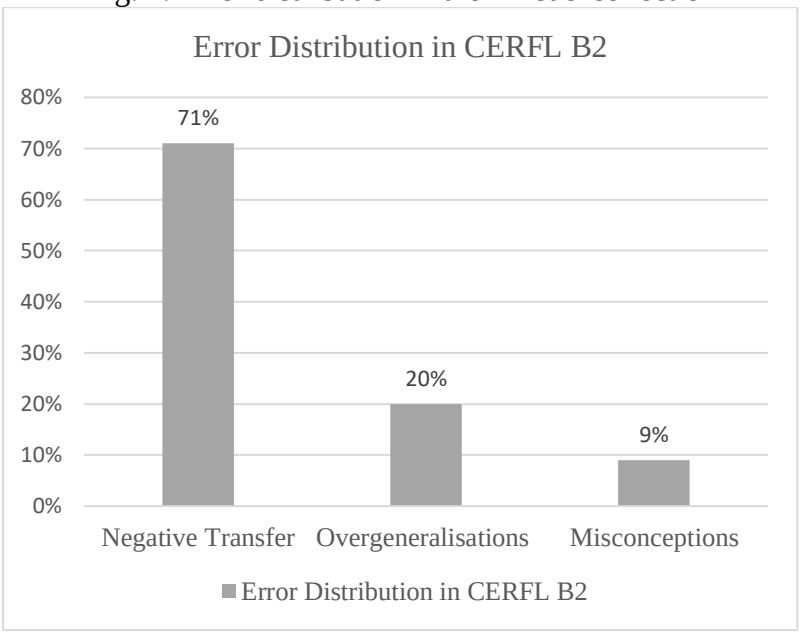
It is essential in this stage of the learning process, in the light of the results obtained, to take into consideration that errors are effective indicators of the progression of the learning process. This lead to realising that the instructor needs to make the learners aware of the importance of the errors; this could be done following: (i) stop and analyse together the recurrent errors; (ii) try to propose solutions and materials to overcome those necessities and, finally, (iii) take into consideration that errors indicate how to continue developing and planning lessons/classes as the indicate the milestones of the teaching and learning process. Hence, making learners aware of their own errors and providing feedback seems to be a good alternative to traditional treatment of the error as a mistake, which included the immediate discard of the error as something punishable in the process of learning second and foreign languages.

Table 2. Supporting examples of B1 Errors

Error nature	Examples
Negative transfer. Errors that we can apply to the interferences with the first language.	- I don't mind to go. - We will visit it this night. - We are doing very photos. - There isn't sun. - He works for the morning. - He hasn't girlfriend. - It's probably you will love him. - I haven't seen them since six months ago. - Serius. - We have not a very good healthy. - Contamination.
Overgeneralization or ignorance of a rule of restriction.	- She is the person more sweet that I met. à Fails to recognize the comparative and superlative grammar rule, applies part of it. - He is the boy most beautiful of the world. à Not only fails to apply the comparative and superlative grammar rule but fails in the use of the preposition of for anything that is "contained." - Waitting à Spelling incorrect, generalisation of an incorrect rule. - We are doing very photos à verb to do for every action of do or make or take. - The pollution not only affects the nature, the people too. They have problems with the breathing àinappropriate use of the definite article.
False concepts hypothesized. Misconceptions.	- We are doing very photos. Very as a lot (of). - Uses of the definite article: the people, the health, the nature . . . - Uses of meet and know as interchangeable.

4.2 Errors in the B2 Level

Fig. 2. Error distribution in the B2 sub-collection



4.2.1 B2 inside the CEFR

This level is the second of the two levels that are named with the letter B. The B levels are those in which the learner or the language user is seen as already independent. In the case of the B2, the CEFR underlines that when reaching this language level, a learner:

– Can understand the main points of clear standard input.
– Can deal with most situations.
– Can produce simple connected texts.
– Can describe first-hand experiences and events.

4.2.2 B2 Common Errors—Analysis, Discussion & Feedback

As learners become more competent, their errors tend to be less frequent, and whilst it seems to be true that their language use and linguistic comfort zone widens (Muñoz-Basols), learners also begin producing more complex outputs, which are characterised by the use of more sophisticated language and richer vocabulary. As a result, there seems to be an increasing desire

of approximating to a more realistic English output which can be perceived in the analysed texts. This is visible when comparing, for instance, the B1 output "how I am visiting Poland I stayed . . ." to the B2 sample "I can't believe it (not being able to go on holidays with you) because I wanted to go with you and it this holidays were going to be incredible"; if we analyse these two extracts, it is possible to observe that the two productions differ greatly as the second sentence (B2) seems to be much closer to a natural English output, and at the same time, the absence of errors found in B1 productions indicate that it could also be the result of the process of the elimination of some of the errors present in the first sentence (B1).

However, even when the changes produced inside both sentences mentioned before may be very significant, in this stage of the learning process, we still find a critical number of errors in samples analysed—most of which could be attributed to three main error natures: negative transfer, violation of restriction rules and many examples of overgeneralization. This can be seen in the following excerpts:

> Error 1. "The life is very beautiful for crying all day and wishing not be born."

ADF: As already indicated in the general description of this learning level, written outputs seem to be better constructed, and this short extract could be an example of a better approximation to native-like written productions. However, this excerpt contains a series of errors which if not treated could hinder the learning process. First, this learner seems to misuse the definite article as in this short production the learner does not apply the restrictive rule of the correct use of the article in English, which, at the same time, could also be an example a case of negative transfer because the equivalent sentence in Spanish always contains a definite article in the noun phrase *La vida*.

Secondly, we can infer from the analysis of this short extract that the learner fails to construct the hypothesis intended in the second part of the excerpt: wishing somebody was never born. This seems to elicit another case of negative transfer, in this case, an interference or direct transfer of the infinitive construction in their first language, which seems to be replicated in the written production (*. . . demasiado corta para llorar y desear no haber . . .).*

One very interesting feature that can be found in this short extract is the learner's success in creating a complex prepositional phrase which

included a non-finite prepositional object, in this case, it is possible to observe a preposition followed by a gerund construction, which did not appear in any of the B1 samples analysed and, thus, represents a real indication of the progression in the process of learning English.

> Error 2. "I can't go to the holidays with you because my parents want to go to the holidays with them."

ADF: A close analysis of this short extract reveals that the use of the definite article continues to be a source of error production in this learner's output. Further analysis reveals that this seems to happen as a result of L1 interference. If we compare the production analysed with the Spanish (learner's L1) construction *las vacaciones* we can see that in such a noun phrase learner's L1 would almost always be accompanied by the definite article, which seems to be prescriptive in such cases, as opposed to English in which in these situations the rule to apply is the opposite. In this short extract, this learner also fails to convey a proper meaning in the verb phrase "want to go"; the absence of the inclusion of the personal object *me*, renders the sentence ambiguous, which would not happen in the full appropriate verbal construct: "want me to go."

> Error 3. "However dinner won't be like I expected it."

ADF: Detailed analysis of this short extract seems to show that the overgeneralization of the use of the definite article (seen in the previous extracts) is fluctuating and not present in every writing, which makes it less frequent than in B1 productions, as expected. Attentive analysis of this selected extract elicits another example of overgeneralization as a nature of error production; in this case, the use of "*like*" which seems to be used in every comparison sentence, i.e., like equals (=) as, as though, likely, etc. The problem the learner seems to have to express comparison meanings and build comparative structures also constitutes an example in which the learner is violating a restrictive rule in English grammar: *like* vs. *as.*

Thus, it can be argued that once learners have reached this stage of the learning process they seem to be more competent and to possess a greater ability of conveying the meaning; they not only seem to be capable of producing better constructed sentences and writings in general, but they also seem to be able to introduce more complex structures in their written outputs, as the analysis of selected extracts demonstrate. However, errors

still appear in the written samples analysed and many of these seem to the result of the negative influence of the first language of the learners in their second language written outputs. Table 3 offers some additional examples to strengthen the points already explained.

As already mentioned in the section dedicated to error in the B1 sub-collection, most of the errors that have been analysed in this section seem to be closely related to classroom-oriented language features. Taking this issue into consideration leads to the understanding that it is essential to inform learners of their errors and use them in a revised a student-oriented syllabus.

One key feature of this level is the ability of the learners to express themselves in a better and more natural way; hence, they are, as suggested in the CRFL, more likely to be understood by a native English speaker with no knowledge whatsoever of their L1 (Spanish). However, even if their communication capacities increase, learners at this stage continue to show critical errors which need to be overcome to produce adequate outputs; analysis these errors reveals that the most significant (in terms of absolute numbers) error natures seem to be (i) negative transfer, (ii) overgeneralisations and (iii) inconsistencies in word order; the following examples have been selected from the samples collected to illustrate these various error natures:

–Selected examples of problems with verb tenses and verbal groups: the group miss you, this one aren't, the phone have been, he know who did it, she has working in the museum

–Selected examples of difficult expressions that are not fixed yet: If people speak the same language, we would have less problems (the conditional is not well formed), I thought that the police had the reason (misconception of being right)

–Selected examples to show that word order is not (always) correct: I have at home some old things.

The same procedure as in B1 (what we have defined here as the ADF process) seems to lead to a better error comprehension and, hence, to an improved language competence while, at the same time, helping upgrade and enhance the quality (in terms of adequacy to the target language rules) of the learners' written output.

Table 3. Supporting examples of B2 errors

Nature	Examples
Negative transfer. Errors that we can apply to the interferences with the first language.	- I'm glad to write you. - Playing with video games. - Sore throats are frequently between adults and children. - The problem is that how I told you . . . - I only have one week. - Taking a cup of coffee. - Send me them. - Be friend of. - Felt in love. Close to Spanish feel in love than fall in love. - To have the reason. - Iguality.
Overgeneralization or ignorance of a rule of restriction.	- Send me them à fails to apply the infinitive construction rule. - Turn over the page à fails to produce a proper word order in the sentence, does not break the verb and preposition. Does not apply a restrictive rule of both verbs and word order. - Uses of the, do not restrict its uses. - Have for everything someone possesses or takes.
False concepts hypothesized. Misconceptions.	- Put as show. - Show as display. - Reserve as booking. - Follow as keep, carry, continue . . . any verb expressing continuity. - Stay as go or be. - To have the reason.

CONCLUSIONS

This study presents two key conclusions based on its findings. Firstly, it underscores that errors at the B1 and B2 proficiency levels are prevalent at both morphological and syntactical levels. Morphological errors

encompass inaccuracies in inflections, prepositions, articles, determiners, and other fundamental components of sentences. Conversely, syntactical errors predominantly involve misuses of the passive voice, tense, and most notably, subject-verb agreement.

Secondly, this analysis highlights that errors can often be attributed to negative language transfer or the adverse influence of learners' native language (L1) on their second language (L2) outputs. Consequently, errors serve as significant indicators of the learning process, not only for educators but also for further research in the field of SLA and ESL pedagogy. The critical examination of errors has broadened the scope of linguistic analysis in ESL, overcoming the limitations and challenges of contrastive analysis (Gass and Selinker).

From this perspective errors provide valuable insights into students' development of their L2 language system, reflecting both successful progress and areas requiring further attention. Recognizing errors as an integral aspect of the classroom environment (Rod), educators must remain adaptable, responding to the implicit cues offered by students' errors in refining syllabi and instructional approaches (Brown; Keh; Rajendran and Yunus).

However, it is essential that language specialists do not forget that over-emphasising errors may lead to learner frustration. Therefore, teachers and educators need to be able to design lesson plans that allow them to elicit the errors in a supportive and positive way that leads to error elimination. In this sense, a prolonged and systematic analysis throughout the course and an attentive revision of errors in the classroom would be necessary. Furthermore, it seems that it could be beneficial if the teacher maintained a record of errors committed by learner, which coupled with supplementary or correctional material can aid in addressing errors constructively and fostering student progress.

Viewed in this light, Error Analysis serves not only as a diagnostic tool but also as a means for evaluating the efficacy of instructional activities. By adopting a flexible and adaptive strategy informed by theoretical insights, educators can facilitate a collaborative learning environment where both teachers and learners actively engage in the process of error identification and correction (Mariappan et al.; Nayernia et al.; Rajendran and Yunus).

As we have seen in the analysis presented, there are various sources of errors when learning a second language. However, it seems clear that the main reason and most significant nature is L1 interference. Some

researchers (Ellis; Gass and Selinker), following the idea that what learners develop is never the target language but an in-between language with its own rules and ways of working, believe that errors are unavoidable in the process undergone to learn a second language, Hence, we could argue that learners are bound to a different social and cultural reality when practising and learning the L2.

Therefore, it seems imperative that teachers and educators show themselves flexible towards error correction as it has been demonstrated that being too rigid regarding errors in the classroom could be prejudicial to the learning process. Learners have diverse expectations and preferences, and teachers need to be vigilant to assess how effective their teaching is. Nevertheless, determining the appropriate timing and method for error correction poses a significant challenge. Scholars have underscored that overly correcting errors may impede learners' communicative abilities (Powell). Thus, the optimal approach to addressing errors requires a careful consideration of learners' needs and preferences, informed by a robust theoretical framework. Consequently, the ADF method proposed herein offers an effective means of integrating theoretical insights into pedagogical practice (Mariappan et al.; Nayernia et al.; Rajendran and Yunus).

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