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Contents

Foreign Languages Section

| | |
|--|---|
| An Analysis of the Spelling Errors. In the Written English of Saudi University Students. Babiker Idris El-Hibir, PhD. and Nouriya Al-Muhaidib, PhD | 1 |
|--|---|

Arabic Section

| | |
|----|---|
| ١ | نونية المثقب العبدى. قراءة في المعاني والموضوعات . د. عبد الله محمد أحمد. أ. معني |
| | النور الأمين حسب الكريم |
| ٢٦ | أسلوب الإبدال في القرآن الكريم. أ. محمد قاسمي |
| ٣٩ | التحولات السياسية واثرها في أزمة الهوية وتأرجحها في رواية (عشاق وفونوغراف |
| | وأزمة). أ.م. د. إسراء حسين جابر |
| ٦١ | الشعر والدين والأخلاق بين النقد والفلاسفة. ألاء ياسين دياب |

قواعد النشر وشروطه

آداب مجلة علمية محكمة تصدر في يونيو وديسمبر من كل عام عن كلية الآداب جامعة الخرطوم وتقبل البحوث في مجالات الآداب والفنون والعلوم الإنسانية مع مراعاة الآتي:

١. ألا يكون البحث المقدم للمجلة قد نشر أو قدم للنشر في مكان آخر.
٢. تخضع البحوث المنشورة في هذه المجلة للتحكيم العلمي الذي يتولاه أساتذة مختصون وفق ضوابط موضوعية.
٣. تسلم نسختان مطبوعتان من البحث على معالج نصوص (حاسوب) مع أسطوانة مدمجة تحتوي على البحث. أو ترسل على البريد الإلكتروني adabsudan@gmail.com.
٤. يراعى في البحث أن يتراوح حجمه بين ٣٠٠٠-٥٠٠٠ كلمة ، ويرفق الباحث مستخلصاً باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية لبحثه بما لا يتجاوز صفحة واحدة (٢٠٠) كلمة ، ويذيل هذا المستخلص بما لا يزيد على خمس كلمات مفتاحية تبرز أهم المواضيع التي يتطرق إليها البحث. ويراعى أن تحتوي الصفحة الأولى من البحث على عنوان البحث واسم الباحث ، والجامعة أو المؤسسة الأكاديمية وعنوان البريد والبريد الإلكتروني.
٥. تنشر المجلة مراجعات الكتب بحدود (٢٠٠٠) كلمة كحد أقصى ، على ألا يكون قد مضى على صدور الكتاب أكثر من عامين ، ويدون في أعلى الصفحة عنوان الكتاب واسم المؤلف ومكان النشر وتاريخه وعدد الصفحات. وتتألف المراجعة من عرض وتحليل ونقد، وأن تتضمن المراجعة خلاصة مركزة لمحتويات الكتاب. مع مراعاة الاهتمام بمناقشة مصداقية مصادر المؤلف وصحة استنتاجاته.
٦. أن يوثق البحث علمياً بذكر المصادر والمراجع التي اعتمدها الباحث في نهاية البحث. وترتب المراجع في نهاية البحث هجائياً على ألا تحتوي قائمة المراجع إلا على تلك التي تمت الإشارة إليها في متن البحث. يشار إلى جميع المصادر في متن البحث المكتوب بلغة أجنبية كالطريقة التالية (اسم العائلة. سنة النشر. الصفحة او الصفحات) مثال: (Adams. 2000. 14).
٧. تعبر البحوث التي تنشرها المجلة عن آراء كاتبها ، ولا تعبر بالضرورة عن وجهة نظر المجلة أو أية جهة أخرى يرتبط بها صاحب البحث.
٨. لهيئة التحرير الحق في إدخال التحرير والتعديل اللازمين على الأبحاث. وتعد هيئة التحرير رأياً محكماً للمقال نافذاً بالنسبة لنشر البحث أو عدمه أو إدخال التعديلات التي يوصي بها المحكم.

An Analysis of the Spelling Errors In the Written English of Saudi University Students

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Abstract

This study investigates the spelling errors that characterize the writing of Saudi university students. The errors are analyzed with a view to finding their causes. The analysis shows that the errors fall into three categories- substitution (letter and word substitution), addition and omission. The authors conclude that the letter substitution error is a characteristic feature of the spelling of the subjects,. The authors also conclude that the subjects' Arabic dialect is responsible for causing such type of substitution. The other types, which occurred less frequently, are attributed to interference from both Arabic and English. The authors finally recommend a kind of instruction focusing on the learners' attested errors considering priorities.

INTRODUCTION

Our experience in teaching English at KFU has drawn our attention to certain substitution spelling errors that are common in the students' writing. These errors are made by students of English at almost all levels of language instruction. What is striking about these errors is that one finds exactly the same kind of error made by graduates and undergraduates, who look like they are preserving the same spelling behavior. We are thinking of substitution spelling errors where the letters a, e and u are almost invariably replaced by the letter i as in *'sitting' (setting), *'lizey' (lazy), *'illustration' (illustration). Often a word like 'set' is copied wrongly as 'sit' even by graduates, not by one or two, but by a relatively considerable number. The exceptionally high frequency of such errors among the subjects and not, we suppose, among other learners has been a source of puzzlement to us. The frequency of the vowel sound /i/ in Saudi speech in the subjects' locality made us wonder if L1 had any relevance to the making of such errors. This prompted us to make a comparison between the subjects' dialect and standard Arabic in relation to the problematic vowel sounds.

Subjects:

The subjects of this study are second year Saudi University students who studied English for six years before university entry. They are male students whose first language is Arabic.

Data:

The Spelling errors examined in this study are obtained from the written English examination scripts of the students under investigation. The examination was given after the students had finished an intermediate level composition course, which emphasized expository writing of a maximum length of 8 paragraphs.

Method:

By adopting a method of observation, a sample of words in the subjects' dialect pronounced by Saudi university instructors,

university and school students, and old and young women from Hofuf, the city where the subjects' university is located, has been collected in the course of observing their casual speech in their local dialect. The words are then transcribed and compared with their equivalents in standard Arabic focusing on vowel sounds. This is intended to judge the effect of the learners' dialect on standard Arabic and the subsequent effect on the subjects' English spelling.

Procedure:

The subjects' errors are identified, classified, described, and finally an attempt is made to account for their causes.

Classification and Description

The spelling errors can be divided into the following categories:

1. Substitution

Three types can be distinguished. The first type occurred when one vowel letter was substituted for by another letter in a given word. The most frequent substitution error involves the vowel letter i which is used instead of e as in:

- * Frish (fresh)
- * Will (well)
- * Mit (met)
- * Dided (decided)
- * Riflict (reflect)

A second type of substitution error that occurred but less often involves the use of i for a and u as in:

- * minual (manual),
- * lizy (Lazy),

- * Trivel (travel)
- * Chinnel (channel)
- * Hospitil (hospital)
- * Dingrous (dangerous)
- * Fither (father)
- * Fivourit (favorite)
- * illustration (illustration)

A third type occurred in similar – seconding words where one word was replaced by another as in:

- * Roles (rules)
- * Smile (Smell)
- * Quite (quiet)
- * Pace (piece)
- * Leaving (living)
- * Tribe (trip)
- * Lake (lack)
- * Birth (breath)

2. Addition

Errors of addition involve the unnecessary addition of the letter e in final position as in:

- * Prefere (prefer)

* Aske (ask)

* Develope (develop)

* Yourselfe (yourself)

3. Omission

This category is subdivided into errors involving omission of an essential

a) vowel letter from a word

i) medially as in

*frind (friend), *bulding (building), *paceful (peaceful)

ii) finally, which is in all cases the vowel e as in

*lik (like)

*pleas (please)

b) consonant letter from a word as in

*married (married)

Causes:

Some researchers accounted for substitution spelling errors of Arab learners in terms of the difference between Arabic and English. Ryan and Meara accounted for Arab substitution, omission and addition of vowels in terms of Arab readers' reliance on "a script that places great importance on consonant structures, and plays down the importance of vowels.... This, of course, does not apply to English." (1991, 533) El-Hibir and Al-Taha, (1994) suggested that Arabic influence on the substitution of i for e medially was only probable.

In light of our present study based on our observation of the sample of the pronunciation of words containing the vowels /a/ and /u/, a plausible cause of such substitution is that the vowels /a/ and /u/ in Standard Arabic are substituted for by /i/ in the subjects' local dialect used in the Eastern Region of Saudi Arabia. This marks a difference between the sound system of this form of Saudi Colloquial Arabic and that of standard Arabic. The two vowel sounds in Standard Arabic corresponding to English open back palatal /a/ and back lip-rounded /u/ are reduced in Saudi Arabic dialect to one sound- the front close palatal /i/, a vowel which is, in fact, a constant feature of word initial position in the learners' Arabic dialect and, to a lesser extent, of medial position as the comparison between the colloquial words and their equivalents clearly shows. Illustrative examples are the following colloquial words used in place of their counterparts in standard Arabic.

Lip-rounded back becomes front palatal as in:

'ig'id (sit down) for 'ug'ud (1) (initial and medial)

Jigrafiya (geography) for jugrafiya (medial)

Gim (stand up) for gum (medial)

Gil (say) for gul (medial)

' ikil (eat) for 'ukul (initial and medial) (the imperative is / kul/))

' iqtul (kill) for 'uqtul (initial and medial)

' iskit (silence!) for 'uskut (initial and medial)

' irkid (run) for 'urkud (initial and medial)

Open back becomes close front palatal as in:

Nijma for najma (star)

Digiga for dagiga (minute)

Ništiri for naštari (we buy)

Sa'ib for sa'ab (difficult)

The vowel /i/ for /a/, /u/ is attested in the spoken dialect of old and young women from Hofuf area in the Eastern Region of Saudi Arabia shown below.

?illi wara: ki šitsammi: nha

- ?il/for/ ?al/

(lit) What is behind you what you will call it?

- ?ða : rihti: ile'rs šitililbsi:n

(/ri/for/ru/;/il/for/al/ri/for/ru/,/il/for/al/,/ti/ for /ta/

(lit) When you go the wedding what you wear?

- wein : ti'aligi : n malabsik (/ti/for/tu/in/ti'aligi:n/)

Where do you hang your clothes?

- Tamaddint for tamaddant /i/ for /a/

- I have become civilized

- Išu:rbah for ašu:rubah /i/ for /a/

- (The soup)

The vowel /i/ in the learners' dialect has a far-reaching influence. It has replaced the vowels /a/ and /u/ in standard Arabic and their equivalent English vowels. It has also replaced the vowel /e/ which has no corresponding vowel in Arabic.

Regarding the cause of substitution errors of the third type occurring in similar-sounding words, there are different interpretations. Anderson, for instance, whose subjects made errors when spelling homophones thinks that the cause is that her students relied on phonological information at the expense of meaning and syntax to determine the right form from the context. (1987)

Oller and Ziahosseiny account for errors of this type in terms of interference of patterns resulting from false generalization. (1970). The patterns in the examples are 'minimally distinct'. Anderson's and Oller's statements cannot account for every individual spelling error of homophones. In such similar -sounding words, we believe the cause of at least some of the errors is that the learner is inclined to choose the more familiar which is the easier. A group of English major students at King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia, for example, were asked to write about a trip, and it didn't come as a surprise to us to see the word "trip replaced by "tribe". 'Tribe' being a very familiar word in Saudi Arabia, which is a land of innumerable tribes, can account for this particular error but not for all similar errors. Familiarity can account for errors such as *birth (breath), *lake (lack) but not for the rest, drawing on one's own experience

A possible cause of the addition and omission of 'e' in final position can be attributed partly to Arabic and partly to English. Regarding English, words with final 'e' and words without it are bound to interfere with each other. The difference between Arabic and English orthography can be another reason. In Arabic, each letter is realized in pronunciation which isn't the case in English. Omission of consonants can also be accounted for in terms of the irregularity of English spelling. Compare: carry and marry with fury and bury.

Conclusion

This study has examined the spelling errors made by second year Saudi university students majoring in English. It has suggested interference from Arabic as a source of error as well as English itself whose orthography does not directly indicate the pronunciation although in some cases it does or, at least, indicates a strong probability. Regarding Arabic, it suggests a strong influence of the learners' Arabic dialect on their English spelling. The subjects' display of the same spelling behavior relevant to the use of the letter i for the vowel letters is remarkable. In light of this study the need for a problem-focused instruction has become obvious. Top priority is to be given to the substitution involving the use of i for e, a and u.

Virtually every student made this type of error. The vowel e which is often added and deleted comes next in rank. This type of error should be given due consideration since its occurrence " can prevent the differentiation of lexical and grammatical morphemes that sound identical, e.g. pleas, noun, versus please, verb where final (e) marks the singular root forms." (Baker 1980).

Less frequent errors also warrant due attention. Errors of symphony classified as substitution errors were not as widespread as i used as a substitute for e, a, and u. However, this problem should be given special consideration since confusion of words can severely hamper reading ability (Ryan 1997). Omission of consonants was the least common type of spelling error which apparently comes last on the list of priorities unless comprehensibility is endangered.

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