

## MARKEDNESS AND INTERLANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN SPEAKING : AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS' SPOKEN LANGUAGE

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### Abstrak

*Tujuan artikel ini untuk mencari perkembangan dari Interlanguage, khususnya keanekaragaman sistem yang digunakan mahasiswa dalam berbicara yang disebabkan oleh markedness linguistik. Data dikumpulkan dari partisipan ketika mereka tampil berpidato. Pidato direkam sehingga penulis bisa memutar kembali rekaman tersebut setelah penelitian. Partisipan dipilih berdasarkan siswa yang lebih baik demi kemudahan dalam mengumpulkan data. Penulis menganalisa 3 pidato yang di sampaikan oleh 3 partisipan. Untuk mengaji perkembangan Interlanguage dari mahasiswa yang kurang mampu cukup sulit, karena mereka menghasilkan bahasa tanpa pengetahuan bahasa Inggris. Oleh karena itu, tidak ada sistem yang baku yang ditemukan ketika mereka menghasilkan bahasa Inggris. Setelah mengumpulkan data dan menganalisanya, penulis menemukan bahwa perkembangan Interlanguage dipengaruhi oleh Markedness. Markedness bisa dibagi menjadi Marked (Bertanda) dan Unmarked (Tidak Bertanda) dan ini merupakan sumber dari kesulitan. Mahasiswa merangkai sistem bahasa Inggris mereka sendiri berdasarkan pada Markedness yang bisa mereka tentukan. Jika mereka tidak bisa melihat atau mendengar kan Markedness, mereka cenderung untuk membuat Overgeneralisasi.*

### Abstract

*This article is proposed to find out the development of interlanguage, especially the variability of the system the students use in speaking caused by linguistic markedness. Data were collected from participants when they performed their speech. The speech was recorded so that the writer can replay it after the research. The participants were chosen from those who were considered better students for the sake of practicality in collecting the data. The writer analyzed 3 speeches spoken by three participants. To study interlanguage development of the poor students is quite difficult, because they produce the language without the knowlege of English. Therefore, there is no fixed system found when they produce English. Having collected the data and analyzed them, the writer found that interlanguage development is influenced by markedness. Markedness can be divided into marked and unmarked and it is one of the sources of difficulty. The students construct their own system of English based on the markedness they can identify. If they cannot see or listen to the markedness, they tend to make overgeneralization.*

**Key words:** *markedness, interlanguage, development, and spoken language*

### INTRODUCTION

Language development in speaking is a little bit different from that in writing. In speaking, a person produces an utterance directly and spontaneously. But in writing he or she can think and consider what will

be written. Therefore, the difficulty eventhough both are difficult, but speaking is more difficult than writing, especially in relation to the usage of syntax.

There are some restrictions met by the speaker in producing the language. The

restriction may come from the other speakers, especially the problem of listening. In addition, it may come from the speaker herself/himself, for example, his/her inability in linguistics and his/her personality, that may influence his/her syntactical structure.

Some experts argue that when speaking, a speaker does not need grammar, and as long as the language used is understandable, one's language is acceptable. This is derived from what Krashen (1982:10) argues " Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication". His argumentation is suitable for second language acquisition but not for foreign language acquisition, because the situation in which second language is acquired is different from which when acquiring foreign language. Language exposure in L2 situation is more frequent than that in foreign language learning situation. The speaker can evaluate their language from the reaction of the listener physically and orally. The listener may give feedback to the utterance produced by the speaker either positively or negatively. As the effect, the interlanguage tends not to be stable. On the other hand, such situation is rarely found when acquiring English as foreign language because language environment may not be found outside the class.

Therefore, many variables may be found in speaking and the variability according to Larson (2008:147). She reviewed some relevant researches. For example, Dickerson (1976) believes parallel stages in interlanguage development and linguistic change and note that the use of the variable rule was appropriate to such study. Stauble and Larsen-Freeman (1978) wrote

variable rules for second language learners of Spanish learning English, and Tarone (1982) made use of Labov's stylistic continuum in her continuous competence model. Schumann (1978) and Andersen (1983b) applied ideas on variation in the processes of pidginization and creolization to second language acquisition. In addition, Gatbonton's (1978) with gradual diffusion model, offered a dynamic view of second language phonological. One of the variables studied in this research is related to the syntactical markedness. Markedness is categorized into marked and unmarked. The writer chooses this as the topic of this research because this phenomenon is supposed to be the source of errors.

It is expected that this paper can enrich psycholinguistic corpus which can be used to consider the strategy of teaching. Making students conscious with the unmarked rules will help them competent to produce the words or sentences which go with the meaning.

## **Interlanguage and Markedness**

### **1. Interlanguage**

A foreign language learner acquires the foreign language systematically as a child acquires his first language. Huebner (1998) with his hypothesis which is known as interlanguage hypothesis states that language of second language acquirers is systematic. This also happens in acquiring foreign language. When learner tries to acquire it, he does not acquire it directly, but through some steps. Therefore, incorrect production naturally occurs in the process of the language development.

Interlanguage according to Trawinski (2005) is also known as the language system which the learner constructs in the process of SLA. The concept is formulated by erroneous, systematic (ruled governed or common for learners), dynamic (constantly changing through the gradual process,

distinct from L1 and L2, and permeable (not fixed). Thus, it is concluded that the process of learning language proceeds continuously which follow the predictable stages through errors.

Based on the concept of interlanguage, error is considered as the process that the students must follow in learning language. From the error they have made, they will learn. Therefore, a language teacher should realize it so that she will not force the students to acquire the language simultaneously.

Furthermore, he classified the errors into two kinds, as interlingual, and intralingual errors. Interlingual errors are the error caused by the system of their first and the second language, called interference. But intralingual errors are caused by the systems in the language they are learning. They can be overgeneralization, simplication, communication based errors (the use of communicative strategies), and pedagogical based errors (the result of faulty classroom).

A language cannot be separated from the system which is called syntax. Words eventhough have got the meaning, but they cannot be used as communication if they stand separately from the context, either the linguistic context or extra linguistic context. For example the noun 'book' will not be meaningful if it stands alone. But if it is used as 'this book is very interesting', the word is meaningful. One who listens to the utterance may be interested in reading it. He quotes Lyons (1969:50) who states that every language at a given time constitutes an integrated system of relationships.

Angelis (2005) suggests that a prior exposure to a nonnative language informs learners' choices of surface structures to a significant extent and learners with the same L1 but different prior nonnative languages develop some significant differences in their target language knowledge. Naturally,

speakers from the same L1 might have different development in foreign language. The differences might be because they have different background knowledge of their own language. The more frequent they are exposed with their own language, the more developed their target language become.

In addition, Huebner (1998) states that every language, at a given time, constitutes an integrated system of relationships that according to Lyons (1969:50) can make them complicated for the learners of English. Labov (1971) defines the traditional notion of system in linguistics as a set of relations with other items or sets of elements.

In a study about function word, Angelis (2005) clarifies that interlanguage principle which is known as One to One Principle guides the learner in constructing an internally consistent IL system and in maintaining the consistency as it develops. This motivates nativization, which in early stage is characterized by pidginization. Based on her finding about subject insertion and omission, she suggests that prior exposure to a nonnative language informs learners' choices of surface structures to a significant extent and learners with the same L1 but different prior nonnative languages develop some significant differences in their internal representation of the IL system he or she is constructing *internally consistent*.

In addition, Andersen (2008) suggests that one important principle of interlanguage construction can account for both minimal "pidginized" interlanguage systems and more developed interlanguage systems. The One to One Principle specifies that an IL system should be constructed in such a way that an intended underlying meaning is expressed with one clear invariant surface form (or construction). The meaning here is the relational meanings or one form to one meaning such as *possession, agent, patient, negative, plural, definite, punctual*, etc

Learners of the new language with One to One Principle construct an internally consistent IL, in their process to acquire the new language. Their first language system as the language exposure for them, so in the early stage of their language development, their language is like pidgin. Furthermore, their language becomes progressed when IL system has been constructed.

## 2. Markedness

Research on markedness tries to classify marked and unmarked components. The more focus is on finding unmarkedness as the source of difficulty in developing one's language. In addition, Haskell, et al (2011) state:

Linguistic markedness is the idea that, given a set of linguistic categories such as singular and plural. There is often a sense that one category is simpler or more basic than the other. The more basic category (e.g., singular) is referred to unmarked, and is often thought of as a default, while the less basic category (e.g., plural) is referred to as marked.

Ellis (1994:323) reveals "The notion of markedness which is defined typologically; that is an area (X) is to be considered relatively more marked than some other area (Y). If cross-linguistically X implies the presence of Y, but Y does not imply the presence of X".

Having read the notion "markedness" the writer can say that first and second languages are considered more marked which influence the presence of Y and not vice versa. The clear variables of the first and the second will make learning more difficult.

Students may have variability in pronouncing words. Some students can produce difficult sound correctly as the native like. But some others may find difficulties even they cannot imitate native pronunciation. Their difficulty may be

because they had never been trained to produce the sound.

The variability may come from the different structure of speech organ possessed by the speaker. The speaker with perfect organ of speech can produce the sound correctly, while the student who has got imperfect organ of speech, for example, that who has a short tongue or an abnormal palate will not be able to produce the correct sound though they are trained repeatedly.

The other source of variability may be related to the word itself. The word may be marked and unmarked. The marked word can be produced easily by nonnative speaker, but the unmarked is very difficult to produce. The sound /t/ or /d/ to express past tense is more difficult if preceded by a consonant voiced or voiceless with the exception, by aspirated sound as /t/, or /d/. For example, the word *learned*, *worked*, *waited*, *needed*, etc. On the contrary, it will become easier if the past form is preceded by vowel, as *studied*, *married*, *argued*, etc.

Stauble and Larsen-Freeman (1978) as reported by Carlisle (1977: 380) states the Interlanguage Structural Conformity Hypothesis predicts that implicational universals influence the structuring of interlanguage phonology. Under one interpretation, L2 learners will modify more marked structures more frequently than less marked structures. From the finding to subject insertion and omission in the Italian target language, Carlisle argues that prior nonnative linguistic knowledge seems to inform learners' choices in regard to surface structures to a significant extent.

To run the communication, the students' difficulty may be also derived from their limited of vocabularies and their inability of combining words into sentence. Many speakers with problems in pronunciation are still engaged in communication as long if they have got some vocabularies needed in

communication. Vocabularies seem very crucial in oral language. However, this does not mean that one with more vocabularies will be more successful in communication with native. They cannot use their vocabulary to communicate unless they have grammatical competence.

Adamson (2008) asserts that some experiments have been done showing that producing or comprehending certain sentences depends on how many transformations are in their derivations. For example, the passive transformation will change the base sentence "Marsha hit John" into "John was hit by Marsha," and the negative transformation will change that sentence into "John was not hit by Marsha." Thus, the negative passive sentence requires more transformations than either the active sentence or the declarative passive sentence. Miller and McKean (1964) found that subjects took longer to comprehend negative passives than declarative passives, and that declarative passives took longer to comprehend than actives. This finding suggested that to understand a sentence, subjects had to mentally undo the transformations that had been applied to it in Adamson, 2008).

Markedness influences transfer, and to show it, Eickman (1977) proposes differential hypotheses so that the areas of difficulty can be predicted on the basis of a comparison on the native language and the target language. They are as follows.

- a). Those areas of TL that are different from NL and are relatively more marked than in the NL , will be difficult
- b). The degree of difficulty associated with those aspects of the TL that are different and more marked than in NL corresponds to the relative degree of markedness associated with those aspects.

- c). Those areas of the TL that are different from the NL , but are not relatively more marked than in the NL will not be difficult

Therefore, conclusion can be drawn that linguistic markedness may affect one's difficulty in producing native-like words or sentences. The native language which is different from the target language will be difficult for the students. The target language which is more marked will be more difficult than that is not marked, Moreover, the degree of difficulty associated with aspects of the target language that are different and more marked than in NL corresponds to the relative degree of markedness. In addition, prior knowledge of nonnative languages may lead to some meaningful differences in learners' target language knowledge.

## RESEARCH METHOD

Because this is a research on language, the research method is discourse analysis. (Hinkel, 2005:231). The subjects of the research were English students. The number of participants was 6 students. They were taken purposively, based on their engagement in communication in the class in odd semester, 2012 academic year. The data were collected by observing, recording, and noting. So, the writer used camera as the instrument. Finally they were analyzed by studying the classroom transcripts and assign sentences to predetermined categories. After collecting the data, the writer analyzed them as follows. The syntactical markedness is classified into two general classifications, as marked and unmarked. More speakers modified the marked more frequently than the unmarked utterances. It can be seen below.

## **FINDING**

### **A. The marked syntax**

English rules must be used in communication in English speech community. In classroom speech community, most students were not aware of grammatical usage. They just focused on the content they wanted to deliver. Their interlanguage markedness can be seen through errors they have made during their classroom communication as part of speech, subject and verb agreement, negative form, and questions. The description can be presented gradually.

### **Part of speech**

The students' interlanguage seen from their errors is presented as follows. The sentence as "here I just additional" "It is have the meaning". The data show us that the students did not know that additional is an adjective or they might think nothing about part of speech. Thus whenever, there is an event to encourage them to speak, they will do it without considering the part of speech and the position in a sentence.

### **Subject verb agreement**

Subject and verb agreement can be used orally or in written communication. Their errors might be originated from their recognition of verbal and nominal sentences. For example, "If we are a listener, we ...." This error might be resulted from careless speakers. They did not pay attention to the subject and the verb. For example, we, and a listener, that 'we' is plural does not agree with 'a' just for singular.

### **Negative forms**

The negative forms of sentences especially for present and past forms tend to be neglected. Many students did not use auxiliary 'do'. So they directly come to negative as previously done. For example,

'If your friend not pay attention' instead of 'your friend does not pay attention; "if my audience not pay attention". From the examples, it can be seen that they omitted "does or do" for negative form.

### **Questions**

The sentence as "what you feel", instead of what do you feel. This shows the students' understanding about how to form a wh-question.

### **B. The unmarked syntax**

This kind of markedness was classified into verb forms and singular forms. The verb forms either past or present tenses were found identical. Producing ed-and es-endings might occur as the result carelessness or misunderstanding.

### **Verb forms**

Data show that [ed] tended to be pronounced clearly /id/. There must be some variations in pronunciation, as /id/, /t/, and/d/. They pronounced the word 'washed' with /wosed/, instead of /woʃt/, the word 'learned' with /le:ned, instead of /lə:nd/. In addition the present for verb is not used correctly, as in the sentence 'Everybody know' instead of everybody knows'. Another example is that the use of the first verb did not go with the subject. For example, 'Yuza mean like that' instead of Yuza means.... Therefore a stress on the lesson is helpful for the students who get benefit from the teaching situation.

Plural form is used for plural noun, 'peoples' in some peoples' and 'childrens' in many childrens'. This might be the result of overgeneralization, and can change gradually. The other error is related to pronunciation of s-ending in plural form as, writers, which is pronounced [raiters]

instead of [raitə:z], boxes is pronounced [boksɛs] instead of [boksɪz], etc.

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the analysis, the writer can draw some conclusions as follows. As one of the topics of Psycholinguistics, Markedness is strange for foreign learners. It influences how the students' interlanguage develops. In interlanguage development, the students develop their own system of language based on what the teacher exposed to them frequently and what they can understand. If they are aware of the errors, they can produce correct sentences. The system they can develop may produce errors that may be caused by overgeneralization.

Fortunately, errors may be minimized through markedness. Markedness in general is classified into two types, marked and unmarked. The marked system is easier to identify than the unmarked system. Moreover, the marked is found in part of speech, negative sentences, interrogative sentences, and subject verb agreement. On the other hand, the unmarked is found in verb forms (present and past) and the use of plural either in the form or pronunciation.

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