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**A Pedagogical Handout  
On**

# **Error Analysis**

**For 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Master's Students, (Third Semester)**

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## **General Introduction**

This course offers a thorough and structured study of Error Analysis (EA), bringing together theoretical grounding and hands-on research practice in the areas of Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Rather than simply cataloguing what learners get wrong, it invites students to think carefully about why errors occur and what they reveal about the learning process. Built on the linguistic foundations laid at undergraduate level, this Master's course takes students deeper into the question of how learner errors are understood, described, and put to productive pedagogical use at different stages of language development.

For much of the twentieth century, making errors in a second language was seen as something to be stamped out, a sign of bad habits and poor learning. Behaviourist teaching methods aimed to prevent errors through drill and repetition, treating them as evidence of failure rather than progress. That view changed decisively with the publication of S. P. Corder's landmark article "The Significance of Learners' Errors" (1967). Corder argued, compellingly, that errors are not random accidents but systematic clues about how a learner is building their knowledge of the target language. Since then, errors have come to be seen as valuable evidence of the cognitive work going on beneath the surface, essential material for both researchers trying to understand SLA and teachers working in the classroom.

EA does not stand alone, it is deeply connected to other major frameworks in SLA, particularly the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis and Interlanguage theory. This course traces how thinking about learner errors has shifted over time, moving away from behaviourist habit-formation accounts toward cognitive and mentalist explanations that place the learner's internal language system at the centre. A great deal of attention is devoted to the concept of Interlanguage, the evolving, rule-governed system that learners construct as they move toward the target

language, and to the related phenomenon of fossilisation, whereby certain features of this system can become resistant to change.

The course is organised into a sequence of lectures that move progressively from theoretical foundations to practical skills. Students will work through the full EA procedure, collecting learner data, identifying and describing errors, classifying them, and interpreting what they mean. To support this work, the course introduces three major classification frameworks: the Linguistic Category Classification, the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, and the Communicative Effect Classification. Together, these give students a versatile toolkit for examining learner language from multiple angles.

Throughout, the course keeps one eye firmly on the classroom. Whether students go on to teach, research, or design language programmes, the insights from EA have direct implications for how they will work. Questions about when and how to give corrective feedback, how to sequence grammar instruction, and how to interpret learner performance are all informed by what EA has to offer. The Algerian EFL setting, where learners navigate Arabic, French, and English simultaneously, makes these questions particularly rich and relevant.

This handout has been designed with active engagement in mind. Each lecture combines theoretical explanation with real examples of learner language, guided analysis tasks, and moments for personal reflection. Students are encouraged to bring their own classroom experiences to the material, the examples and observations that mean most to them will often be the ones that make the theory come alive. Approaching the course with curiosity and a willingness to question familiar assumptions will make all the difference.

## **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain the theoretical foundations and historical development of Error Analysis within the broader context of SLA.
- Distinguish between errors and mistakes and apply key concepts such as competence, performance, interlanguage, and fossilisation.
- Identify, describe, and classify learner errors using major taxonomies in Error Analysis.
- Analyse the sources of errors, including interlingual and intralingual factors.
- Apply the five-step Error Analysis procedure to authentic learner data.
- Design appropriate data collection tools for conducting error analysis research.
- Evaluate the pedagogical implications of Error Analysis in EFL contexts, particularly in Algeria.
- Compare Error Analysis with Contrastive Analysis and situate it within Interlanguage theory.

## **Course Prerequisites**

To ensure success in this course, students are expected to have:

- A solid understanding of basic linguistic concepts, particularly in grammar, syntax, and morphology.
- Familiarity with fundamental notions in Second Language Acquisition (SLA).
- The ability to analyse simple language data and identify basic grammatical structures.
- An introductory knowledge of research methods in linguistics or language studies.

## **Assessment**

### **• Final Examination (50%)**

A written examination at the end of the semester assessing: theoretical understanding of Error Analysis; the ability to analyse unseen learner data; and application of the five-step Error Analysis procedure.

### **• Continuous Assessment (50%)**

Based on: attendance and active participation in lectures and tutorial sessions; completion of written assignments and mini-analyses; and a mid-semester Error Analysis project.

**Final Average:** Final Average = (Final Exam Grade + Continuous Assessment Grade) / 2. A minimum grade of 10/20 is required to pass the course.

### **Formative Assessment (Non-graded)**

To support student success, formative activities are organised throughout the semester. In-class activities include: guided error analysis tasks; group discussions and data interpretation; and practice with classification frameworks. Independent work includes: reading assignments; collection of learner language samples; and preparation for classroom discussions.

## Lecture 1: Introduction to Error Analysis

### 1.1 Definition of Error Analysis

Error Analysis (EA), also referred to as errors analysis, is an area of applied linguistics that focuses on the systematic analysis of errors made by learners when learning a second or foreign language. The goals of EA include identifying, describing, classifying, and explaining error types (deviations from the target language) in learners' output (both written and spoken). The intent behind this type of analysis is to provide information to aid understanding of the nature of second language acquisition (SLA) as well as to provide teachers and curriculum developers with empirically-based data concerning the difficulties experienced by learners.

The establishment of this field can be traced back to a pivotal article by S. P. Corder entitled "The Significance of Learners' Errors," published in the *International Review of Applied Linguistics* in 1967. In Corder's view, learner errors should not be regarded as random mistakes but as systematic and important indicators of learners' developing knowledge about the target language. His analysis of learners' errors resulted in a major shift in research direction from seeing error as a problem to be solved and eliminated, to seeing error as a window into the cognitive processes of learners that generate language. Error analysis is the systematic empirical investigation into learner language with a view to identifying, describing, classifying, explaining, and evaluating those forms of deviation which have been produced by L2 learners. According to James (1998, p. 1), error analysis is "the process of identifying the frequency, nature, cause, and effect of language not used successfully."

## 1.2 Importance of Studying Learner Errors

The systematic study of learner errors matters for several interconnected reasons, spanning theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical domains.

- Insight from the theory: While errors provide insight into how learners use mental systems and reasoning when creating their speech growth (Corder 1967) , they also show where learners are compared to their developed English as a foreign language (EFL) Developed Language; also known as transitional competence (TC).
- Diagnostic function of errors: Looking at error types over a group indicates persistent instructional areas. By understanding error types teachers will be able to target their instruction more directly and create materials based on current difficulties while developing EFL language.
- Evaluative function of error types and frequencies: Types/frequencies of errors may serve as measures of where learners are in their development. By tracking changes in types of errors over time researchers can document development and adapt instruction accordingly.
- Learner interface: EA sees learners growing systems as coherent and permanent; unlike more traditional approaches where learners' output is compared against an ideal standard (typically native speakers) and treated as deficient (Ellis 2008).
- Humanistic benefit from errors in the classroom: Classroom environments that view errors as natural parts of the learning process and not as shameful failures will improve chances of reducing learner anxiety, encouraging risk-taking with language use and improving students' autonomy toward long-term use of EFL.

This point is especially important for those students who wish to become EFL teachers in Algeria. Students in Algerian universities frequently experience high levels of foreign language anxiety, due in large part to an educational culture that has historically treated errors as failures. If teachers can come to understand errors from a theoretical perspective, they will be better positioned to transform their classroom practice accordingly.

### **1.3 Role of Error Analysis in SLA Research**

The focus of SLA research within Error Analysis has had a landmark position in the development of intellectual ideas about second language acquisition (SLA). Prior to the establishment of EA, Contrastive Analysis (CA) as a hypothesised explanation about second language acquisition was the primary model; this model predicted potential learner difficulties via a systematic comparison between the first language and target language of the learner. EA offered an alternative to the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis and utilised an empirical, inductive methodology to analyse learner error, describing rather than predicting errors made by learners and explaining why they were made.

Through this methodological approach, EA established two major constructs that continue to influence SLA theory: the concept of interlanguage (Selinker, 1972), which posits that second language learners develop (or create) linguistic systems in transitional steps while they progress to the target language, and the idea of developmental sequences, or the stages by which L2 acquisition occurs, and which are largely independent of L1 transfer. These two constructs have become foundational to modern theories of how second languages are acquired.

The present-day methodology utilized in EA has been developed using learner corpus research, computational methods of error annotation and cross-linguistic influence studies; however, the essential principles of EA methodology from the 1960s and 70s continue to guide inquiries and classroom implementation of SLA.

### **Activity 1**

Before reading further, write one paragraph (approximately 100 words) describing your own experience of making errors in English. Which errors did you make most often? How did your teachers respond to them? How did this make you feel? Keep this reflection to hand as you work through the module, it will give your theoretical reading a concrete personal anchor.

## Lecture 2: Historical Background of Error Analysis

### 2.1 The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)

In order to fully comprehend the importance of Error Analysis, it is important to have an understanding of the theoretical background out of which it came. Structural linguistics was, at this point in time (i.e., 1940s and 1950s), the primary paradigm in both linguistics and language teaching/learning. Alongside the structuralist paradigm one can find behaviourism. Thus, from a behaviourist standpoint, language is acquired through the formation of habits (i.e., L2 acquisition occurs when one sets aside old (first language) habits in favour of new (second language) habits). Therefore, error, being indicative of 'bad' habits, should be avoided through excessive, repeated drilling, the basis of the Audio-Lingual Method of teaching.

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH), as described in detail by Robert Lado in his 1957 book entitled *Linguistics Across Cultures* is based on the very same premises outlined above. According to Lado, the major source of interference (or difficulty) in learning L2 can be attributed to the use of the learner's native tongue (i.e., L1) when attempting to acquire a second tongue (i.e., L2). If the learner's native tongue and second tongue are similar with respect to structures, there will usually be ease of acquisition (i.e., positive transfer); however, if the structures of the two tongues differ, the learner will likely experience difficulty (i.e., negative transfer/interference). Thus, the applied linguist can determine, in advance of instruction, how to help the learner acquire L2 by systematically contrasting the phonology, grammar & lexicon of the two tongues.

CAH was developed with both a strong and weak version. The strong version theorized that all errors by L2 learners could be predicted from a grammatical comparison of L1 and L2, but this theory was not empirically supported. The weak version claimed that although errors could be

predicted using an L1–L2 comparison, only previously observed errors could be predicted using an L1–L2 comparison, which was much less useful as a predictive or instructional tool.

## **2.2 Limitations of Contrastive Analysis**

By the late 1960s and into the 1970s, mounting empirical and theoretical evidence had seriously undermined the CAH. Four critical limitations emerged:

- **Credibility for prediction:** The research done with respect to predictions made through Contrastive Analysis (CA), indicated that CA based predictions are not dependable. There were numerous errors identified through CA; however, these errors that CA predicted to occur did not happen. In the same respect, many errors found in the learner's performance were not accounted for based upon the fact that these errors had no equivalence or direct connection to their first language. Therefore, they could not be predicted by CA and were instead referred to as "Non-Transfer errors."
- **Errors defined as non-contrastive:** Many of the learner's errors are classified as "intralingual errors," which shows that even though an error may occur, they were nevertheless not attributed to or due to L1 interference. For example, Richards (1971) provided evidence that there were numerous instances of Errors that had occurred due to a strategy based upon difficulties that are inherent in the process of acquiring the second language, which include the application of originally generated rules.
- **Universal Epistemology:** The findings of Dulay and Burt (1974) further demonstrated that L2 learners, regardless of their first language (L1) backgrounds, followed a similar sequence when learning English grammatical morphemes. These findings support the notion that there

are universal language learning patterns that exist and can be generally applied in L2 acquisition, regardless of L1 transfer.

- Theoretical incompatibility: The emergence of Chomskyan Generative Linguistics during the late 1950's and early 1960's effectively challenged the fundamental behaviourist underlying principles of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH). If we treat language as a creative, rule based cognitive faculty, then it is inappropriate to view second language acquisition primarily as a series of habit formations.

### **2.3 The Emergence of Error Analysis**

Corder's 1967 paper initiated a paradigm shift. While Corder's argument was deceptively simple, that errors made by learners are of considerable significance or importance, it was also revolutionary. Errors are not random noise or a failure of a learner's habit-forming process; they are systematic evidence that the learner has a current hypothesis about his/her second language (TL). Thus, in the act of studying errors, we are able to also study the process of acquiring language as we study the learner's production (actual) of the TL.

Corder's approach to studying errors was inductive rather than deductive. Instead of making predictions from a theoretical framework, Corder suggested that researchers collect representative samples of learner output and then examine the actual errors present in that data. He also introduced an important conceptual distinction between errors and mistakes (discussed in Section 3), which provided EA with a principled empirical basis for the study of learner language.

The decade following the publication of Corder's paper was a period of rapid expansion in EA research as Richards (1971, 1974), Dulay and Burt (1974), and Selinker (1972) increased the

empirical basis for EA through the development of new taxonomies of errors, sources and types of errors, and the establishment of an empirical foundation of interlanguage studies building upon Corder's study of errors.

## **2.4 Key Scholars and Their Contributions**

### **2.4.1 S. P. Corder (1918–1990)**

In the study of modern Error Analysis, Pit Corder is properly seen to be one of the original founders. His 1967 IRAL publication laid out three long-lasting principles. (a) Errors show systematic and significant proof that an individual is going through the stages of the learning process; (b) Errors will provide a representation of the current transitional competence of the learner; (c) Errors can provide useful information for teachers, researchers, and learners. In more recent works, including 'Idiosyncratic Dialects and Error Analysis'(1971) as well as the book, *Introducing Applied Linguistics* (1973), he has provided a detailed indication of some of the methodological procedures of EA as well as introduced the concept of the reconstructed target utterance, which is a tool for identifying learner intents. He also made the very significant assertion of the 'built-in syllabus', which proposes that the learner follows a sequence of language acquisition that is internally governed and may, therefore, not match the order given by the instructor.

### **2.4.2 Jack Richards**

A major advancement to the field of SLA (Second Language Acquisition) was provided by Jack Richards (1971, 1974) in his contributions of a great many learner errors which could not be attributed to L1 transfer. His research on types of errors (i.e., intralingual vs. developmental) raised the possibility of strategies for errors such as overgeneralization of L2 rules, a lack of awareness of restriction of rules, and an incomplete application of rules. Additionally, Richards' work demonstrated that errors arising out of L2 learning were generated by the L2 learning process itself and therefore greatly expanded the understanding of EA (Error Analysis) beyond that of the L1 interference model.

### **2.4.3 Larry Selinker**

One of the most frequently cited resources within the SLA field is Larry Selinker's (1972) paper 'Interlanguage' published in IRAL. Selinker proposed a new linguistic system that is independent of both an L1 and TL (Target Language) would be developed by adult L2 learners, which was later coined 'interlanguage'. Additionally, he introduced the idea of fossilization, where some linguistic features of the interlanguage would become fixed at a non-target-like level (e.g., they would not approximate the TL) cementing fossilization as one of the most contentious phenomena in contemporary SLA.

### **2.4.4 Heidi Dulay and Marina Burt**

Dulay & Burt (1974) published the Surface Strategy Taxonomy, which classifies errors based on how surface structure is altered, and carried out successful empirical research on morpheme acquisition order by children learning their second language. Their results support the

theory that morpheme acquisition occurs in a similar way for children of different first languages (Spanish & Chinese) learning English.

#### 2.4.5 Carl James

Carl James' *Errors in Language Learning and Use* (1998) is recognized as the most comprehensive and theoretically advanced analysis of the subject of EA. In this work, he synthesizes over 30 years of EA research, develops a detailed error taxonomy, and critically assesses the methodology and limitations of *Errors in Language Learning and Use* as methodologies, and examines the relationship of EA to broader frameworks of applied linguistics. This book is essential reading for any advanced student of EA.

#### 2.4.6 Rod Ellis

Rod Ellis has been one of the most prolific contributors to the field of SLA over the past few decades. His book *The Study of Second Language Acquisition* (1994 and 2008) offers an integrated overview of the field of SLA and incorporates EA findings into a larger theoretical structure. Moreover, his research into the role of corrective feedback (Ellis et al., 2006) addresses the pedagogical ramifications of EA research.

**Table 1. Contrastive Analysis vs. Error Analysis: A Comparative Overview**

Feature	Contrastive Analysis	Error Analysis
<b>Theoretical basis</b>	Behaviourism; structural linguistics	Mentalism; generative linguistics
<b>Primary aim</b>	Predict errors before instruction	Describe and explain observed errors
<b>Method</b>	Deductive: compare L1 & L2 → predict	Inductive: collect data → classify → explain

<b>Error status</b>	Sign of failure; to be prevented	Evidence of the learning process
<b>Role of the L1</b>	Central, main source of all errors	One factor among several
<b>Key scholar</b>	Robert Lado (1957)	S. P. Corder (1967)
<b>Key weakness</b>	Over- and under-predicts errors	Cannot account for learner avoidance

**Reflection Question**

*Why do you think the publication of Corder's 1967 article was such a turning point? What specifically did it change about how researchers and teachers thought about learner errors? How does it relate to broader shifts in linguistics during the same period? Can you think of any educational contexts in Algeria where the behaviourist attitude toward errors still persists today?*

## Lecture 3: Key Concepts in Error Analysis

### 3.1 Error vs. Mistake

Error Analysis includes two fundamental error types—Errors and Mistakes—which will be defined below. The difference between Error and Mistake was first introduced by Corder (1967) using Chomsky's (1965) distinction between Competence and Performance. The importance of this relationship is that it has major methodological implications.

#### 3.1.1 Errors

An example of an Error is the systematic deviation of the rules of the Target Language (TL) due to inaccessible rules (i.e., the learner has a gap in their underlying linguistic competence). This means that the learner does not have the appropriate rule (e.g., to self-correct), since it is not available, so they lack the means to produce the correct form. Since the learner produces Error forms in a consistent manner regardless of the context in which they occur, this is what makes the Errors useful; they will demonstrate how the learner's interlanguage grammar currently operates. Errors will provide the foundation for Error Analysis data.

#### Examples of Systematic Errors

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**She don't know the answer. [3rd-person singular agreement not acquired]**

---

**I have seen him yesterday. [Present perfect incorrectly used with past time adverb]**

---

**He suggested to go. [Incorrect verb complementation: suggest + gerund required]**

---

**The informations are very useful. [Uncountable noun incorrectly pluralised]**

---

**I am agree with you. [Copula addition, transfer from French/Arabic]**

---

### 3.1.2 Mistakes

Mistakes may not usually be caused due to lack or absence of knowledge; however, they can be caused by incorrect performance. Mistakes can occur in the performance of both learners as well as native speakers. Common factors such as: being tired or distracted, feeling anxious, having memory limitations; or being subjected to the time pressures related to real-time communications can therefore cause a learner to produce something differently than they would have typically. Importantly; in most instances; learners will have the ability to identify and correct their own mistakes. This should result from the fact that the correct version has previously become part of the learner's systematic knowledge. As a consequence; mistakes are not indicative of the underlying interlanguage subsystems present within the individual's language; and therefore, they cannot be included in error analysis.

#### **Examples of Mistakes (Performance Slips)**

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**A learner who consistently uses 'doesn't' correctly produces 'she don't' once while distracted and immediately self-corrects.**

---

**A learner writes 'the students was' in a hurried note but changes it to 'the students were' when re-reading their work.**

---

**A fluent speaker accidentally says 'He went go' while telling a story, pauses, and corrects to 'He went.'**

---

**Table 2. Error vs. Mistake: Distinguishing Criteria**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Error</b>	<b>Mistake</b>
<b>Nature</b>	Systematic, consistent deviation	Unsystematic, occasional slip
<b>Source</b>	Gap in knowledge (competence)	Performance factor (fatigue, distraction)
<b>Self-correction</b>	Not possible, rule not yet acquired	Possible when attention is directed to it
<b>Consistency</b>	Rekurs in similar contexts	Occurs irregularly, not consistently
<b>EA relevance</b>	Central object of study	Excluded from analysis

The methodology used to differentiate between errors and mistakes can therefore create problems since each isolated instance from a learner's output cannot be allocated to one of the two categories without reference to the patterns produced across the full number of cases. Consistency must be established. If the learner produces the same deviant form repeatedly within different contexts or across different occasions than it can most probably be considered as an error; if the learner produces the deviant form once while continuing to produce correctly the target form than clearly that would constitute a mistake.

### **Activity 2**

Read the following ten sentences produced by an intermediate EFL learner (L1 Arabic, University Year 2, Algeria). For each sentence: (a) identify the deviation from standard

English; (b) decide whether it is more likely to be an error or a mistake, giving reasons; (c) write the reconstructed target form.

1. *Yesterday I have met my old teacher at the market.*
2. *The government must to invest more money in education.*
3. *Although she studied hard, but she failed the examination.*
4. *I am agree with your opinion on this matter.*
5. *The informations he gave us was very useful for our research.*
6. *He could not explained why he was late.*
7. *My parents they always support me in my studies.*
8. *She suggested me to take the train instead of the bus.*
9. *We must protect the nature from the pollution.*

### **3.2 Competence vs. Performance**

The difference between competence and performance was developed by Chomsky (1965). Competence is the internalized knowledge a speaker has of the grammatical rules of language. Performance refers to how a speaker produces or comprehends language in real time, which can be affected by memory limitations, distractions, and other factors.

There are two components to competence/performance: what the learner knows about the language as an L2 learner and how the learner's knowledge affects their language comprehension and production (i.e., how the learner's developing knowledge impacts their language

understanding). Corder (1971) indicated that L2 learners do not possess the competence of a native speaker, but rather they have transitional competence, or the developing interlanguage they possess as they develop both their language competence and performance. To understand transitional competence, EA examines patterns of learner performance (e.g., error vs. mistake), as errors reflect transitional competence, whereas mistakes reflect performance failures.

Transitional competence refers to the evolving knowledge of the target language at any given time. Unlike native competence, transitional competence is subject to revision and change. EA is concerned with expanding our understanding of transitional competence; therefore, transitional competence is the primary focus of EA.

### **3.3 Interlanguage**

Interlanguage is a central idea in SLA research, that was suggested by Selinker (1972) but it is seen as one of the most credible and significant theoretical constructs.

According to Selinker, the majority of adult second language (L2) learners, who do not attain completely native-like proficiency in the second language develop an independent psychological construct—interlanguage— that is different from both their first language (L1) and the second language (L2). The interlanguage developed by an L2 learner constitutes the learner’s current grammar of the second language at any point in time during the development of the student’s second language acquisition process.

Interlanguage is critical to utilizing error analysis (EA) to study learner errors, because interlanguage theory serves as the conceptual model that forms the basis of interpreting learner’s errors as the systematic reflection of their underlying interlanguage (IL) grammar rather than as

measures of their performance compared to a native speaker's performance). Therefore, when an error is analyzed it describes and explains the structure and functioning of a learner's interlanguage.

### **3.3.1 Key Characteristics of Interlanguage**

- **Consistency:** The IL will always apply the same rules for all generated utterances at a particular point in time, even when rules are not target-like (e.g., an early stage learner may not produce the third person singular –s marker). The learner will apply the same (deviant) rule for this instance across all other relevant contexts.
- **Fluidity:** The IL will continue to be adjusted by the learner in order to incorporate new data because unlike a native speaker grammar, rules within the IL are not fixed but rather subject to change. It is this fluidity that allows for development to occur.
- **Continuity:** Development of the IL will not be static but will instead be dynamic; it will continue to change throughout the different levels of development as the learner progresses toward being an effective user of the TL.
- **Variety:** Even within one part of the development continuum learners at a same developmental stage will produce both native-like and non-native-like forms of the same particular structural feature. The context, style, and task conditions will all affect the variability in both of these items (Tarone, 1988).
- **Influence from the L1:** The IL reflects a high level of influence from the learner's L1 in terms of both phonology and morphosyntax. However, how much L1 influence there is

will depend upon other variables including skill/practice, area and type of difficulty, and typological distance.

### 3.3.2 Selinker's Five Central Processes

**Table 3. Selinker's Five Central Processes of Interlanguage Development**

Process	Description	Illustrative Example
<b>Language transfer</b>	L1 structures transferred to the L2	Arabic speaker omits copula: He tired.
<b>Overgeneralization</b>	L2 rule applied beyond its legitimate scope	He goed to school. (-ed applied to 'go')
<b>Transfer of training</b>	Errors induced by the teaching method or materials	Overuse of a structure heavily drilled in class
<b>Strategies of communication</b>	Paraphrase or avoidance to convey intended meaning	'The thing you cut bread with' for knife
<b>Strategies of L2 learning</b>	Hypothesis testing, simplification	Using one past form for all past events

### 3.4 Fossilization

In second language acquisition (SLA) research, fossilization is one of the most frequently researched and debated concepts in regards to its theoretical implications. Fossilization has been defined as the mechanism which is responsible for certain 'linguistic items, rules or subsystems of a 'particular NL [native language] that will remain in their IL relative to a particular TL [target language] of a specific learner(s)' (Selinker 1972). This means that certain features of an interlanguage that do not reflect those of a TL will eventually become fossilized - or cease to

develop - prior to the learner reaching TL norms even with continued exposure to, instruction in or feedback regarding TL.

Fossilization is significant because it undermines the assumption that a learner will always achieve target-like proficiency given a sufficient level of input and exposure. Most adult L2 learners do not reach native-like proficiency. Fossilization is one of the central factors in explaining why this occurs in the majority of cases.

### 3.4.1 Types and Characteristics

- **Individual fossilization** refers to a persistent error pattern within the interlanguage of a specific learner, who continues to use that pattern regardless of extensive corrective feedback. For example, an advanced EFL student from Algeria might continue to produce the phrase "I am agree" (a mistake) after being corrected for years.
- **Group fossilization** refers to a common error that occurs within the interlanguages of multiple learners from the same first language (L1) group, suggesting that the source of that error pattern is cross-linguistic in nature. For example, many francophone EFL students produce the phrase "I am agree," indicating that their interlanguage contains a fossilized form.
- **Backsliding** is when a learner who has appeared to master a target form (e.g., past participle) reverts to a previous non-target-like interlanguage form due to external pressure (e.g., real-time communication environment) or in less monitored contexts (e.g., informal settings). Some scholars refer to this as temporary or pseudo-fossilization.

### 3.4.2 Conditions Favouring Fossilization

- **Communicative Success:** If learners are able to communicate well despite errors, they will be less likely to feel the pressure to change their IL form to the TL norm. The error of the learner can be 'good enough' for purposed of communication.
- **Absence of Negative Feedback:** Learners who do not receive clear, consistent corrective feedback may not be able to recognize the gap between their IL form and the TL norm. Schmidt (1990) refers to this as 'noticing.'
- **Structural Complexity / Irregularity:** TL features that are formally complex or semantically opaque will have a greater tendency to be fossilized due to their greater acquisition difficulty and the lower communicative reward associated with them.

*Table 4. Commonly Fossilised Errors in Algerian EFL Learners*

Commonly Fossilized Errors in Algerian EFL Learners	
She always work hard.	[Persistent omission of 3rd-person singular -s]
I am interested on music.	[Fixed incorrect preposition, from French 'intéressé par']
I am agree with you.	[Fixed copula addition, transfer from French 'je suis d'accord']
Yesterday I go to market.	[Invariant use of present simple for past events in speech]
He is very sympathetic.	[False friend from French 'sympathique' = nice, likeable]

**Reflection Question:**

*Consider a learner you know or have taught who makes the same error consistently despite repeated correction. What factors do you think contribute to the persistence of this error? How does the concept of fossilization apply? What specific instructional strategies might help to 'unfreeze' a fossilized form?*

## Lecture 4: Types of Errors

Error analysis uses several complementary taxonomies to classify learner errors by illuminating different aspects. There are three major taxonomies: Linguistic Category Classification, Surface Strategy Taxonomy, and Communicative Effect Classification (all of which are interrelated). Each taxonomy provides different information about the nature of error, how it was produced, and its communicative effect; therefore, they are commonly used together in a comprehensive analysis of errors.

### 4.1 Linguistic Category Classification

The Linguistic Category Assignment groups errors based on which part of the linguistic system they violate (The taxonomy is organized according to the descriptive categories from structural linguistics) There are five primary classifications of errors within this taxonomy: Phonological, Morphological, Syntactic, Lexical/Semantic, and Discourse Errors.

#### 4.1.1 Phonological Errors

Phonological errors occur when a sound is incorrectly produced or perceived. In written work, phonological errors appear as phonetically motivated spelling errors; whereas, in spoken work, they involve errors of phoneme production, phonotactic violations and errors of stress, intonation or timing.

## Phonological Error Examples

**/tʃɪps/ for 'ships' [No /ʃ/ phoneme in Arabic L1 → phoneme substitution]**

**'estart' for 'start' [Epenthesis: Arabic/French phonotactics disallow word-initial clusters]**

**'whould' for 'would' [Phonetically-motivated spelling error]**

**Stress: 'hotel' → pronounced 'HO-tel' instead of 'ho-TEL' [L1 stress pattern transferred]**

**'wery' for 'very' [/v/ phoneme absent in some L1 phonological systems]**

Phonological Errors in the Algerian EFL Context Phonological errors (as in many other contexts) are an extremely significant source of error; in the case of Algerian EFL learners, these phonological errors fall into two categories: the absence of certain English phonemes (for example, the distinction made in English between /p/ and /b/, /v/ and /f/ and /ŋ/); and the presence of French-influenced phonological patterns that affect learner pronunciation of English. The effect of phonological errors on spoken language production can be significant in terms of the level of difficulty caused by sound substitutions when used to create minimal pair constructions.

### 4.1.2 Morphological Errors

Morphological errors are errors where a learner makes an incorrect application of either the inflectional or derivational rules of English morphology. Morphological errors are some of the most well-documented errors found within EFL research; this is due to the fact that the morphology associated with English (especially with verbal inflection and nominal pluralisation) is often very

different from the morphological patterns that are associated with the learners' native language (L1), which leads to difficulty for learners. Arabic is a morphologically rich language with a root-and-pattern system (that does not use concatenation) that differs significantly from English, which uses suffixation for most of its morphology.

**Table 5. Examples of Morphological Errors in EFL Learner Production**

<b>Learner Production</b>	<b>Target Form</b>	<b>Morphological Error Type</b>
<b>She always work hard</b>	She always works hard	Omission of 3rd-person singular -s
<b>Yesterday I walk to school</b>	I walked to school	Omission of regular past tense -ed
<b>I need many informations</b>	I need a lot of information	Uncountable noun incorrectly pluralised
<b>He is very successfull</b>	He is very successful	Incorrect derivational suffix (double -l)
<b>She is very beautifull</b>	She is very beautiful	Hypercorrection of adjective suffix
<b>The teacher explainedd</b>	The teacher explained	Incorrect spelling of past morpheme

### 4.1.3 Syntactic Errors

Syntactic errors break the rules that define phrase/sentence structure - such as word order, agreement, clauses within other clauses and their arguments - and can be due to L1 transfer or to over-generalisation of L2, or to failure to acquire all aspects of L2.

### Syntactic Error Examples (with analysis)

**I can to go tomorrow.** → modal + bare infinitive required; not modal + to-infinitive

---

**He is more taller than his brother.** → double comparative (overgeneralization)

---

**The book that I bought it.** → resumptive pronoun in relative clause; L1 Arabic transfer

---

**Did she went to the market?** → double marking of past tense in question

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**Although he tried hard, but he failed.** → double subordinator; L1 Arabic/French transfer

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**He gave me a book red.** → postpositive adjective; L1 French/Arabic word order

---

#### 4.1.4 Lexical Errors

Lexical errors cover many types of error; they may involve inappropriate or inaccurate word usage, collocation, confusion among near-synonyms and false friends, incorrect use of prepositions and non-existent words. Because learners will never have complete lexical knowledge, lexical errors are one of the most frequent kinds of error made in language learning. In Algeria, French-English false cognates are an excellent source of lexical errors, because French is the dominant L1 for most students.

**Table 6. Examples of Lexical Errors in Algerian EFL Learner Production**

Learner Error	Target Form	Error Type	Explanation
<b>He did a mistake</b>	He made a mistake	Collocation error	MAKE (not DO) collocates with 'mistake'
<b>She is very sympathetic</b>	She is very nice/friendly	False friend	French 'sympathique' = nice; English 'sympathetic' = compassionate
<b>The teacher explained us</b>	The teacher explained to us	Prepositional error	'Explain' requires 'to' before an indirect object
<b>I assisted the conference</b>	I attended the conference	False friend	French 'assister à' = attend; 'assist' = help
<b>He is very economic</b>	He is very economical	Derivational confusion	'Economic' = relating to economics; 'economical' = thrifty
<b>I am bored of this topic</b>	I am bored with this topic	Preposition error	Collocation: 'bored with,' not 'bored of'

#### 4.1.5 Discourse Errors

Communication does have errors in discourse in the areas of text organisation, cohesion, coherence, as well as pragmatic appropriateness of language. Errors in discourse generally are not as noticeable as errors in morphosyntax; yet these types of errors cause a significant impact on how well the writer communicates with others, especially in formal and/or academic writing situations. In the area of EFL research, interest in discourse errors has been growing due to the evolution of our understanding of language affecting the communication process beyond just the sentence level.

Examples of discourse errors include:

- **Cohesion errors:** 'But the results were different, however.' (double connective use - using 'but' and 'however' in the same clause at the boundary of two clauses is grammatically unacceptable in English)
- **Reference errors:** 'John told his friend that he was wrong.' (bolded pronoun use - an ill-defined antecedent for the pronoun 'he')
- **Pragmatic errors:** using a direct imperative statement (i.e. 'Give me the information immediately') as a formal written request to a university administrator.
- **Text organization errors:** No topic sentences and paragraphs combining unrelated topics without cohesive thematic development (this has been observed as a trend in academic writing by Algerian EFL learners).

### Activity 3

For each of the following learner errors, identify the linguistic category (phonological / morphological / syntactic / lexical / discourse). Justify your answer in one clear sentence, and write the reconstructed target form.

1. *She don't eat meat.*
2. *He is very economic with his money.*
3. *The students was very happy about the result.*
4. *I am boring in class.*

5. *She has a car red.*
6. *We must protect the nature.*
7. *I assisted the conference last week.*
8. *Although he tried hard, but he failed the test.*
9. *She could not coming to the meeting.*
10. *The teacher explained us the difference between the two concepts.*

## **4.2 Surface Strategy Taxonomy (SST)**

The Surface Strategy Taxonomy, developed by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) and based on work done by Dulay and Burt (1974), uses an earlier classification system to categorize errors in terms of how the learner has changed the surface structure from the target form. The taxonomy is observational; it identifies what went wrong but does not identify the cause. Four separate categories of error are identified: omission, addition, misformation, and misordering.

### **4.2.1 Omission**

Omission occurs when a morpheme or word that is required for the learner's output to conform to a language rule is absent. Grammatical morphemes (e.g., articles, prepositions, auxiliary verbs) and inflectional endings tend to be omitted most frequently because, although they carry grammatical meaning, the amount of meaning they contribute is low; therefore, their absence does not necessarily disrupt communication as much as omissions of content words do.

**Table 7. Examples of Omission Errors**

<b>Learner Production</b>	<b>Target Form</b>	<b>Omitted Element</b>
<b>I going to school tomorrow</b>	I am going to school tomorrow	Auxiliary verb 'am'
<b>She work in hospital</b>	She works in a hospital	3rd-person -s; article 'a'
<b>He told me he sick</b>	He told me he was sick	Copula 'was'
<b>I need buy some bread</b>	I need to buy some bread	Infinitive marker 'to'
<b>I been waiting for long time</b>	I have been waiting for a long time	Auxiliary 'have'; article 'a'
<b>We must respect environment</b>	We must respect the environment	Definite article 'the'

#### **4.2.2 Addition**

Errors of addition occur when there is a superfluous item (one that is not required) present in a well-formed sentence of the target language. Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) established three categories for errors of addition:

- **Double marking:** A semantic feature has two markers on it. This generally occurs because the student has applied both a target language rule and their native language rule to the same morpheme. For example: Did she went? (The past-features of both 'did' and 'went'.)
- **Regularization:** A regular morpheme has been improperly applied to an irregular morpheme. For example: He goed to school; She thinked about it. The student has learned the rule for regular morphemes but has not learned how to apply it properly in all cases.

- Simple addition: An item that serves no grammatical function in the sentence has been added. For example: She is always comes late; I am agree with you (am was transferred from French je suis d'accord).

### 4.2.3 Misformation

Misformation occurs when a morpheme or a structure has been used incorrectly for a morpheme or structure. When making an error of misformation, a student has not omitted an item or added an item; therefore, the student has incorrectly selected an item. Additionally, misformation errors are the most widespread type of grammatical error in student language data and contain a very wide variety of subcategories.

**Table 8. Examples of Misformation Errors**

Learner Production	Target Form	Type of Misformation
<b>He runned away quickly</b>	He ran away quickly	Irregular past tense regularised
<b>I seen him yesterday</b>	I saw him yesterday	Past participle used for simple past
<b>I am boring</b>	I am bored	Active participial adjective for passive
<b>It depends of the situation</b>	It depends on the situation	Wrong preposition in collocation
<b>The childs were playing</b>	The children were playing	Incorrect plural of irregular noun

<b>She is more better at this</b>	She is better at this	Double comparative
<b>I have saw the film</b>	I have seen the film	Wrong past participle form

#### 4.2.4 Misordering

Misordering errors result from having the right linguistic components but arranging them in a different order than that required by the target language. Learners whose L1 word order typology differs significantly from the TL are likely to produce misordering errors with greater frequency.

**Table 9. Misordering Error Examples**

<b>Misordering Error Examples</b>		
<b>I know not the answer.</b>	<b>→ I do not know the answer.</b>	<b>[Negative placement]</b>
<b>She has a car red.</b>	<b>→ She has a red car.</b>	<b>[Adjective postposition, L1 French/Arabic]</b>
<b>When arrived he?</b>	<b>→ When did he arrive?</b>	<b>[Question formation]</b>
<b>He me gave a book.</b>	<b>→ He gave me a book.</b>	<b>[Indirect object placement]</b>
<b>Always she is on time.</b>	<b>→ She is always on time.</b>	<b>[Frequency adverb placement]</b>

A comprehensive SST summary can be visualised as follows:

**Table 10. Surface Strategy Taxonomy (SST): Summary Overview**

SST Category	Definition	Key Subtypes	Common Example
<b>Omission</b>	Required item absent	Grammatical morphemes, articles, prepositions	She work hard [missing -s]
<b>Addition</b>	Extra item present	Double marking, regularization, simple addition	Did she went? [double marking]
<b>Misformation</b>	Wrong form used	Irregular forms, wrong tense, wrong preposition	He runned [regularization]
<b>Misordering</b>	Correct items, wrong sequence	Adjective placement, negation, question formation	She has a dress beautiful

#### Activity 4

Classify each error below using the Surface Strategy Taxonomy (omission / addition / misformation / misordering). Where possible, identify the SST sub-type (e.g., for addition: double marking / regularization / simple addition).

1. *She don't eat meat.*
2. *He goed to school yesterday.*
3. *Did she went to the cinema?*
4. *Always he is late for class.*
5. *I not understand this exercise.*
6. *She has a dress beautiful.*
7. *The childs are playing in the garden.*

8. *I have visited Paris last summer.*

9. *He is more taller than his brother.*

10. *They was very happy about the result.*

### 4.3 Global vs. Local Errors

Burt and Kiparsky (1972, cited in James, 1998) proposed a classification of errors into two categories: global and local, based on the extent to which an error adversely affects the communicative intent of the utterance. This classification offers a grounded basis for prioritising errors for correction by teachers in a classroom; perhaps the most useful practical application of this taxonomy to classroom instruction.

#### 4.3.1 Global Errors

A global error is one that violates or frustrates the rules of syntax which, in turn, prevents or hinders the communication of the intended meaning of the utterance to the listener or reader. A global error disrupts the overall structure of the utterance. Since global errors disrupt communication so badly, they are the highest priority for correction.

#### Global Error Examples

**The teacher give the students homework not. [Negation entirely misplaced, meaning unclear]**

**Because it was raining, but we stayed inside. [Faulty subordination, double connective]**

**If I would have more time, I will studied more. [Conditional structure completely broken]**

**She not went market yesterday big. [Multiple structural errors, comprehension severely impaired]**

### 4.3.2 Local Errors

Local errors impact only one aspect of an utterance (typically a morpheme, or single word) rather than having considerable effects on the understanding of the utterance, the message conveyed can be extracted from the utterance notwithstanding the error. Local errors can be frustrating or carry a stigma in formal written formats; they provide a lower level of communication value than global errors.

Local Error Examples	
She always work hard.	[Missing 3rd-person -s, meaning perfectly clear]
I have seen him yesterday.	[Tense error, not ambiguous in context]
He gave me many advices.	[Incorrect plural, message fully understood]
I am interested on music.	[Wrong preposition, meaning clear from context]

**Table 11. Global vs. Local Errors: Comparative Features**

Feature	Global Errors	Local Errors
<b>Impact on meaning</b>	Disrupts or prevents comprehension	Does not significantly impair understanding
<b>Structural scope</b>	Affects sentence-level organisation	Affects a single morpheme or word
<b>Priority for correction</b>	High, immediate pedagogical attention needed	Lower, can be addressed systematically
<b>Typical examples</b>	Wrong clause structure, faulty subordination	Morpheme errors, wrong prepositions, article errors

#### 4.4 Communicative Effect Classification

The communicative effect classification of errors is based on the impact that the error has on communication and, in particular, on the ability of the listener/reader to comprehend the intended message from the learner. This classification has specific relevance to educators as it provides an objective way to prioritise which errors should be given immediate corrective attention in the classroom.

**Table 12. Communicative Effect Classification of Errors**

Category	Description	Example
<b>Irritating</b>	Error is noticeable but meaning is preserved	She don't know the answer.
<b>Stigmatising</b>	Error marks speaker as low proficiency	We was happy about it.
<b>Ambiguity-creating</b>	Error creates more than one possible interpretation	I punished my students' work. (mark? discipline?)
<b>Communication-disrupting</b>	Error prevents understanding of the message	If she would study, she will pass.

## **Reflection Question**

*Look at the following two errors: (a) She don't know the answer; (b) Although he tried hard, but he failed the examination. Which is more serious from a communicative standpoint? Which taxonomy, SST, Linguistic Category, Global/Local, or Communicative Effect, best captures the distinction between them? As a future teacher, which taxonomy would you find most useful for planning your feedback on student writing, and why?*

## Lecture 5: Sources and Causes of Errors

When we identify a particular error, we have learned about where there was something that went wrong; by identifying the cause of that error, we can understand why it occurred. The investigation of the causes of errors is one of the most interesting theoretical issues and practically significant areas within the whole study of EA. Since the work of Corder (1967), we have found numerous possibilities for what causes errors, which can be grouped into two broad categories: interlingual/multilingual (cross-linguistic/L1-based) and intralinguistic (within-the-L2) with many other sub-categories of each type.

### 5.1 Interlingual Transfer (L1 Interference)

There can be problems when learners use their first language (L1) structures, rules or items incorrectly when learning a second language (L2). This is referred to as interlingual transfer; some people also refer to this as negative transfer or L1 interference. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis was created with the goal of being able to anticipate errors based on the differences between languages. Through Error Analysis studies it has been demonstrated that interlingual transfer is not the only reason for errors to occur, but throughout research history; it has always been shown that it is an actual issue and continues to be of major concern to researchers and educators, especially during the initial stages of L2 acquisition, especially when there are vast differences between L1 and L2. (Ellis, 2008).

**Table 13. Examples of Interlingual Transfer Errors in Algerian EFL**

Level	L1 Feature (Arabic/French)	Learner Error	Explanation
<b>Phonology</b>	Arabic lacks the phoneme /p/	'bean of beer' for 'pint of beer'	L1 phoneme /b/ substituted for L2 /p/
<b>Morphology</b>	French gender agreement on adjectives	'a beautifull country' (adj. inflection)	L1 adjective agreement pattern transferred
<b>Syntax</b>	French: être + past participle for perfect	'I am gone to the market.'	L1 auxiliary 'être' transferred to L2
<b>Lexis</b>	French 'assister à' = attend	'I assisted the conference.'	False friend, L1 meaning mapped to similar L2 form
<b>Discourse</b>	L1 Arabic rhetorical conventions	No topic sentences; no paragraph conclusions	L1 text-organisation patterns transferred to L2 writing

Interlingual transfer for Algerian EFL learners can be a complex process as learners exist within a multilingual setting; they may produce errors as a result of influence from MSA, Arabic dialects, and French since French has a co-dominant position in academic settings within Algeria. Therefore, the analyst needs to know all the languages of the learners when identifying an interlingual source of the error.

## **5.2 Intralingual Transfer and Overgeneralization**

Intralingual transfer (as opposed to interlingual transfer) arises based on the context of L2 use. Errors arising from intralingual transfer are based on the application of L2 linguistic patterns to L2 use situations in which the L2 pattern cannot be applied. Throughout his studies of learners'

language errors, Richards (1971) was the first researcher to construct an empirical body of research evidence documenting this type of error and concluding that intralingual errors are due to the way the learners use the L2 rather than due to L1 interference.

The most frequently mentioned and researched form of intralingual transfer is overgeneralisation, where a learner extends a regular L2 rule to an irregular L2 word where the regular L2 rule does not apply. Overgeneralisation errors provide clear evidence of the learners' active, constructive involvement in rule building for the L2; the learner is actively engaging in the L2 learning process and constructing abstract rules from input and applying those rules in new situations, resulting in the production of non-target coded forms.

#### **Overgeneralization Examples**

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**He goed to school. [Regular past -ed applied to irregular verb 'go']**

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**The childs are playing. [Regular plural -s applied to irregular noun 'child']**

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**I can to speak English. [To-infinitive pattern generalized after modal verb]**

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**She explained me the rule. [Pattern from 'tell me' applied to 'explain']**

---

**More bigger / more better [Periphrastic comparative generalized to irregular adjectives]**

---

The following are Richards's (1971) intralingual error categories, along with examples of each.

1. Ignorance of rule limitations: The learner makes a correct generalization, but does not realize that there are exceptions to that generalization, (e.g., made her to cry rather than made her cry; causative verb require that the base form of a verb, not the infinitive form of a verb be used after them).

2. Incomplete rule generalization: The learner has not fully generalized a rule he has acquired for some reason (e.g., questions that do not include the inversion of the subject and auxiliary verb).
3. Erroneous concept hypotheses: The learner forms an incorrect hypothesis or concept about a feature of the target language based on partial or erroneous evidence he has received from his input into the target language (e.g., all uses of the word will are used to express future time and as a result will be used in if clauses such as, if she will come, I will tell her).

### 5.3 Simplification

Simplification is an approach to the reduction of the complexities of the grammar of a target language where the learner drops elements of low communicative value, or elements that have no equivalent in the learner's native language. In addition to overgeneralization (where the learner has extended the application of a rule), simplification is a system reduction (the learner has not created or applied as many systems as exist in the grammar of the target language). The cognitive economy aspect of simplification is that the learner uses simplification as a way of reducing demands on the processing of their planned output in the second language.

#### Simplification Examples

**She go school every day. [Simplified verb phrase: auxiliary, article, and preposition all omitted]**

**He not come. [Simplified negation: no auxiliary, no inflection]**

**I have twenty year. [Number expression without plural marker]**

**She very tired. [Copula omitted, communicatively redundant for immediate meaning]**

## 5.4 Developmental Errors

Developmental error is an error of the same type as the types of errors made by a child in the L1 acquisition process. They are examples of normal, universal stages of acquisition, and cannot be attributed to either the transfer from the L1 or to particular types of instruction. The presence of developmental errors in the data from L2 learners constituted a major empirical argument against the strong form of the CAH. Developmental errors indicate that L2 acquisition takes place through developmental sequences that are largely independent of L1.

### Developmental Error Examples

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**She goed / He hitted** [Past tense overregularization, also found in L1-acquiring children aged 2–4]

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**He no like it.** [Preverbal negation, typical early stage in L1 acquisition]

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**What he is doing?** [Non-inversion in wh-questions, mirrors early L1 question formation stage]

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**I not understand.** [Lack of do-support in negation, developmental stage in L1 English acquisition]

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## 5.5 Communication Strategies

Strategies used by learners of a new language as they attempt to communicate with others when there is a gap in their linguistic knowledge about how to say something in the language they are learning are called communication strategies. Even when learners do not have enough of the linguistic resources necessary to communicate, they use a variety of compensatory strategies to continue to attempt to communicate instead of stopping because they don't have all the necessary

linguistic resources. All compensatory strategies are functional; however, they may produce non-target-like or deviant forms of language.

**Table 14. Common Communication Strategies Used by L2 Learners**

Strategy	Description	Example
<b>Paraphrase circumlocution</b>	Describe what you cannot name	'The thing you use to cut paper' for 'scissors'
<b>Code-switching</b>	Insert an L1 word into L2 utterance	'I went to the souk to buy vegetables' [Arabic insertion]
<b>Word coinage</b>	Create a new word from L2 morphology	'Hairist' for 'hairstylist'
<b>Approximation</b>	Use a semantically related TL word	Using 'ship' to mean any large boat or 'vessel'
<b>Appeal for help</b>	Ask the interlocutor for the missing word	'How do you say...?' / 'What is the word for...?'
<b>Avoidance</b>	Restructure to bypass a difficult form	Always using active voice to avoid the passive

### Activity 5

Examine the following learner errors. For each one, identify the most likely source (interlingual transfer / overgeneralization / simplification / developmental / communication strategy). Justify your answer with a brief explanation. Remember that multiple causes may overlap, indicate this where relevant.

1. *She have two childrens.*

2. *I not understand this question.*
3. *He is more better at maths than his sister.*
4. *I assisted the conference last week. [Learner L1 = French]*
5. *She could not coming to the meeting.*
6. *Although the weather was bad, but we decided to continue.*
7. *I need the thing to cut grass. [= a lawn mower]*
8. *If she will study more, she will pass.*
9. *He is very sympathetic and kind. [Learner means: nice/friendly]*
10. *The book that I bought it was very interesting.*

*As James (1998) emphasises, in practice the causes of learner errors are often multiple and overlapping. A single error may simultaneously involve L1 transfer and an intralingual strategy; a learner who overgeneralizes may be facilitated by input frequency or instructional emphasis. Assigning a single cause to any error is always an interpretive act, not a mechanical classification. Good EA practice requires the analyst to acknowledge uncertainty and consider alternative explanations, stating not only the most likely cause but also other possible contributing factors.*

## Lecture 6: Procedures of Error Analysis

Error Analysis involves both theoretical and practical aspects as a conceptual framework and methodology for research. The systematic five-step approach based on Corder's (1967, 1974) work and synthesised by James (1998) and Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) provides principled and replicable methods for assessing learners' language use. Each step requires careful consideration of methodological decisions, as these directly affect the validity and reliability of the analysis.

### Step 1: Collecting a Sample of Learner Language

The initial phase is a representative collection of learner language - samples of learners' or learner produced speech being researched. This represents the raw data for EA. The representativeness and overall quality of a corpus directly affect the validity of every succeeding step in the EA process. Important decisions to be made regarding the corpus include:

1. **Corpus Size:** A bigger corpus of data is generally able to deliver greater reliability and generalisability than a smaller one. For example, many small-scale research projects in classrooms with a few students would have only examined 20-30 pieces of writing, while many larger-scale research projects will have had access to hundreds/thousands of pieces of writing depending upon the type of research being conducted.
2. **Mode:** Data collected through writing (e.g., essays, exam papers, letters) are often much easier to collect and analyse than spoken data (e.g., interviews, presentations, free conversation); however, spoken data allows for greater naturalism but requires the use of a recording device and later transcription.

3. **Task Type:** Many different types of tasks can be used to elicit language and produce different errors depending on the nature of the task. For example, free writing may elicit avoidance of difficult structures, while constrained writing (e.g., translations, sentence completion) would require certain features to be present in the corpus.
4. **Learner Variables:** Various characteristics of the learner (e.g., first language background, TL proficiency level, age, educational experience, and exposure to the TL) are likely to be relevant to the research and should be documented in a learner profile.
5. **Ethical Considerations:** Researchers must obtain informed consent from the participants who provide data for analysis before collecting their data. Researchers should also ensure that the data they publish does not identify the learners, and that the learners understand how their data will be used.

## **Step 2: Identifying Errors**

After collecting a corpus, the analyst must begin identifying which utterances/sentences contain errors. This step is far more methodologically complex than what might initially be imagined. For error identification, the key methodological tool is Corder's (1967) concept of the reconstructed target utterance (RTU). The RTU procedure requires establishing what the learner was trying to say, their intentions or intended meanings, prior to evaluating whether an utterance represents an error or deviation.

### **Examples**

Learner: The people is very friendly in my country.

RTU: The people are very friendly in my country. Error: subject-verb agreement.

Learner: He is very economic with his money.

RTU: He is very economical with his money. Error: lexical, derivational confusion.

Learner: She is always comes late.

RTU: She is always late. / She always comes late. Error: addition (simple), double verb.

Error identification can be complex for a number of reasons. Ambiguous errors can have more than one possible interpretation. Covert errors are grammatically correct in the TL but do not represent the learner's intended meaning and, therefore, are not necessarily considered errors from a formal point of view so those must be treated with caution. Errors of omission require the analyst to determine what should have been present in an utterance/sentence but is not.

### Step 3: Describing Errors

The main goal of this step is to identify and describe errors in terms of standard linguistic structure. For an error to be clearly defined, it must receive a systematic description in linguistic terms, using the categories and criteria outlined in the SST (Section 4.2) and the Linguistic Category Classification (Section 4.1), in a manner that allows others to replicate the description precisely.

**Table 15. Error Description: SST and Linguistic Category Analysis**

Learner Form	RTU	SST Category	Linguistic Category
<b>She don't know</b>	She doesn't know	Misformation	Morphosyntactic, 3PS agreement
<b>I am boring</b>	I am bored	Misformation	Lexical-morphological, participial adjective
<b>many advices</b>	a lot of advice	Addition + misformation	Morphological, uncountable noun
<b>I have seen him yesterday</b>	I saw him yesterday	Misformation	Syntactic, tense selection

<b>Because it was late.</b>	[needs a main clause]	Omission	Syntactic, sentence fragment
<b>She has a car red</b>	She has a red car	Misordering	Syntactic, adjective placement

**Step 4: Explaining Errors**

In conducting the EA process, this step represents the highest theoretical and cognitive load for the EA process. Explanation involves assigning probable causes to a given error. The analyst will refer to the sources' taxonomy from section 5 (interlingual transfer, overgeneralization, simplification, developmental processes, communication strategies or transfer from training). The analyst will evaluate if there is an L1 structure to support that error has occurred, if the error matches a known developmental stage, and/or if a specific teaching method might have caused it.

When conducting EA, the analyst is always providing a reason for the explanation of an error; the analyst may generally have more than one probable cause of an error at the same time; thus, the analyst will present a rationale, using substantive evidence for their rationale, and also will identify alternative possibilities. As James (1998, p. 188) states, "Identifying an accurate source of error requires considerable knowledge of the learner, L1, L2, and the learning context." This is especially important in an Algerian context, where the common influence of multiple languages (i.e., Arabic, French, and English) means that multiple L1 and L2 influences may converge to contribute to a single error.

## Step 5: Evaluating Errors

Evaluating the significance of the errors identified is the last step of the process. This step consists of two related but distinct dimensions of evaluation:

- Pedagogical evaluation: Which errors occur most frequently? Which errors had the greatest negative impact on communication (global vs. local)? Which errors show signs of fossilization? The answers to these questions will directly influence decisions regarding corrective feedback, syllabus sequencing and materials design.
- A theoretical evaluation: What do the errors tell us about the learner's interlanguage at this point in time? What hypotheses are they testing? Are there any patterns that indicate a universal stage of development, influence of a specific L1 or the impact of instruction? This dimension informs theory and research in second language acquisition.

<b>Summary: The Five Steps of Error Analysis</b>
<b>Step 1: Collection</b> , Gather a representative corpus of learner language; document learner profile.
<b>Step 2: Identification</b> , Use the RTU procedure to locate and establish errors; address ambiguities.
<b>Step 3: Description</b> , Describe errors systematically using linguistic and SST categories.
<b>Step 4: Explanation</b> , Assign likely causes with reasoned justification; acknowledge uncertainty.
<b>Step 5: Evaluation</b> , Assess frequency, severity, communicative impact, and pedagogical implications.

## Activity 6

Using the five-step procedure described above, conduct a mini Error Analysis of the following short learner text (Intermediate EFL, L1 Arabic, Algeria). Present your work in a formatted table for Steps 2–4, and write a brief evaluative comment of approximately 80 words for Step 5. Then state two specific pedagogical recommendations. 'In my opinion, the technology is very important in our modern world. It have transformed the way we communicate and we work. Thanks to the internet, the students can now access to a lot of informations from all over the world. However, some peoples argue that the technology is dangerous for the young generation because they spend too much times in front of the screens. I am agree that we must to control its use.'

## Lecture 7: Methods of Collecting Learner Errors

Selecting a data collection method is one of the most important decisions to make in EA research because the method selected will directly determine which types of errors will be found in the corpus and at what frequency; thereby impacting the conclusions the researcher can draw from those errors. Each of the methods will have characteristics (advantages and disadvantages) that the researcher needs to compare and contrast against the research question and any constraints that they may encounter based on the practical nature of the context. No method is perfect; therefore, researchers usually find that using more than one method (i.e., using different methods of collection in triangulation) provides them with a complete and reliable picture.

### 7.1 Written Compositions

Free written composition (FWC) is the most common method of data collection in empirical studies of EFL learners, since the primary focus is on writing. The learners write about a specific topic with very few restrictions on form (structure), which gives researchers a genuine view of the learners' developing interlanguages.

- **Advantages:** The data are permanent and available immediately; there are virtually no restrictions for how long or complex a learner can write; large samples can be collected easily without special instruments; can be given to learners under the same conditions in classrooms as they would be in real life.
- **Limitations:** There is often avoidance of structures that the learner is unsure of (this does not mean that the structure cannot be produced, but that the learner avoids it), written composition

is more carefully planned than is spoken (therefore, written errors may not truly be reflective of the learner's true ability to produce the structure in a spontaneous manner).

### Written Composition Sample (Intermediate, L1 Arabic, Algeria)

Topic: 'Describe a significant event in your life.'

'Last year, I have visited my grandmother in countryside. It was very interesting because I not seen her since long time. The house was very old and it have a big garden where we played when we was children.'

Errors for analysis: I have visited (tense); I not seen (auxiliary omitted); since long time (preposition/article); it have (agreement); we was (agreement)

## 7.2 Spoken Production

Structured interview, oral report, retelling a story, role playing, and free conversation are methods of collecting spoken data. The spoken data allow researchers to study features of the learner's language that would not be present or would have been hidden by written data, such as phonological errors, prosodic features, strategies for processing language in real time, and managing discourse.

**Advantages:** spoken data reflect how people actually use language; they are not as likely to be avoided as written tasks; and they contain phonological and pragmatic characteristics that are not evident in written tasks.

**Limitations:** recording and transcribing data can be time-consuming and requires special equipment; the observer's paradox (Labov, 1972) can affect the naturalness of the data; and transcription choices can result in bias on the part of the transcriber.

### 7.3 Elicitation Tasks and Tests

Elicitation tasks are used to guarantee that the target features will be present in the corpus. They include: gap-filling, sentence completion, picture description, sentence transformation, translation tasks & grammaticality judgement tasks. Elicitation tasks are used when the researcher has a specific linguistic feature of interest and would like to guarantee that there are sufficient tokens in the data to provide enough of that feature.

**Table 16. Common Elicitation Task Types for Error Data Collection**

Task Type	Target Feature(s)	Example
<b>Gap-fill</b>	Specific morphemes or words	'She works ___ a hospital.' (in / at)
<b>Sentence transformation</b>	Passive, questions, relatives,	'Turn into passive: The teacher explained the rule.'
<b>Translation</b>	Cross-linguistic comparison	'Translate: I have been waiting since yesterday.'
<b>Picture description</b>	Vocabulary, tense use	'Describe what is happening in this picture.'
<b>Dictogloss</b>	Grammar reconstruction	'Listen twice; reconstruct the text from memory.'
<b>Oral interview</b>	Spoken fluency, pronunciation	Semi-structured conversation with the researcher

**Advantages:** Provide representative information from learners as it relates to targeted language features; permit comparison across learners; easy to administer and score

**Limitations:** Tasks will be artificial and may not replicate genuine use of L2; learners may respond to testing conditions differently than in authentic communicative situations; forms generated may not represent the L2 used in learners' everyday lives.

#### 7.4 Classroom observation

The classroom observation method consists of recording the errors made by learners in real time when learning takes place. Methods for collecting this data include field notes, audio or video recordings, and think-aloud protocols.

**Advantages:** Provide very authentic data from a natural communication source; capture errors made in response to instructional interaction; provide access to full range of error types.

**Limitations:** Logistically difficult to do, subject to the "observer" paradox; method constrains the type and language produced during learning; may miss errors that were not apparent to the observer in the field notes due to their immediate context.

**Table 17. Data Collection Methods: Advantages and Limitations**

Method	Best For	Main Advantage	Main Limitation
<b>Written compositions</b>	Global error profile; academic writing errors	Large corpus; easy to analyse	Avoidance; not naturalistic
<b>Spoken production</b>	Phonological; discourse; pragmatic errors	Naturalistic; reveals real-time processing	Transcription burden; observer effect

<b>Elicitation tasks</b>	Specific target features; research studies	Ensures target structures appear	Artificial; limited generalizability
<b>Classroom observation</b>	Real-time interaction; instructional context	High ecological validity	Logistically demanding; observer effect

**Activity 7**

Design a short data collection instrument (two tasks) to elicit errors in the following areas from a B1-level EFL class in an Algerian university: (a) present perfect vs. simple past tense; (b) the use of articles with generic nouns (e.g., 'Education is important' vs. 'The education is important'). Specify the task type, give sample instructions, and explain why you chose this particular task type for each target feature. Then describe how you would distinguish errors from mistakes in the data you collect.

## Pedagogical Implications of Error Analysis

The impacts of Error Analysis (EA) on teaching practice are far-reaching and well-documented. This section describes how EA informs three interrelated aspects of teaching: how errors are conceptualised in the classroom; the strategies used to provide students with corrective feedback; and the evidence base for evaluating various corrective feedback approaches.

### 8.1 Rethinking the Role of Errors in Language Learning

The most profound pedagogical implication of EA is a fundamental shift in how teachers, and learners, conceptualise errors. The behaviourist, pre-EA perspective treated errors as failures to be prevented and eliminated as quickly as possible. EA reversed this entirely: errors are natural, necessary, and informative.

- ▶ **Errors are inevitable:** The acquisition of a L2 is impossible without generating errors. Due to the hypothesis testing necessary to acquire a language, errors are expected to occur throughout the process. If every error could be removed from a learner's access to input (e.g., allow only controlled and correct input), the learner would not acquire an L2.
- ▶ **Errors are informative:** For every error a teacher sees, he/she learns something about the learner's ability or state of development with the target language. Similarly, if many learners in a classroom make the same type of error, there is evidence that many learners are having the same difficulty in learning, which should be addressed through the syllabus.
- ▶ **Errors should not be stigmatised:** When learners have a fear of making errors they will not take risks. Taking risks while communicating in a second language is an important factor in reducing language anxiety (Brown, 2007). A classroom that develops an

atmosphere in which errors are seen as normal will ultimately enhance the learner's willingness to participate, as well as be more effective in developing their longer-term skill levels.

- ▶ **Not all errors are equally important:** EA provides a set of rational criteria for distinguishing between errors requiring a higher priority for correction (e.g., global, frequent and fossilizing) and errors which can be corrected with less urgency (e.g., local, infrequent and transient).

In Algerian universities, the third point mentioned above is particularly significant for lecturers. Many lecturers cannot realistically correct every error in their students' assignments and projects, given the limited time available in a semester. EA allows teachers to develop principled frameworks that help them determine which errors to prioritise and how to address them; this includes building a theoretical foundation for developing their own strategies and approaches to assessing student performance.

## **8.2 Corrective Feedback Strategies**

Research on correcting learners' mistakes is widespread and one of the most thoroughly studied areas of applied linguistics. The efficiency of correction depends on those variables relating to both the learner (proficiency, anxiety, learning objectives), and the type of error (global vs. local, fossilized vs. developmental); as well as the conceptual framework for instruction (fluency vs. accuracy), and various techniques employed to implement correction.

## 8.2.1 When to Correct

**Table 18. When to Correct: Guidelines by Instructional Context**

<b>Instructional Context</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>Fluency-focused activities (debate, role play, discussion)</b>	Delay correction; note errors for later	Interruption disrupts communicative flow and discourages participation
<b>Accuracy-focused activities (grammar practice, writing)</b>	Correct promptly and explicitly	The goal of the activity is target-like accuracy; learners expect feedback
<b>Global errors (communication breaks down)</b>	Correct immediately	Understanding has broken down; communication must be restored
<b>Local errors (meaning preserved)</b>	Delayed correction or peer correction	Constant correction of minor errors is demotivating
<b>Fossilized errors</b>	Explicit, focused correction with practice	Implicit correction is insufficient for entrenched forms

## 8.2.2 Types of Corrective Feedback in the Classroom

A major study about corrective feedback in communicative immersion classrooms was conducted by Lyster and Ranta (1997), who identified six main types of corrective feedback. The taxonomy

created by Lyster and Ranta has become the primary reference source for researchers studying error correction in classroom-based settings.

**Table 19. Types of Oral Corrective Feedback (Lyster & Ranta, 1997)**

Feedback Type	Description	Example
<b>Explicit correction</b>	Teacher directly provides the correct form	'No, we say \'she works\', not \'she work\'.'
<b>Recast</b>	Teacher reformulates the error correctly without interrupting the flow	L: She don't know. T: 'She doesn't know. Interesting!'
<b>Clarification request</b>	Teacher signals that the utterance was not understood	'Sorry, could you say that again?'
<b>Metalinguistic feedback</b>	Teacher provides a comment without supplying the form	'Is that the right verb ending for third person singular?'
<b>Elicitation</b>	Teacher elicits the correct form from the learner	'She... ?' (rising intonation, prompting completion)
<b>Repetition</b>	Teacher repeats the error with rising intonation	L: He goed home. T: 'He goed home?'

According to Lyster and Ranta (1997), recasting--one of the most frequently employed methods of providing corrective feedback--yields the lowest percentage of uptake (repair) by learners. By contrast, the other two feedback strategies studied, elicitation and metalinguistic feedback, produced much higher percentages of learner uptake. This indicates that the most frequently used method of correcting errors may not be the most effective and has important implications for teacher training and development in Algerian EFL contexts.

### 8.2.3 Written Corrective Feedback

WCF has a considerable amount of empirical literature associated with it. Truscott (1996) took a very extreme position regarding the efficacy of grammar correction in writing, asserting that it does not lead to increased accuracy in the use of grammar and may actually impede learning. However, more recent research has provided evidence that certain types of WCF are effective for certain types of errors and in certain situations, thus leading us to believe that it is not a question of whether to provide WCF, but rather a question of how to provide WCF.

**Table 20. Written Corrective Feedback (WCF): Types and Applications**

WCF Type	Description	Best Used For
<b>Direct WCF</b>	Teacher crosses out error and provides correct form	Complex errors; beginners; highly disfluent texts
<b>Indirect WCF</b>	Error underlined but not corrected	Intermediate-advanced learners; promotes self-correction
<b>Coded WCF</b>	Error type indicated with a code (e.g., T = tense, WO = word order)	Systematic self-study; raising metalinguistic awareness
<b>Focused WCF</b>	Only pre-selected error types corrected	Targeting a specific developmental feature
<b>Conferencing</b>	Teacher and learner discuss errors face-to-face	Fossilized errors; addressing individual learner needs

### 8.3 Practical Recommendations for EFL Teachers

Here are six strategies for providing corrective feedback to second language learners.

1. Use an encouraging approach to mistakes: regard learners' mistakes as evidence of their current developmental stage rather than as failures to be penalised or eliminated.
2. Prioritise errors by severity: allocate the most attention to the most frequent and communicatively disruptive error types. Begin with common global errors before addressing less frequent and potentially fossilised local errors.
3. Match feedback type to instructional goal: implicit feedback (such as recasting and repetition) is more appropriate for fluency-focused activities, while explicit feedback (such as metalinguistic commentary or elicitation) is better suited to accuracy-focused activities.
4. Vary feedback techniques: do not rely solely on recasts. Expanding the range of feedback strategies employed will generally yield better results.
5. Involve students in the correction process: encouraging learners to self-correct and participate in error identification builds metalinguistic awareness and promotes long-term autonomy.
6. Use student errors as teaching materials: Recurrent patterns of errors within a class provide the most applicable and motivational data for grammar lessons.

**Reflection Question:**

*Based on the research discussed in this section, evaluate the following scenario: A secondary school EFL teacher in Algeria interrupts learners during oral activities to correct every error immediately, believing this to be the most effective way to improve accuracy. What advice would you give this teacher? What evidence would you cite, and what specific alternative strategies would you suggest? How might the Algerian classroom context (class size, learner anxiety, examination culture) affect your recommendations?*

## Classroom Applications

This section presents strategies and methods for teaching and learning based on the theoretical understanding of EA. The purpose of this section is to offer teachers a means of moving beyond simply responding to students' errors (a reactive, post-hoc approach) to using errors systematically (a proactive approach) as an ongoing resource throughout the entire teaching and learning process. There are six evidence-based classroom strategies, all of which are feasible to implement in an Algerian EFL classroom and are specifically aligned with the EA framework developed in previous sections.

### 9.1 Learner Error Logs

An error log (sometimes called an error journal) is a continuing, written log of all students' major errors that students maintain on their own, which include a record of the student's major errors, the student's corrections of his/her major errors, and the student's own explanation of the rules for his/her major errors. The error log serves two primary functions: the student develops metalinguistic awareness of his/her major errors (an understanding of how he/she makes mistakes), and the teacher has continual and current information about the student's progress through the use of the error log to provide continuing diagnosis of the student.

**Table 21. Sample Learner Error Log**

My Error	Target Form	Type	Likely Cause	The Rule (in my words)
She don't know	She doesn't know	Morphological	3PS agreement not acquired	he/she/it → does/doesn't

				in present simple
<b>I am agree</b>	I agree	Lexico-syntactic	French transfer (je suis d'accord)	'Agree' is a stative verb, no copula needed
<b>since three years</b>	for three years	Lexical	L1 calque	'Since' = a point in time; 'for' = a duration
<b>more better</b>	Better	Morphological	Double comparative	Irregular: good / better / best, no 'more'
<b>The informations</b>	information	Morphological	Overgeneralization of plural -s	'Information' is uncountable, no plural form

Organise a section of student notebooks or a computer document to create an error log in order to execute the following procedure. At the conclusion of each writing task or oral assignment, students should document two to three types of errors made and write a brief statement about the rule that governs the type of error made in their logbook entry. In addition to periodic review of error logs for messages, the teacher can add meta-linguistic feedback to all student logs. The error log will serve as a personal resource for grammar rules during your course of study.

## 9.2 Written Correction Code

A correction code is a system created to provide learners with constructive feedback about their writing by requiring the learner to be an active participant rather than an observer. In this way, the teacher does not correct errors on the student's paper, but will mark the location and type of error for the student. This gives the learner the responsibility of identifying and correcting the error. This provides opportunities to learn self-proofreading skills as well as develop their metalinguistic knowledge and skills.

**Table 22. Written Correction Code: Symbols and Examples**

Code	Error Type	Learner Error Example	Expected Self-Correction
<b>T</b>	Tense error	I have seen him yesterday [T]	I saw him yesterday
<b>WO</b>	Word order	Always she is late [WO]	She is always late
<b>AGR</b>	Agreement	The students was late [AGR]	The students were late
<b>ART</b>	Article	I need information [ART]	I need some / the information
<b>PREP</b>	Preposition	interested on music [PREP]	interested in music
<b>SP</b>	Spelling	recieve [SP]	Receive
<b>WW</b>	Wrong word	very economic [WW]	very economical
<b>^</b>	Omission	She go ^ school [^]	She goes to school
<b>//</b>	Unnecessary word	I am // agree [//]	I agree

To implement this effectively: introduce the code at the beginning of the semester and provide learners with a reference card; use the code consistently across all written tasks; give students time in class to self-correct; facilitate discussions about what you see as patterns that emerge throughout the class and also to review rewritten drafts with your students in order to determine if self-corrections are correct.

### **9.3 Consciousness-Raising Tasks**

Consciousness-raising (CR) tasks are a type of task which serve to draw students' attention to a target linguistic feature, but do not require them to produce that feature immediately. Schmidt (1990, cited in Ellis, 2008) claims that noticing (differentiating between a student's developing language and the language they are trying to learn) is essential to acquiring the target language; therefore, through the use of CR tasks, a student increases their opportunities for 'noticing' and provides them with a safe, non-threatening opportunity to explore that language.

#### **Activity 8**

Read the following sentence pairs. Both sentences in each pair are grammatically correct. Discuss with a partner: what is the difference in meaning between each pair? Then write two rules explaining when each tense is used. Compare your rules with another pair.

- a) *I saw this film last week.*     / *I have seen this film.*
- b) *She lived in Paris in 2010.*     / *She has lived in Paris.*
- c) *Did you eat yet?*                 / *Have you eaten yet?*
- d) *He worked for that company.*     / *He has worked for that company.*

## **9.4 Error Dictation**

The Error Dictation technique is an implementation of teaching through error analysis. It consists of the teacher reading aloud sentences that contain common errors made by student learners. Errors can come from actual examples of learning done in class or from constructed sentences that are samples of what many learners do wrong. Student learners are responsible for writing what they hear as the teacher reads each sentence, identifying what is wrong with the sentence/s and writing their own versions using correct language. Additionally, learners will identify what the grammar rule or reason is for why they made their error.

In using the Error Dictation technique in your classroom follow these guidelines: (1) The teacher will read the erroneous sentence twice at a normal speaking rate. (2) The learners will write what they hear. (3) The learners will identify the error and write the correct version of the erroneous sentence. (4) The learners will write a 1-sentence metalinguistic rule explaining why they made the error. (5) As a class, students will discuss and come to an agreement as to what the correct version of the sentence and the rule are. Error Dictation works best with errors that all learners have made together. Because of this the learners will have a sense of recognition and familiarity in the patterns of the errors.

## **9.5 Peer Error Correction**

Peer correction is a process in which learners review and provide feedback on each other's spoken or written work. Research has shown that peer feedback can be as effective as teacher feedback for certain error types. Moreover, peer feedback carries additional benefits: it reduces learner anxiety, promotes the development of higher-order thinking and metalinguistic awareness, and encourages cooperative learning. Structured peer correction procedures should be used by learners

(i.e., learners are trained to use the correction code and provide non-personal, specific/constructive comments).

The procedure for peer correction is as follows:

1. Learner A and Learner B share their written texts.
2. Each learner uses a correction code to mark errors they find in each other's work.
3. Each learner provides a short comment identifying the most important error and their reason for identifying that error.
4. Both learners meet to discuss the feedback and resolve any differences of opinion.
5. Both learners revise their original text based upon the feedback they received from their peer.
6. Teacher reads all revised versions of the text and gives each learner one last metalinguistic comment.

## **9.6 Error-Based Grammar Focus Lessons**

Using erroneous language produced by students in the classroom as a basis for instructing on grammar gives rise to a very direct means of implementing EA in the classroom context. By using actual errors produced by students in their writing as a basis for constructing lessons on grammar, teachers provide lessons that are as relevant to the learners' current learning needs as possible, and learners will be able to relate to the examples found in the lesson immediately.

For example, a lesson design for an EFL learning environment based on errors noted from student writing may look like:

- **Stage 1: Awareness:** Present the students with the erroneous sentences. Ask: Are these sentences correct? How do you know? What is wrong with each of the sentences?
- **Stage 2: Discovery:** Students work together in pairs to identify and explain the error and to formulate the rule that lies behind each of the errors. Each pair of students presents their findings to the rest of the pairs and the teacher elicits and consolidates the responses.
- **Stage 3: Practice:** Students do a targeted exercise where they apply the rule to complete sentences. They receive immediate feedback on their work.
- **Stage 4: Production:** Students write three new sentences using the target rule. Each student pairs with another student to review the written work and applies the correction code to provide feedback to the other student.
- **Stage 5: Reflection:** Students will document the target rule they have learned by writing it in their error logs and including an example of the target rule.

### **Activity 9**

Design a short 20-minute error-based grammar focus lesson for a B1-level EFL class at an Algerian university, based on the following errors collected from students' recent writing: She don't know; He goed; They was happy; I seen him yesterday; She don't never come on time. In your lesson plan, specify: (a) the target linguistic feature(s); (b) the awareness-raising phase;

(c) the practice phase; (d) the production/reflection phase. Your lesson should avoid immediately providing the correct forms, instead, guide learners to notice and self-correct.

### **Full Error Analysis Task:**

#### **Activity 10**

Using Case Study 1 below as your model, conduct a full Error Analysis of the following learner paragraph (L1 Arabic, Algeria, B1 level). Follow the five-step procedure from Section 6. Present your analysis in a formatted table (Steps 2–4) and a brief evaluative comment of approximately 150 words (Step 5). Then state three specific, prioritised pedagogical recommendations.

“In the modern world, the technology plays a very important role in our daily life. It have transformed the way we communicate, work and learn. Thanks to the internet, the students can now access to a lot of informations from all over the world without leaving their homes. However, some peoples argue that the technology is dangerous for the young generation because they spend too much times in front of the screens. In my opinion, we cannot ignore the advantages of the technology, but we must also to control its use. The parents have the responsibility to teach their childrens how to use the technology correctly. I am agree that the government should also to make laws to regulate the social medias.”

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