Analyzing lapsus linguae in the English language

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1. Introduction

The central topic of this final paper is ‘Analyzing lapsus linguae in the English language’. *Lapsus linguae* is a Latin term meaning slips of the tongue, or speech errors. Everyone who speaks a certain language has made an error in speech, however, not many question why that happens. The aim of this paper is trying to provide some answers that question and give insight into speech errors, also to demonstrate that they may not be as random as previously believed. Even though they appear randomly, they exhibit certain patterns.

The current paper is structured into eight parts. First, there is the introduction in which readers will be introduced to the key issues. The second part explains the types of errors in speech, and their general classification, providing some examples. The third part is about Freud’s interpretations of speech errors and how he uses dreams and psyche to explain them. The fourth part is centered around speech errors made by children and what they tell us about the language development. The fifth part explains how the second language acquisition (L2) can be better understood by analyzing speech errors in L2. The sixth part deals with the effects of old age on language production. The seventh part is focused on how speech errors are utilized in literature. Finally, in the eighth part the main aspects will be concluded.

2. Types of speech errors

Lapsus linguae, translated from Latin, means a slip of the tongue; some linguists refer to it simply as a speech error. Speech errors are a common occurrence, and they happen to everyone. On average, for every 1,000 spoken words, one or two errors occur (Pincott, 2012). If we assume that the average pace of speech is 150 words a minute, it will mean that an error occurs every 7 minutes (Pincott, 2012). Depending on the person, one can make between 7 and 22 speech errors daily. A question arises: How can one intend to say one thing but end up saying another? Are speech errors predictable? These questions will be answered in this chapter.

One cannot predict when a speech error will occur. However, the errors that occur are predictable and nonrandom. Victoria Fromkin (1971) has properly entitled her article “The Non-Anomalous Nature of Anomalous Utterances.” By solely looking at the article's title, it is evident that, even though they are anomalies or errors in speech, their nature is not. By understanding speech errors, one can better understand how speech is produced and gain insight into other aspects of speech.

Many linguists who have studied speech errors classify them differently. The terminology used here will be the one introduced by Fromkin (1971). However, different solutions by other authors will also be mentioned.

Specific speech patterns occur on any linguistic level, meaning they involve phonemes or whole words. The most common ones are the following: shift, transposition (spoonerisms), anticipation, preservation, addition, deletion, substitution, and blend.

Shifts are speech errors where one speech segment is relocated somewhere else. Transpositions or exchanges are more famously known as spoonerisms and are speech errors when two segments are transposed. Anticipation errors happen when a later segment replaces an earlier one. Preservation is the opposite of anticipation when an earlier segment replaces the later one. Addition implies adding linguistic material, and deletion means removing linguistic material. Substitution occurs when another replaces one segment that is not in the sentence. Finally,

blends occur when more than one word is considered and blended into a single word.

Speech errors can be broadly divided into three main types: phonological, syntactic, and lexical. These categories reflect different linguistic levels at which errors can occur and help researchers understand the mechanisms underlying the language production.

2.1. Phonological speech errors

Phonemes are the smallest units of speech and hold the most significant percentage of occurring speech errors. The mentioned errors involve substitution, omission, addition, or transposition (metathesis) of segments that are the size of a phone.

Phonemic speech errors encompass phonological units that do not carry semantic content, which includes: “phonetic features, segments (consonants or vowels), sub-syllabic sequences of segments (consonant clusters, rhymes, etc.), syllables, and lexical stress.” (Jaeger, 2005, p. 22).

The error that occurs most frequently is the error of anticipation. This error happens when one sound is used to anticipate a sound that occurs later in the utterance. Here are some examples provided by Fromkin (1971, p. 30):

1) a. also share → alsho share [ɔlšo šer]

b. John dropped his cup of coffee → … cuff of coffee

c. Such observation → sub - …

In example 1a, the *sh* sound in the second word is anticipated, and the speech error occurs in the first word. The same can be said for examples 1b and c.

Perseverance errors are the opposite of anticipation errors where, instead of the influence of an anticipated sound, the former is preserved and influences the next one:

2) a. John gave the boy → … gave the goy

b. irreplaceable → irrepraceable

c. Chomsky and Hale → Chomsky and Chale

MacKay (1979, as cited in Fromkin, 1971, p. 30) claims that "There is a much greater chance for an error to occur when there are repeated phonemes".

More complex errors are spoonerisms in which there is s transposition or metathesis of two segments. They were named after the Reverend William A. Spooner, a dean and a warden of New College, Oxford, who became famous due to his funny slips of the tongue. The said errors can be interpreted as combinations of the errors mentioned above. Fromkin (1971, pp. 30-31), however, believes that it is more likely that the error occurs due to a switch in the linear ordering of the intended sounds:

3) a. Keep a tape → teep a cape

b. The zipper is narrow → the nipper is zarrow

c. Turn the corner → torn the kerner

Spoonerisms are a fascinating occurrence in speech. At the motor level, spoonerisms sound natural, so they follow the rules of sound sequences of a language and, thus, are possible for the language (Baars & Motley, 1976, p. 469). However, they become gibberish on higher levels, such as lexical and syntactic levels. Actually, “They clearly violate pragmatic and semantic control, partly violate lexical and syntactic organization and never violate phonotactic and motor control” (Baars & Motley, 1976, p. 470).

Speech errors in consonant clusters involve only one segment of the cluster, which means that the consonant cluster is not an indissoluble unit, as shown in the following examples (Fromkin, 1971, pp. 31-32):

4) a. fresh clear water → flesh queer water

b. brake fluid → blake fruid

c. two hundred drugs → two hundred [dʌgz]

4c is an example of another pattern of speech errors, deletion, in which one segment is deleted or omitted. Deletion further proves the conclusion that clusters are not unitary performance units (Fromkin, 1971, p. 32).

Speech errors involving consonant clusters can happen, but it is an exemption from the rule (Fromkin, 1971, p. 32):

5) a. little island in Brittany → brittle island in litany

b. throat cutting → coat thrutting

Furthermore, "the movement of whole clusters is further evidence that the 'syllable' is not a single indissoluble unit in speech production, but itself composed of a sequence of segments" (Fromkin, 1971, pp. 32-33). Consonant-verb (CV) or verb-consonant (VC) sequences, that are part of a syllable, can be involved in speech errors (Fromkin, 1971, p. 33):

6) a. pussy cat → cassy put

b. foolish argument → farlish …

c. a heap of junk → a hunk of jeep

The speech errors above show that clusters can be divided into segments, as mentioned above, but in the case of affricates, there is not one example where they divide into segments (Fromkin, 1971, p. 33):

7) a. pinch hit → pinch hitch

b. pretty chilly → chitty pilly

c. Ray Jackendoff → Jay Rackendoff

The same happens with diphthongs. "Where vowel + glide or [r] is involved, the error always includes the entire diphthong, or the vowel with its 'r-quality'" (Fromkin, 1971, p. 33). This occurrence suggests that "the complex vowels are single units, or that errors which 'violate' phonological constraints are 'corrected' after the substitution occurs" (Fromkin, 1971, p. 34), as shown here:

8) a. first and goal to go → first and girl to go

b. took part in the first → took pirt [pərt] in the first

c. available for exploitation → avoilable for …

Many linguists agree with the following statement (Boomer & Laver, 7, as cited in Fromkin, 1971, p. 39): "Segmental slips obey a structural law with regard to syllable-place; that is, initial segments in the origin syllable replace initial segments in the target syllable, nuclear replace nuclear, and final replace final". This simultaneously means that a syllable is a unit in the "phonemic programming system" (Fromkin, 1971, p. 39).

As it was previously mentioned, slips of the tongue appear randomly, but they are not random. The linguistic system constrains them. It would be impossible to find phones that are not found in regular utterances. According to Fromkin (1971, p. 40), "For example, an English speaker does not substitute a rounded front vowel in anticipation of a rounded back vowel, nor a lateral click for a lateral liquid".

The phonological rules of a language state that there is a sequential ordering of segments within each syllable, which means that initial segments switch with initial segments, central with central and final with final (Fromkin, 1971, p. 40):

9) a. sphinx in moonlight → minx in spoonlight

b. play the victor → flay the Pictor

c. tab stops → tab [stabz]

Even when a speech error involving a phone, syllable, or even a whole word, occurs, the stress pattern of the affected sentence is not changed. Fromkin (1971, p.43) explains this as follows: "Thus it seems that two aspects of stress must be

accounted for: first, the word stress moves with the word itself (i.e. the syllable of the word which receives main stress in isolation also receives the primary stress when the word is moved); second, the stress contour of the phrase is fixed by the syntactic structure of the phrase itself, and must be generated independently of the word order in the utterance".

2.2. Lexical errors

Lexical errors involve substitutions and blends of meaningful lexical items, including “1) entire words, both content and function, both monomorphemic and polymorphemic; 2) content stems; and 3) inflectional and derivational affixes.” (Jaeger, 2005, p. 23).

In cases where the entire word was substituted it was shown that the substituted words were phonologically similar to the intended words. Fromkin (1971, p. 44), for instance, suggests that our stored lexicon is ordered in a dictionary-like fashion, which would explain the previously mentioned statement. Furthermore, "derivationally complex items may be stored as combinations of separate formatives, i.e. stems and affixes", as seen in the following examples (Fromkin, 1971, p. 45):

10) a. grouping → groupment

b. infinitive clauses → infinity clauses

To explain the process in 12a and b, the same author suggests that there are certain rules to word formation. The rules, combined with a vocabulary of stems and affixes, create neologisms that do not occur in the language.

Blends are another pattern of speech errors, and they occur when two words with similar semantic features are combined into one non-existent word. They occur when a speaker has two words in mind for the intended meaning. However, instead of choosing one, the speaker blends the two words, creating errors.

Another interesting occurrence is that some errors may involve the substitution of antonyms (Fromkin, 1971, p. 46):

11) a. I really like to – hate to get up in the morning

b. It's at the bottom – I mean – top of the stack of books

c. This room is too damn hot – cold

Substitutions between words for space and time can also happen (Fromkin, 1971, p. 46):

12) a. the two contemporary, er – sorry, adjacent buildings

b. during the apparatus, er – behind the apparatus

c. the singular, sorry, the present time

The results from aphasia studies provide evidence that substituted words often belong to the same semantic class, "as in cases where patients will read tree for flower, night for dark, spoon for fork, liberty for democracy etc. (Marshall &- Newcombe 1966, Luria & Vinogradova 1939, Jakobson 1966, as cited in Fromkin, 1971, p. 46).

It is essential to study such errors because they indicate the storage of vocabulary and how the speech is produced.

2.3. Syntactic speech errors

Misplacement of lexical items (words and morphemes) and phrase blends fall into the category of syntactic speech errors (Jaeger, 2005). These occur due to the misplacement of lexical items in a linear order as opposed to lexical errors which occur due to an error in a lexical choice (Jaeger, 2005).

One of this misplacement examples refers to the indefinite article switching:

13) a. a current argument → an arrent curgument

b. an eating marathon → a meeting arathon

c. a history of an ideology → an istory of a hideology

Whenever an error involves a mistakenly selected word, the selected word always belongs to the same word class. This means that nouns switch with nouns, verbs with verbs, etc. Furthermore, "the grammatical phrase under construction imposes imperative restrictions on the selection of words." (Nooteboom, 1969, as cited in Fromkin, 1971, p. 44):

14) a. a computer in our own laboratory → a laboratory in our own computer

b. naturalness of rules → nationalness of rules

c. chamber music → chamber maid

Apart from the classification of speech errors mentioned above, there is another one which has been introduced by Nooteboom (1973). He generally differentiates (1) errors in the programme and (2) errors of selection. The former hold majority of the errors collected by Nooteboom. “In these errors two units in the same utterance interfere with one another, the result being an anomalous form” (Nooteboom, 1973, p. 146). This category comprises phonemic speech errors and non-phonemic errors (units larger than phonemes or consonant clusters), including affixes, root morphemes, whole words, VC and CV combinations (Nooteboom, 1973, pp. 146-154). On the other hand, the latter are the errors that occur due to the selection of the wrong word.

3. Freudian interpretation of speech errors

Freud believes that everything, from human behavior to speech errors, is influenced by the unconscious. In his attempt to explain the origin of speech errors, he uses psychoanalysis to examine and understand them. To understand the mistaken word used in the sentence, Freud looks to the elements and context outside of the given word. In other words, “the elements which the speaker did not intend to express, and of whose incitement we became conscious only through the disturbance” (Freud, 1914, p. 75).

In his other work, *Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud introduces the process of condensation in which several elements are combined or condensed into one. “The formation of substitutions and contaminations [blends] in speech-mistakes is, therefore, the beginning of that work of condensation which we find taking a most active part in construction of the dream” (Freud, 1914, p. 77).

While observing speech errors, Freud found a “disturbing influence of something outside of the intended speech” (Freud, 1914, p. 80). This disturbing influence, Freud writes, is either a single unconscious thought revealed through the speech error or “a more general psychic motive, which directs itself against the entire speech” (Freud, 1914, p. 80). In the influence of unconscious thought, an analysis needs to be performed to bring it to the conscious.

What comes next here are some examples of Freud’s analysis of speech errors. Instead of saying, “The ape he is a funny sight / When in the apple he takes a bite.” (Freud, 1914, p. 81), Freud made a speech error and said, “The apel.” The said error is a blend, or as Freud calls it, contamination, and is a result of him repeating himself coupled with impatience to say the couplet.

Freud believes that speech errors are highly contagious. As an example, he writes a speech error his daughter had made months prior to the error mentioned above. She made a mistake when saying a woman’s name wrong. Instead of saying, “I wrote to Mrs. Schlesinger.”, she mispronounced her name as “Schresinger” (Freud, 1914, p. 81).

Another example of contagious speech errors is Freud's example of one of his patient's speech errors. The woman made an error and said, "I sut up…" instead of "I shut up." (Freud, 1914, p. 82). When she was questioned why she said 'sut' instead of 'shut', the woman replied that she did that because Freud had jokingly changed the word 'earnest' into 'earnesht' (Freud, 1914, p. 82). She went on to repeatedly make speech errors. Freud further points out that the reason she kept on repeating errors was not because she imitated him but because of the unconscious connection with her name (Ernst) (Freud, 1914, p. 82).

One of Freud's patients made a speech error saying "the manx in the boc" instead of "the man in the box," referring to the game her children invented (Freud, 1914, p. 82). The answer to the said error Freud found while analyzing her dream. In her dream, her husband was rich (opposite of what he was in reality). A day before the dream, she had asked for a new set of furs which he could not afford. "She upbraided him for his stinginess, "for putting away so much into the strong box" (Freud, 1914, p. 83). The woman's friend had gotten a new mink coat. According to Freud, "the word manx (manks) reduced itself to the "minks" which she longs for, and the box refers to her husband's stinginess" (Freud, 1914, p. 83).

When a woman was discussing her marital problems, she made a speech error, saying she saw her husband in the theatre while watching the play *Officer 606* (Freud, 1914, p. 86). Upon acknowledging her mistake, she corrected herself and said that she meant to say *Officer 666* (Freud, 1914, p. 86). The mistake was due to the unconscious influence of "606," a treatment for a disease that was the reason for their marital problems.

Freud's analysis is in the sphere of semantic errors. He considers what was meant to be articulated and "the thoughts outside the intended speech, which determine the origin of the speech-blunder, and also suffice to explain the newly formed mistakes in speech" (Freud, 1914, p. 95). He does not deny the fact that sounds influence other sounds. However, he believes that "they merely represent the performed mechanism, which is conveniently utilized by a more remote psychic motive" (Freud, 1914, p. 95). Furthermore, "the conditions underlying speech-

blunders are complex and go far beyond the contact effect of the sounds" (Freud, 1914, p. 95). Freud further points out the presence of shame when one makes a speech error.

Freud emphasizes that mistaking someone's name, intentionally or unintentionally, can serve as an insult to the other person. Furthermore, substituting a stranger's name or adopting it "signifies an appreciation of the same" (Freud, 1914, p. 98). In a couple of examples where another substituted one's name, Freud writes that it is a self-criticism.

4. Speech errors in children

Understanding speech errors children produce helps us research the language acquisition process. In order to study children's slips of the tongue, it is important to first differentiate a slip of the tongue from the usual language a child uses. According to Jaeger (2005, p. 2), for instance, "a slip of the tongue cannot be made on a structure unless that structure has already been learned or acquired". In other terms, a child's slips cannot be judged by adult standards but by their own, although children react like adults when making an error; they just look confused and correct their errors (Jaeger, 2005, p. 11).

There are other children's speech errors that are not considered slips of the tongue, such as re-starting an utterance because the speaker changed his/her mind about it or stuttering, slurred speech, and other motor dysfluencies because they are results of a problem in the 'Motor Planning' component rather than in the 'production planning' (Jaeger, 2005. pp. 11-15).

The age at which children begin to produce slips varies from child to child. In order to get accurate results, the researcher needs to be familiar with the child's speech development and abilities. Each child is different, and they develop different language skills at different stages of their development. So, there is no rule as to what slips occur and when.

4.1. Differences between slips made by children and adults

Data from Nooteboom (1973) shows that substitutions are the most common type of phonological error. Following this premise, Jaeger (2005) has found similar results in children's errors. Substitution errors constitute a majority of errors produced by 1-year-olds (58.5%), but that number plummets at the age of 2 up to 47% and continues to rise to 63.5% by age 5 (Jaeger, 2005, p. 74). 63.5% of substitution errors exceeds adult numbers of 56.5%.

There is an increase of additions from age 1 to age 3 to 18%, which remains steady into adulthood (Jaeger, 2005, p. 74). Children do not make omission errors until age 2, when they range from 6.5% to 9%, and these numbers are slightly higher than those of adults that are 2% or 5% (Jaeger, 2005, p. 74).

This rise happens over time since very young children do not yet produce consonant clusters that are primarily involved in making the said errors (Jaeger, 2005, p. 75).

Another interesting difference between adults and children lies in the environmental influence. Both exhibit errors influenced by some environmental factors. However, available data shows that children are far more susceptible to it. “These external influences are extremely important in the young children’s errors, as visual, tactile and auditory stimuli vie for attention in the child’s working memory while he or she is planning an utterance” (Jaeger, 2005, p. 275). As children mature and gain control over their verbal planning, they are less influenced by external factors, yet the influence is still more significant in a 5-year-old than in adults, which Jaeger’s study confirms.

4.2. Children-only and adult-only errors

Jaeger (2005) has found that children and adults often have the same errors. However, some errors are produced only by adults, and others are produced only by children. They make up a small percentage of the errors produced and can be attributed to an accident in the data collection, but “a closer examination of these categories may reveal some interesting differences between the children and adults in terms of representation or processing” (Jaeger, 2005, p. 53). Furthermore, if they vary considerably, such differences require developmental explanations (Jaeger, 2005, p. 51).

Only four types are marginally different between slips produced by children and adults respectively. These differences cover morphology, prosody, stress, and lexical substitution errors. Of the four mentioned above, only the errors involving

morphology, more specifically derivational morphemes, are specific just to children's slips.

The issues of derivation show "the developmental trends in the children's lexical representations for productive derivational morphemes" (Jaeger, 2005, p. 53). In other words, it shows the beginning of understanding words' stem + derivational morphemic structure.

The second group of differences refers to the errors of hierarchical word-internal prosodic structure (Jager, 2005, p. 54), and they occur in slips produced by adults rather than by children. "The fact that this error type was more predominant in adult errors suggests a greater role for the higher-order prosodic structure of words in adult representation and planning, since the overall prosodic structure (i.e. number and structure of syllables) of neighboring words seemed to be an influence in adult errors more than children's" (Jaeger, 2005, p. 54).

The third group includes the errors of lexical stress. These occur in more significant percentages in adults because "English-speaking children have not yet completely internalized the compound-stress rule by age 5" (Volgel, 1999, as cited in Jaeger, 2005, p. 55). Furthermore, children have stored in their lexicon words with fixed stress patterns and, therefore, cannot make such errors.

The final group consists of lexical substitution errors, which occur exclusively in adults. This may be interpreted by their semantic or phonological relationship. In most cases, such errors occur with proper names. Taking into consideration that very young children are 'pre-literate,' it is logical to observe that the errors mentioned above occur only in adults (Jaeger, 2005, p. 54).

5. Influence of old age on speech errors

Language, as an essential aspect of human communication, undergoes changes throughout the lifespan. The aging process brings various cognitive, linguistic, and motor alterations that can impact speech production. This chapter, therefore, examines the influence of old age on speech errors.

Kavé and Knafo-Noam (2015) have focused on studying the development of phonemic and semantic fluency across the lifespan. They found a universal increase in these abilities, indicating that older adults maintain a certain level of fluency. However, their study also highlighted a differential decrease between the two types of fluency, phonemic and semantic. The former is the ability to generate words starting with a specific letter, while the latter is the ability to generate words within a specific category. Phonemic fluency significantly declines with age in comparison to semantic fluency (Kavé & Knafo-Noam, 2015, p. 752). This divergence suggests that specific linguistic processes might remain intact in old age, but others could be more vulnerable to decline.

Another study by Burke and Shafto (2004) explores the intricate relationship between aging and the language production. The study has shown that even though older adults maintain or improve their knowledge of words and meanings, they experience a shortage in the ability to produce the spoken and written forms of words (Burke & Shafto, 2004, p. 24). The given authors believe that shortages are caused by weak connections in the phonological and orthographical systems. Furthermore, their research shows that "being unable to produce a word one is absolutely certain that one knows" (Burke & Shafto, 2004, p. 21), older adults experience tip-of-the-tongue states much more than young adults.

6. Speech errors in first and second language production

6.1. Monolingual models of speech production

In the chapters above, it has been clear how important it is to understand slips of the tongue much better, since their research results shed light on speech production. Following the findings, it is also possible to study slips of the tongue made by foreign language speakers (L2) to have deeper insights into the second language acquisition process.

Poulisse (1999) has researched whether there is a difference between L2 and L1 contexts. The data for her research was collected from 45 Dutch learners of English whose levels were advanced, upper intermediate, and lower intermediate (Poulisse, 2000, p. 137).

Following Dell's and Levelt's models of speech production, there are at least three levels of encoding, that is, syntactic, morphological, and phonological, and each ones has its own rules that define the possible combinations of units at that level (Poulisse, 2000, pp. 128-139).

On the syntactic level, slips follow the 'syntactic category constraint': nouns switch with nouns, verbs with verbs, and the rest. "This turned out to be true for 99% of the lexical slips in L1 (Fay & Cutler, 1977) and for 97% of the 717 lexical slips in our L2 corpus" (Poulisse, 2000, p. 140).

Similarly, phonological rules follow the 'syllable position constraint" where onset switches with onset, nuclei with nuclei, and codas with codas (Poulisse, 2000, p. 140). "This was true for 98% of L1 consonants and 81% of L1 vowels" (MacKay 1970, as cited in Poulisse, 2000, p. 140).

Another thing that needs to be considered in observing the possible differences between L1 and L2 slips is the lexical bias effect (LBE). LBE is "the tendency for phonological substitution errors to result in existing words (rather than nonwords) at a rate higher than would be predicted by chance" (Costa et al., 2006, p. 972). The experiment by Dell and Reich (1981) have found that 60% of the phonological errors

resulted in existing words in L1 (Poulisse, 2000, p. 141). However, there was no clear evidence for the lexical bias effect in L2 data; only 29% of phonological slips resulted in existing English or Dutch words (Poulisse, 2000, p. 141). Furthermore, there was no difference in LBE between advanced and beginning learners, thus, no difference between the L1 and L2 lexical bias effect (Poulisse, 2000, p. 141).

The best example of distinctions between L1 and L2 involves the extent to which errors in speech impact content and function words. Among all phonological slips made by L1 speakers, 96% appeared in content words compared with 62% in L2 speakers (Poulisse, 2000, p. 142). In the same way, lexical slips made by L1 speakers concerning content words were 71%, and in L2 speakers, 42% (Poulisse, 2000, p. 142). Advanced learners made fewer mistakes in this regard than the least proficient ones, proving that the less skilled a speaker is, the more mistakes they will make.

6.2. Bilingual models of speech production

In order to fully understand L2 speech production, it is crucial to remember that L2 speakers speak at least two languages, so that the models of speech production need to be adapted to bilingual speakers.

Firstly, one must understand how L1-based slips occur in L2 utterances to better understand the bilingual mind. Said errors are based on the proficiency in a language. The influence of one's L1 diminishes when one is better at a particular language. This is clear in data that have been collected by Poulisse (2000), where advanced learners' errors influenced by their L1 constituted 13.4% of slips, as opposed to 37.5% of errors made by lower intermediate learners (Poulisse, 2000, p. 142).

Poulisse and Bongaerts (1994) suggest that the errors mentioned above occur due to the model of L1 and L2 lemma selection (Poulisse, 2000, p. 143). Following this model, L1 and L2 lemmas can be simultaneously activated because they share

many semantic features (Poulisse, 2000, p. 143). Additionally, the model was based on L1/L2 blends (Poulisse, 2000, p. 143).

7. Slips of the tongue in Shakespeare's plays

William Shakespeare is, by many, believed to be the greatest playwright in history. His works were written in the late 16th and early 17th century during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. This chapter discusses how Shakespeare masterfully employed the use of speech errors in order to guide his plays toward certain conclusions.

Samuel A. Tannenbaum (1930) has provided a deep analysis of how Shakespeare used slips of the tongue in his characters. One such scene is in the play 'Richard II.' The scene in which the slip takes place is Act II Scene ii, where the Duke of York, after discovering that his sister, the Queen, has died, refers to his cousin as his sister. "Come, sister,--cousin, I would say--pray, pardon me." (Shakespeare, 2018, p. 49). It is clear how his sister's death was still heavy on his mind.

Another example is from the play 'As You Like It', that is, from Act IV Scene iii. Two instances in this play actually depict slips of the tongue. The first one is made by Oliver, who explains to Rosalind and Celia how Orlando saved his brother from a hungry lioness. Wishing to hide his identity as Orlando's brother, he refers to himself in the third person. In his retelling, he is carried away by his emotions and says: "From miserable slumber I awaked." (Shakespeare, 2023, p. 60). Oliver is experiencing conflicting emotions of remorse and gratitude, trying to simultaneously avoid the humiliation of confessing to being Orlando's brother. He struggles to refer to himself in the third person (Tannenbaum, 1930).

Soon, another error is made in the same scene, this time by Cecilia. Rosalind, who is pretending to be Ganymede, swoons after looking at the handkerchief soaked with her lover's blood. Cecilia is concerned and momentarily forgets that Rosalind is pretending to be someone else, exclaims "Cousin" (Shakespeare, 2023, p. 60). She has always referred to her as such, and when she realizes her mistake, she exclaims, "Ganymede!" (Shakespeare, 2023, p. 60). Tannenbaum (1930) writes how some do not refer to this as slip, but instead, as a common expression that is used in

Shakespeare's play where one calls someone cousin, referring to their niece, nephew, brother-in-law, and grandchild (Tannenbaum, 1930, p. 64).

Even though Shakespeare had written these plays 300 years before Freud published his work 'Psychopathology of Everyday Life', we can see his deep understanding of the "psychological mechanism" (Tannenbaum, 1930, p.63) behind slips of the tongue. So, it is clear that Shakespeare was well aware of them. He knew how distraction works in creating speech errors and how sometimes said errors may reveal the truth intended to be hidden. With the use of speech errors, Shakespeare has brought characters to life and humanized them in a way that the characters seemed more relatable.

8. Conclusion

Lapsus linguae occur randomly in speech, but they follow specific rules despite that. They are generally put in three main categories, referring to the level of speech they occur. Phonological errors involve the errors of phonetic features, segments, consonant clusters, rhymes, syllables, and lexical stress. Lexical errors encompass meaningful lexical items, including whole words, content stems, and inflectional and derivational affixes. Syntactic errors differ from lexical errors because they imply the misplacement of lexical items in a linear order.

Among many interpretations of speech errors, there is the one suggested by Freud in his own work 'Psychopathology of Everyday Life,' which is still rather intriguing. His thoughts try to explain how a deep analysis of the psyche, most notably patients' dreams, is needed to fully understand the specific slip's origin.

By observing speech errors made by adults and children, it becomes possible to see how age significantly impacts the language production. Studies have shown that very young children make more slips than adults. Afterwards, their language skills also grow as they themselves do. In older adults, studies have shown that phonemic fluency decreases significantly with age than semantic fluency.

Speech errors by second language learners reveal a lot about the second language acquisition. L2 speakers make more errors in speech concerning content words than L1 speakers. Differences between the two in this regard are lessened when the speaker is at an advanced level of language learning. However, it is essential to understand that L2 speakers speak at least two languages, which significantly impacts their speech errors. Again, the better one is at a particular language, the fewer errors they will make. Many L2 speakers create blends of L1/L2 words because L1 and L2 lemmas share lots of semantic features; thus, they can activate simultaneously, creating blends.

Finally, errors are widespread in speech, and they are sometimes represented in literature. Shakespeare's plays were used as an example of such occurrences in this final paper. The main reason is that Shakespeare used speech errors as a literary device to create more intricate plots and believable characters.

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SUMMARY

The easiest way for humans to interact is through language. As humans grow up, they learn more and more about their language and, in time, master it. However, no one is perfect at a particular language. One may know every word in the dictionary and every grammatical rule but still make mistakes while speaking. Lapsus linguae mainly occurs when a person is stressed and under pressure. Nevertheless, it can also happen in normal circumstances. We can learn more about speech production by understanding the phenomena of lapsus linguae.

The aim of writing this final paper is to give insight to readers into the fascinating occurrences that are known as lapsus linguae. Furthermore, I have tried to broaden the topic towards children's and older adults' slips of the tongue in order to show the influence which the age has (or may have) on their occurrence. Not only do slips reveal much about one's native language, but they also broaden the understanding of the process of second language acquisition. I also delved into the field of literature to show how lapsus linguae influences the artistic field and how it can be used to enrich stories/narratives.

Key words: lapsus linguae, slips of the tongue, language processing, second language acquisition

SAŽETAK

Najlakše se interakcija s drugima ostvaruje pomoću govora. Kroz odrastanje ljudi sve više usvajaju i uče jezik(e). No, nitko nije savršen govornik. Može se znati za gotovo svaku riječ u rječniku i/ili svako gramatičko pravilo, pa pogriješiti. Govorne se pogreške ili lapsusi često pojavljuju kada je osoba pod stresom, ali su također moguće u normalnim komunikacijskim situacijama.

Cilj mi je u ovome radu dati uvid čitateljima u jednu tako zanimljivu jezičnu pojavu kao što su upravo govorne pogreške, a središnju sam temu proširila na govor u djece i starijih osoba kako bih prikazala utjecaj dobi na njihov nastanak (proizvodnju). No, ne samo da lapsusi prilično otkrivaju o razvoju i uporabi materinskoga jezika nego također znatno proširuju naše razumijevanje procesa ovladavanja nematerinskim jezikom. Osim toga, dotaknula sam se područja književnosti kako bih prikazala da lapsusi mogu utjecati na umjetničko stvaralaštvo te kako se njihovom svjesnom uporabom mogu obogatiti razni narativi.

Ključne riječi: lapsus linguae, lapsusi u govoru ili govorne pogreške, jezična obrada, usvajanje drugoga jezika