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Classification of Spoken Errors Regarding the Communicative Competencies

Yasemin CETEREISI¹, Hanife Bensen BOSTANCI², Mustafa KURT³

Abstract

Errors are inevitable in the foreign language learning process. They are indications to educators of the unlearned knowledge and problematic areas of the learners. For this reason, it is important to investigate and classify the most frequent errors produced by non-native speakers of English. The present research investigated the spoken errors of university level learners. A classification of spoken errors using the Common European Framework for Language's (CEFL) (2001) on the communicative language competences was developed to shed light into the difficulties which learners experience in their learning progress. Data were collected from 40 EFL learners through in class observations and recordings. The results of revealed that the most prevalent errors were produced in the main category of linguistic competences. Within the linguistic competence the most prevalent errors were produced in the sub category of lexical competence followed by grammatical competence, functional competence, phonological competence, sociolinguistic competence, pragmatic competence and lastly semantic competence. The findings have implications for educators to understand the problems which learners encounter and set more realistic expectations for themselves and their learners.

Keywords: classification of errors, communicative competences, English as a foreign language, spoken errors, sociolinguistic competence.

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Introduction

Speaking is defined as using verbal and non-verbal language to put meaning together to produce and receive information (Brown, 1994; Burn & Joyce, 1997; Chaney, 1998). Learning to speak is one of the productive skills which can be challenging however, is required in order to be proficient in a second or foreign language.

According to Ellis (2003) a mistake occurs occasionally as a result of learners' actions in a class where they cannot implement what they know whereas an error is a gap in a learners understanding therefore cannot accept the rules of a second language. Edge (1989) separated mistakes into three categories which are slips, errors and attempts. It is the errors category in which students are unable to amend. When a language is learnt, it needs to be used especially in spontaneous situations therefore errors are likely to occur. Committing errors is inevitable; it means that the learners are trying to use the language in a communicative way. It also detects the areas which learners need to work on and improve in order to produce better language (Aveni, 2005; Alrabai, 2014; Spratt, Pulvernerss & Williams, 2011). In the light of the above, Corder (1967, 1981) was the first to examine errors in language learning. He explained that errors need to be identified, described, explained and evaluated. In the past, errors were corrected as they happened and no attempt was made to establish commonalities between them. Thus, Corder (1981) has shown that errors are part of the learning process for second/ foreign language (L2) learners and emphasised that teachers should understand these features in order to be able to teach a language more directly and effectively and to improve the mental frame which is set by cultural backgrounds of individuals.

Nowadays, material designers, institutions and English language teachers are showing extra emphasis on the communicative skills of the learner. To be able to do this, they base their syllabi and lesson plans on the communicative approach which combines the best in current methodology with special new features designed to make learning and teaching easier and more effective (Ahmad & Rao, 2013; Richards, 2006; Richards & Schmidt, 2013). Vocabulary and grammar are given equal importance and there is a strong focus on listening and speaking in social situations. In addition, there has been a shift from teacher classrooms and mechanical drills and examinations to learner classrooms and functional language use and examinations (Al-Seghayer, 2015; Richards, 2006). The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) has supported institutions and English language teachers to fulfill their objectives of the aforementioned issues, however, errors are still committed in the language learning classes as there seems to be a gap between what is taught and how it is used in real life situations. Students deficiency in the competences suggested in the CEFRL leads them to produce presumably more errors. It is therefore essential to ease their processes of language learning. This study aims to highlight the errors produced by Turkish male and female speakers of English as foreign

language learners (EFL) when speaking and categorize these errors according to the communicative language competencies illustrated in the CEFRL. To be able to achieve the aim, the following research question will guide this study: *What language competence errors do Turkish speakers learning English as a foreign language make when learning English?*

Literature Review

While errors are evaluated, things to consider are types of errors which are: local errors where there is only one component in the sentence therefore it may not cause a major problem (Brown, 2007) and secondly global errors which is a major problem as it interrupts learners understanding of the entire sentence (Ellis, 2008; Zheng, 2007). Ferris (2013) defined global errors as untreatable because the learner will need to develop already known knowledge of the target language to correct it. Examples include most problems with ordering words or using unnecessary words. He also defined local errors as treatable due to the level of the error which means that the learner can use the rules but in an incorrect way. Examples include spelling, use of capital letters, some grammatical usage and so on.

The term competence was viewed as knowledge of language and performance was the actual use of language in real situations (Chomsky, 1965). Communicative language competencies were introduced by Hymes (1966) as a result of Chomsky's (1965) Transformational-Generative Grammar which failed to differentiate linguistic competence and performance. Hymes (1966) disagreed with Chomsky's description of linguistic competence where he believes that children are born with the innate capacity for acquiring languages therefore Hymes (1971) argued that communicative competence is learned as a result he started ethnographic research into sociolinguistic aspects of learning. He divided the communicative competence into two sub-categories: linguistic competence and linguistic performance. Hymes (1971) defined linguistic competence as intuition and knowledge of linguistic features and structure, internal knowledge of the language form and grammar and linguistic performance was defined as real speech, practical knowledge of the linguistic structure, function and use of language and the ability to accept and correct themselves (as learners). According to Hymes (1972) communicative competence is not just grammatical competence, but it is the use of grammatical competence in real life situations. Furthermore, Widdowson (1983) mentioned that communicative competence is a broad area which he sub-divided into linguistic and sociolinguistic conventions which as he highlighted performance (real language usage) as the most important aspect of the competences. Communicative competences are a conscious and subconscious process of learner's knowledge which was then proposed as three types of namely: grammatical principles, knowledge of the social context to complete the communicative functions and knowledge of combinations of utterances with discourse (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980). Canale and

Swain (1980) further divided the components of communicative competences as linguistic competences: the language code, sociolinguistic competence: the knowledge of the cultural code, discourse competence: the use of cohesive and coherent text and strategic competence: the appropriate use of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies. Bachman's (1990) components of communicative competence differed. He stated that language competence has two sub-components which are organizational competence (includes grammar and text) and pragmatic competence (includes functional competence and sociolinguistic competence). Strategic competence is related to the goals of the conversations (whether or not the conversation is achieved) and psycho-physiological mechanisms are the understanding and production of language. In addition, Bachman and Palmer (1996) proposed a model which included grammatical knowledge including vocabulary, morphology, syntax, phonology, and graphology. Including, pragmatic and strategic knowledge.

The CEFRL (2001) is an assessment for learning and teaching of languages. According to CEFRL (2001) the main components of the communicative competence is the linguistic competences, sociolinguistic competences and pragmatic competences. Linguistic competences are the incomplete knowledge and production of language. There are six sub categories to linguistic competences which are lexical competence, grammatical competence, semantic competence, orthographic competence, phonological competence and orthoepic competence. Lexical competence is the learners' knowledge, ability and the usage of vocabulary involving lexical elements that include fixed expressions, single word forms and phrasal idioms and, grammatical elements such as articles, quantifiers, demonstratives, personal pronouns, possessives, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions and particles. Grammatical competence is the ability to use the grammatical areas of language. The description includes elements, categories, classes, structures, descriptive processes and relations. It also has two sub categories: morphology and syntax. Morphology is the organization of words such as, roots or stems, affixes and, words formation such as, simple words, complex words, compound words, vowel alteration, consonant modification, irregular forms, suppletion and zero forms. Syntax is the organizing and placing of words into sentences that have a set of rules which includes elements, categories, classes, structures and processes. Semantic competence is the learner's awareness and control of the organization of meaning, such as lexical semantics which are relating word to context. Phonological competence is the perception and production of phonemes, phonemes, composition of words, sentence phonetics and phonetic reduction. Orthographic competence is the skill and knowledge of the perception and production of a written text such as the layout, paragraphing, spelling and punctuation and orthoepic competence involves the knowledge of spelling of words and the use of dictionaries to check the pronunciation of words and the ability to resolve ambiguity in context.

Sociolinguistic competence deals with the social aspect of language. There are five subcategories of sociolinguistic competence. Firstly linguistic markers of social relations such as the use and choice of greetings, addressing people, conventions of turn taking and use of expletives. Secondly, politeness convention such as positive politeness, negative politeness, appropriate use of manners and impoliteness. Thirdly, expressions of folk wisdom such as proverbs and idioms. Fourth is the register difference such as formal, informal, intimate, and familiar or neutral language. The final subcategory is dialect and accent such as social class, regional provenance, ethnicity and occupational group.

Finally, pragmatic competences involve the learners' knowledge of the principles of the language which includes discourse competence and functional competence. Discourse competence is the arrangement of sentences in sequence to make the sentence coherent and cohesive. On the other hand, functional competence is the spoken and written communication for the communicative purpose and functions that have an internal structure according to formal and informal patterns of social interaction which is called schemata. Firstly, micro-functions include, seeking factual information, expressing and finding out attitudes, suggestions, requests, warnings, advice, asking, help, invitations, and offers. Others include social inventions; greeting, attracting attention, communication repair secondly, macro-functions which are functional use of spoken and written discourse used in the sequence of sentences finally, interaction schemata which is exchange of communication(CEFR, 2001).

Studies on Communicative Competences

Vu Van Tuan (2017) investigated linguistic/ grammatical and discourse communicative competences at five universities in Vietnam. The aim of the study was to find out whether there is a correlation between linguistic/ grammatical and discourse competences. The results have shown that students parents whose academic level is high have better performance as they would have rich exposure to English language. Wahyuni and Hayati (2014) examined linguistic competence and speaking performance of an English education study program of students at Sriwijaya University. The aim of the study was to find out whether there was a correlation between linguistic competence and speaking performance and if this could contribute linguistic competence to speaking performance. The results revealed that there was a significant correlation between the students' linguistic competence and their speaking performance. Furthermore, Lasala (2014) studied the communicative competence of secondary senior students. The findings revealed that the level of communicative competence of students speaking and writing skills were related however they differed in terms of numbers (difference between oral and written skills). Another conclusion drawn from the study was the fact that sociolinguistic competence of the learners could still be improved.

Methodology

Research Design and Procedure

This qualitative research is designed to determine and examine the Turkish speakers' spoken errors when learning English. Qualitative research involves discovering the characteristics of the language as well as emerging patterns, observing the meaning in language and a critical reflection can be drawn from the observations (Tech, 1990). According to Maxwell (2013) a qualitative approach is designed to focus on a group of people and it highlights descriptions. Descriptions in this study included learners' errors which were observed, recorded and notes were taken in the form of a diary which were then transcribed and placed in their competencies (see *Figure 1*).

This study was carried out at the Department of English Language Teaching (ELT) in a private university in North Cyprus. Two compulsory speaking classes were observed, recorded and notes were taken in a diary. The content of the classes included classroom discussions, tasks and exams (mid-term and final exams). All of the participants participated in class discussions and attended exams (mid-term and final exams) which were a part of their courses. The classes were recorded for a semester which meant recording six hours (50 minutes each hour) of teaching each week for sixteen weeks in total excluding the mid-term and final examination weeks. Recording information is a crucial element of a qualitative approach as it is required in observations and describing the notes which were observed (Creswell, 1994).

Participants and Sampling

Forty students studying in the Department of English Language Teaching at a private university in North Cyprus constituted the participants of this study. Convenient sampling was employed in this research which includes people who are willing to participate (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). All of the participants were above 18 and were Turkish and Turkish Cypriot in origin. In other words, all the participants spoke Turkish as their native language. The participants were informed and consented to the observations and recordings. Although the participants agreed to participate in the study, their real names were anonymised in order to hide their identities.

Data Collection Tools

The spoken data were collected continuously from EFL classes. As part of their bachelor's programme learners were required to attend the classes. Observations, recordings and diary entries were used to collect the data (Saldana, 2016). Observations enable the researcher to record natural occurring data and record

the data as it occurs as well as having the first-hand experience in being exposed to the language and enables note taking of any unusual occurrence which the recorder cannot achieve (Creswell, 1994; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Recordings were taken for the six hours of lectures during the semester. Recording spoken language can be played back and analysed thoroughly. It provides natural occurring data of many people speaking at the same time (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Recording is a necessary tool in evaluating large amount of speech data (Gibbon, Moore & Winski, 1997).

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is a non-linear process (Bazeley, 2013; Glesne, 2006; Silverman, 2016). After the observations and recordings, the data was transcribed and the errors were explicitly analysed and placed into different competencies using the CEFR model. Moreover, notes were taken in the form of a diary with specific dates and times so they were also analysed with the intention that no detail would be missed. Figure 1 illustrates the themes which were coded. In addition to this, notes were taken in class in a form of a diary. In this case no detail was ignored. In this project, the stages of CEFFL's language competencies were used to categorize then analyse the data (see *Figure 1*).

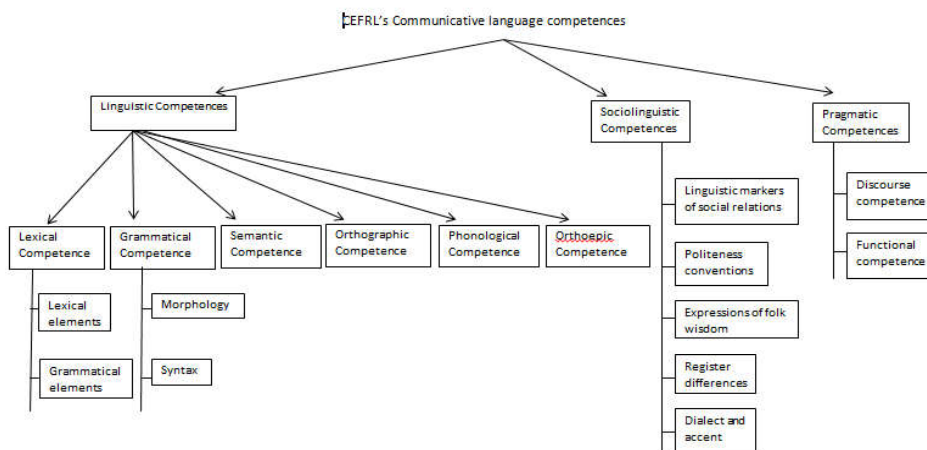


Figure 1 Communicative language competences

Results and Discussion

In this section, the results of the analysis of the spoken data will be presented indicating the errors committed by the EFL Turkish learners among the competencies presented in *Figure 1*.

Classification of the Main Competences of the CEFRL

All of the errors that the participants produced were analysed according to their communicative competence (see *Figure 1* and CEFRL, 2001). It was revealed that in total there were 119 errors produced orally by the learners. The analysis of the spoken data showed that the most prevalent error types produced in the participants' spoken language were the errors of linguistic competence (N= 86, %=72), followed by pragmatic competence (N=24, %=20) and sociolinguistic competence (N=9, %=8) (see *Table 1*). In other words, the participants of this study mostly lacked linguistic competences (illustrated in *Table 1*).

Table 1: Main Competences of the CEFRL

Competences	n	%
Linguistic	86	72
Pragmatic	24	20
Sociolinguistic	9	8
Total	119	100

Subcategories of the Linguistic Competences

The analysis of the spoken data showed that the most prevalent error types produced in the participants' spoken language with regard to their linguistic competences were the errors of lexical, grammatical, phonological and semantic competences. The errors of lexical competence (N=39, %=45) outnumbered the errors of grammatical competence (N=30, %=35), the errors of phonological competence (N=13, %=15) and the errors of semantic competence (N=4, %=5). The study focused on spoken language regarding competences therefore it did not include any orthographic or orthoepic errors as these type of errors occur in a learners written language (see *Table 2*).

Table 2: Linguistic Competences

Categories	n	%
Lexical	39	45
Grammatical	30	35
Semantic	4	5
Orthographic	None	None
Phonological	13	15
Orthoepic	None	None
Total	86	72

Lexical competences. As before mentioned the most prevalent errors produced in the spoken language of the learners regarding the competencies were committed in the main category of lexical competence (N=39, %=45). The most prevalent errors produced in the main category of lexical competence was seen in the sub categories of grammatical elements (N=31, %=80) and lexical elements (N= 8, %=20). The results indicated that the participants mainly lack knowledge regarding the grammatical elements among the subcategory of lexical competence related to the main category of linguistic competences (see *Figure 1*).

Grammatical elements. According to the CEFRL's (2001) lexical competences model, the grammatical elements included are: articles, quantifiers, demonstratives, personal pronouns, question words and relatives, possessives, prepositions, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions and particles. With regard to the subsub category of grammatical elements (N=31, %=79), the most prevalent errors produced in this category was seen in the absence of prepositions (N=7, %=18). This was evident in the words of John, 'everyone looks *M* you or in my opinion people like *M* be famous' followed by the incorrect use of prepositions (N=6, %=15). An example of this is 'everybody has a different view *in* (on) this topic about schools' or 'students would be faced *to* (with) some difficulties if computer's didn't exist' (Dave); the absence of the definite article 'a' (N=5, %=13). This was apparent in the words of Liam 'we should apply *M* different method/ technique for the clients or another job of *M* councilor is to create a working relationship with the client'; overuse of the indefinite article (N=5, %=13). To illustrate 'when we all go *the* home we always use mobile phones or these people create their own principles in *the* life' (Adam); absence of conjunctions (N=4, %=10) seen in the words of Veli 'looking at it on paper helps students, some people can't understand *M* (until) they see it or in the past, some people didn't have shoes *M* (so) they had to make shoes'; overuse of the definite article 'a' (N=2, %=5), which was present in the

words of Allan ‘I’m presenting *a* little research on a technology’, ‘if people make *a* friends in a restaurant and they want to keep notes on who they met then there are journals which can be used to write all thinks’ (Darren) and the absence of the object pronoun ‘it’ (N=2, %=5). This was apparent in the words of Derek ‘I remember *M* in general but can’t say for sure or you can show *M* at the therapy’. The findings are in line with the findings of Barman (2014) who stated that there is lack of learner knowledge of grammatical elements and that learner errors vary and some learners are incompetent in certain grammatical areas than others.

Lexical elements. The second subcategory of the linguistic competence model is lexical elements which includes fixed expressions (exponents of language functions), phrasal idioms, words or phrases, phrasal verbs or compound prepositions and fixed collocations (words which are used together). The most prevalent errors produced in the main subsub category of lexical elements (N=8, %=21) was seen in the use of singular instead of plural noun (N=3, %=8) This was depicted in the words of Penny ‘*councilor* should not show her feelings or he mentions that he has some problem’ and the overuse of the uncountable (N=3, %=8) which was seen in the words of Jane ‘she *were* in school and did her exam (was) or parents must limit children watching *violences* because it effects them’ followed by the incorrect use of the noun (N=2, %=5) which was exemplified in the words of Sue ‘Student A: Wow! Nice home. Student B: This is the *home* my uncle built’. The findings are somewhat similar to the findings of Yule (2006) and Kapeliuket al. (1994) who found that in Semitic languages singular instead of plural is more preferred as numbers.

Grammatical Competence. The CEFRL (2001) grammatical competence includes two sub-categories; syntax and morphology. In the main category of grammatical competence (N=30, %=35) the most prevalent errors produced was in the sub category of syntax (N=25, %=83) which according to the CEFRL (2001) deals with elements, classes, structures, processes and relations. The other sub-category: morphology (N=5, %=17) deals with roots or stems, affixes including word-forming affixes and inflectional affixes. The findings are in line with the findings of Teng and Sinwongsuwat (2015) that put forth that learners are more likely to concentrate on the end result which is passing exams therefore they do not consider learning the correct structures, only the end result.

Syntax. In the subsub category of syntax (N=25, %=83), the most prevalent errors produced in this category was seen in the use of the verb to be (N=9, %=30) This was evident in the words of Liam ‘shoes *is* (are) part of a women or people that go to private schools are may get low grade’, followed by the wrong use of the present simple tense (N=5, %=16). An example of this was produced in the words of Jane ‘if the councilor agrees that he *have* (has) a problem then he *have* (has)’, absence of the future tense (N=4, %= 13) which was depicted in the words of Leyla ‘today we are *M* talk about iPhone or I’m *M* speak about the disadvantages of coffee’, absence of the ‘-ing’ form (N=3, %=10). This was seen in the words of Mary ‘*watch* T.V programs makes children violent or I will be *speak* about social

media', absence of the verb to be (N=2, %=7). To illustrate 'I think that being famous *M* bad' (Hayley) and 'My presentation *M* about Person Centered Therapy' (Karen) and using present continuous instead of present simple tense (N=2, %=7), this was seen in the words of Janet 'when people see you in the street they *are looking* at you' or 'people *are looking* at the wrong side of things, they should be positive'. This finding is in line with the findings of Steedman (1989) and Auer (2009) who stated that learners perception of syntactic structures are very narrow therefore errors are likely to occur.

Morphology. In the main subsub category of morphology (N=5, %=17), the most prevalent errors produced in this category was seen in the absence of the word-forming affix (N=3, %=10). This was apparent in the words of Valery 'she *hope* doesn't make the same mistake (hopefully) or come in the class *quiet* as I will be doing my presentation (quietly)', and the inflectional affix (N=2, %=7). This was seen in the words of Tom 'the man is *sleep* on the sofa (sleeping) and he is *work* at a clothes store as a sales assistant (working)'. The findings are in line with the findings of Tabatabaei (2011); Griva and Anastasiou (2009) who stated that learners perform well and they are able to connect morphological awareness in English.

Phonological competence. With regard to the errors committed in the sub category of phonological competence (N=13, %=15) which includes sound-units, phonetic features, phonetic composition of words, sentence phonetics and phonetic reduction (CEFRL, 2001). The only committed errors in this sub-category was incorrect pronunciation (N=13, %=11). This was seen in the words of Gill '/kæp.tʃəd/ instead of /kæp.tʃər/ (capture) they had to *capture* the photo that day', '/web.sait/ instead of /web.sart/ (website) (Louise), 'A *website* can help you find new information' and '/ke:/ instead of /ki:/he should get the *key* to be there before the client' (Adam). The finding is in line with the findings of Fabre-Merchan, et al., (2017) who stated that learners produce their own phonemes leading to misunderstanding. Learners lack phonemic awareness and decrease their ability to produce the English language.

Semantic competence. In the sub category of semantic competence (N=4, %=5), referred to in the CEFRL (2001) as the relation of words to the general context, such as reference and connotation or inter-lexical relations such as, synonymy/ antonymy, collocation, part-whole relations, componential analysis or translation equivalence. The only errors committed by the learners were related to the relation of word to general context (N=4, %=3) to illustrate Darren 'you're very *helpable*, thank you (helpful)' and 'in all *honestness* I can say that I don't believe that he is trustable (honesty)'. Awwad (2017) claimed that EFL learners do not understand and comprehend semantic features. However, the EFL learners of this study committed few errors in this subcategory compared to the other categories which contradicts to the recent claim of Awwad (2017).

Sociolinguistic Competences

In the main category of sociolinguistic competence (N=9, %=8), the CEFRL (2001) pointed out that it includes linguistic markers for social relations, politeness conventions, expressions of folk wisdom, register difference and dialect and accent (see Figure 1). However, the EFL learners of this study did not produce any errors in register difference, expressions of folk wisdom or dialect and accent (see Table 3).

Table 3: Sociolinguistic Competences

Competences	n	%
Politeness conventions	7	77
Linguistic markers for social relations	2	22
Expressions of folk wisdom	None	None
Register difference	None	None
Dialect and accent	None	None
Total	9	8

The most prevalent errors produced in this category were seen in politeness conventions (N=7, %=78). This was apparent in the words of Suzan 'Student: *miss how much money do you get?* Teacher: you don't ask questions as such', 'student A: you look smart today! Student B: *So!*' (Adam) and 'Student A: I brought this for you as you never bring one (a pen) Student B: *No...no thanks*' and linguistic markers for social relations (N=2, %=22). This was evident in the words of Frank 'Student A: *Hello teacher* Teacher: Ms Smith, ok. Student B: Yes. Sorry'. The findings are in line with the findings of Rabab'ah (2015) who stated that communicative strategies affect oral proficiency level and that those students who have increased awareness, are in control of their fluency and they can overcome communication barriers.

Pragmatic Competences

In the main category of pragmatic competences (N=24, %=20), the participants of this study committed errors regarding discourse competence (N=8, %=33) and functional competence (N=16, %=67) (see Table 4).

Table 4: Pragmatic Competences

Competences	n	%
Discourse	8	33
Functional	16	67
Total	24	20

Discourse competence. The most prevalent errors produced in the subsub category of discourse competence (N=8, %= 33) was the use of coherence (N=3, %=12.5). This was seen in the words of Melisa ‘Student A: *it’s hot in here.* Student B: *I’ll close the door*’ and ellipsis (N=3, %= 12.5) which was evident in the words of Janet ‘Student A: *We don’t have enough for everyone.* Student B: *I’ll make more*’ followed by the use of cohesion (N=2, %= 8). This was evident in the words of Mark ‘*I graduated from Oxford. I have a lot of students I am successful. When I’m walking anywhere I have a lot of students*’. The findings are in line with the findings of Han and Burgucu-Tazegül (2016) and Wyner (2014) who argue that culture has an affect on language usage therefore discourse competence varies from culture-to-culture.

Functional competence. The subsub category of functional competence includes seeking factual information, expressing and finding out attitudes, suasion, socializing, structuring discourse, communication repair, the functional use of spoken discourse, interaction schemata which is moving to a place, establishing contact, selecting goods/services, identifying options, discoursing pros and cons, exchanging goods for payment and leave-taking (CEFRL, 2001). In this subcategory the learners committed sixteen errors (%=67). The most prevalent errors produced in this category were pause fillers (N=7, %=29.5) which was evident in the words of Roxanne ‘*my presentation is about...erm...Person Centered Therapy*’ and transfer and pause fillers (N=7, %=29.5). This was obvious in the words of Derek ‘*you know erm...I mean...actually she is not a good example of erm...successful person*’, followed by the circumlocution (N=2, %=8). An example of this was seen in the words of Petrina ‘*the extra room in that house is for guests for sleeping (bedroom)*’. These findings are somewhat similar to the findings of Zakaria and Mugaddam (2015) who pointed out that some learners are able to use simple language in context whereas other learners can produce and interpret meaningful utterances.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the results for the spoken data has shown that the most prevalent errors are produced in the lexical competence followed by grammatical competence, functional competence, phonological competence, sociolinguistic competence and semantic competence. However, there were no errors produced by learners in the orthographic competence or orthoepic competence for the spoken data as these two competencies are based on written data. Lexical competence consists of two subcategories which are lexical elements and grammatical elements and the results have revealed that learners produce more grammatical elements errors than lexical elements errors especially in the use of articles. Possible reasons for this could be due to the fact that the Turkish language does not have articles therefore learners either overuse or not use articles. The findings with regard to the grammatical competence suggest that the most prevalent errors were produced in the sub category of syntax more specifically, the use of verb to be. A possible reason for is that in the Turkish language there are root words instead of separate verbs.

Recommendations

It is recommended that research is done with a larger population and replicated at a different state using different age ranges to see the range of errors that different age ranges make. In addition, this research can be replicated in another foreign country to find out the kind of mistakes learners make in other countries and it would provide guidance for the instructors in understanding the errors and finding ways to overcome those errors. This study has implications for syllabus designers and instructors in general, and English teachers of Turkish learners in particular.

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