

Abstract

Iman H Omar

A Study of the Lexical Errors in the Writing of Egyptian Learners of English as a Foreign Language

The aim of the thesis is to identify the types and frequency of lexical errors in Egyptian EFL learners' writing. The study also explains the possible sources of the lexical errors detected (whether they occur because of the learners' first language the target language). Fifty-two essays written by second-term engineering students at the Arab Academy for Science and Technology were analysed using the lexical error taxonomy created by Carl James (1998). The lexical errors identified in this study were classified into two broad categories, namely, formal and semantic errors. Each of these categories was classified into further subcategories depending on the errors identified. A total of 733 lexical errors were identified in the study. Nearly 68% of these errors were semantic errors, the majority of which were attributed to the students' limited knowledge of English collocations. Most of the errors detected were intralingual errors. Hence, the target language was the main cause of the lexical errors in the Egyptian EFL students' writing. In fact, the interlingual errors represented less than one fifth of the lexical errors detected. This can be attributed to the fact that the subjects Selected were graduates of English medium schools who have been exposed to the English language for many years. The results of this study can therefore usefully inform ESL/EFL teachers working with learners from many different backgrounds about the type and range of lexical errors that need attention.