CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

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1.1   Background of the Study

In order to express their ideas, people need to communicate with others. People can communicate with others by using many means of communication. One of the means people often use in their daily life is language. The ability of mastering and using language is one of the characteristics distinguishing human from other creatures. People can communicate either in written or spoken form. A striking characteristic of human speech is that we often talk about things not immediately present. We may talk about events that occurred in a different place or at some remote period in time. This characteristic of human speech is an extremely important property. It gives us the flexibility of discussing things not present at the moment. We can therefore readily discuss past events and use our experience with such past events to plan for the future.

Perhaps the most important characteristic of human speech is that it enables us to communicate about everything, even if we must create new words or sentences to do so. This ability to generate new sentences grows out of the process by which each human child learns to speak during the first few years of his life. This remarkable ability to produce countless new words and sentences is not present in the social signaling of animals.

When we communicate, we string together a number of sounds into a word and then a number of words into a sentence. Not every string of words forms a meaningful statement. This is to say that our language has a certain grammatical structure to it (Altmann, 1987).

As the international communication enormously grows, most people in almost every country in the world are urgently required to have much better command of more languages. They also need to understand and to response in —if possible— several languages. This manner has become an instrumental demand and therefore a great number of people want to learn a foreign language, especially English, as one of the languages used most worldwide..

On the other hand, educational systems are faced with a number of challenges which necessitate a revision of their school programs and structures. Some of these challenges are multiplication of sources of information and communication, which put an end to the school's monopoly in transmitting knowledge; accelerated pace of scientific and technological progress, requiring a continuous adaptation of the science course content; transformation of the nature of work and the need for more flexibility and mobility which make the acquisition of some skills indispensable such as communication skills, the readiness for teamwork, and the capacity of using some new technologies such as computers.

Nowadays, global communication in the last quarter of the 20th century has developed immensely, bringing the farthest corners of the

world closer to each other than ever before. This process, now popularly referred to as globalization, has been characterized most notably by international institutions and cross-cultural interaction. The widespread of the Internet use has contributed drastically to making communication ever faster, more efficient, and more global. With such advance in technological communication, English has emerged as the global language, claimed to be the most suitable for world communication. Whether in business, medicine, space exploration, or any other major field of human endeavor, English holds a primary role in bringing together the people of the world.

As stated previously, in order to express their ideas in any teaching and learning process, the teachers and students involved need to communicate with others. They can communicate either orally or in written form. When it comes to learning second language, writing is not as simple as speaking. Learning to write is not as natural as learning to speak a language. As a child, we learned to speak our first language at home without systematic instruction, and after that, most of us had to have a lesson at school on writing the same language. So that, even many adult native speakers of a language find writing difficult (Raimes, 1983). Learners of English often complain about learning to write. They argued that learning to write fluently and expressively is the most difficult task of the language skill for all language users, whether as a first or second language (Nunan, 1989:35)

This study intends to show the potential of using the Internet as a supportive means for teaching and learning. Since their advent, computer technologies have been adapted not only to reinforce existing learning theories, but also to promote new approaches to learning (Pena-Shaff, Martin, & Gay, 2001). Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is one example of such technology. According to Feenberg (1987), this particular technology has been used for higher education instruction on a small but growing scale, since 1982.

When we are dealing with the second language acquisition, we will also take into account the idea of communicative competence. In communicative competence, grammatical competence plays a significant role, as it is one of the sub-types forming communicative competence. Concerning the explanation above, the writer intends to examine the grammatical competence of the lecturer and the students, represented in the form of sentences written in the asynchronous online discussion. In regard to the grammatical competence, the writer tries to observe their knowledge of grammatical rules in English language. By taking into account the contrastive analysis hypothesis, the writer predicts that the difficulties that occur in learning English as a second language mostly due to the presence of: Noun types, Verb types, Verb forms, Pronouns, Adjectives, Prepositions, and Articles.

In addition, in order to have a successful learning process in education, especially in second language learning, students must have the

motivation to proceed with the *lifelong* learning. Motivation should be considered as a significant factor. The concept of lifelong learning is not new, but its importance has varied over time and place. Thus, besides focusing this study on the sentences made by the lecturer and the students, the writer also has the focal point on the students' motivational or demotivational aspects of online learning, since this research also sets out to study the motivational and demotivational aspects of learning online by using an online discussion held by the lecturer teaching History of Modern Thoughts at Petra Christian University. The students taking the subject were encouraged to participate in the online discussion taking place on Petra University's web site. For the purposes of this study a section of Keller's ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) model was chosen. This section concentrates on the motivational states of apathy, boredom, anxiety and flow (ABAF).

1.2 Statement of the problems

Due to the fact that grammatical competence cannot be directly observed, the errors made by the learners of a language may reflect their grammatical competence. Error analysis is one means that can be used to reveal the grammatical errors. Therefore, this study tries to answer the following problems:

1. Which types of grammatical errors were found in the online discussion?

2. Which types of motivational states did the lecturer and students express hypothetically in their sentences in the online-discussion, seen from Keller's ABAF model point of view?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to:

1. Find out which types of grammatical errors were found in the online discussion.

2. Find out which types of motivational states the lecturer and students expressed hypothetically in their sentences in the online-discussion, seen from Keller's ABAF model point of view.

1.4 The Significance Of The Study

This study is an attempt to analyze the grammatical competence and the usage of a section of Keller's ARCS model concentrating on the motivational states of boredom, apathy, flow and anxiety (ABAF) in an asynchronous online Discussion. Then hopefully, this study can be useful to make another great framework of maintaining online learning as one of many ways students can take in order to uphold their lifelong learning.

1.5 The Scope and Limitations of The Study

This study will mainly discuss the sentences the students made in their replies in the online-discussion. This study will focus on the online discussion maintained as a support in teaching the subject of History of Modern Thoughts as one of the subjects taught at Petra University.

1.6   The Assumptions

Due to the fact that the source book used by the students being the subjects of this study to learn grammatical rules is the same as the one used by the writer as a model of applying acceptable grammatical rules, and by gathering some information from the lecturer, the writer has some assumptions, they are as follows: The students have already learned Tenses, Modal auxiliaries, Prepositions, Passive sentences, Infinitives, Verb types, Noun Types, Clauses, and Modifying Phrases.

1.7   The Theoretical Framework of the Study

Communicative competence plays a very significant role in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Because when we learn a second language, we must also learn how to make the language become communicative, in the sense of being able to be understood by native speakers of the language.

Regarding this fact, in this study the writer tries to examine the grammatical competence, for it is one of the sub-types forming the communicative competence.

On the other hand, the Internet has reached a level of acceptance in the public's eyes that means it is almost impossible to escape. Nearly every kind of institution or company has a web site of some form or another, and a growing amount of academic business is performed through electronic mail. The Internet provides academics with an opportunity to make their teaching better, to allow them to teach in different ways to the

standard one-to-many lecture, and to reach more students. Simply put, it allows for the 'maximization' of learning, which Somekh (1996) described as: 'There are two ways in which 'maximization' [of learning] can be measured: either in terms of the increase in the amount of learning, or in terms of the increase in the quality of learning.'

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is one example of such technology. CMC can be defined as the exchange of messages among a group of participants by means of networked computers, for the purpose of discussing a topic of mutual interest (Gunawardena et.al. 1997). Such exchanges of messages can be carried out either synchronously or asynchronously. According to Groeling (1999), facilitating asynchronous discussion has the potential to improve the teaching and learning experiences in traditional classroom formats, as well as in distance learning.

In an online discussion, the participants present themselves in a text-based form. The participants need to write down what they want to say in the discussion. To make it understood by others reading it, the grammatical rules of creating acceptable sentences should be carefully considered.

Thus, the data for this study will be the sentences that the lecturer and the students made in the asynchronous online discussion. The online discussion was held to support the teaching process of the History of Modern Thoughts. In this subject, the lecturer teaches the students mainly

about the development of people in the past centuries, including the great thinkers at the moment, as well as their thoughts and beliefs. The lecturer also tried to correlate the situation at the moment with the present time. The writer acquires the entire data by downloading them from the Petra University web site.

1.8 The Definition of Key Terms

There are some important terms used in this study. The definitions are as follows:

1. Asynchronous Discussion.

   Asynchronous discussion refers to a type of discussion that permits participants in the discussion to go online at their convenience.

2. Internet.

   According to Webster's College Dictionary, The Internet refers to a large computer network linking smaller computer networks worldwide.

3. Grammatical competence

   Within linguistic theory, it is the system of a formal grammar acquired or internalized by a speaker of a language, and it underlies his/her ability to produce or understand the sentences of a given language, and identify ambiguous and deviant sentences (Johnson and Johnson, 1999)

4. Lifelong learning

   Lifelong learning is defined as all purposeful learning activities whether it is formal, non-formal or informal. Furthermore, lifelong learning has to be based on an analysis of people's total access to knowledge and learning, within the whole range of different contexts – formal learning at school and at university, non-formal learning in the evening class, in the residential college, at the workplace, informal learning through literature or television and life experiences. Lifelong learning is a holistic view of education and recognizes learning from a number of different environments.

   (quoted from the Constitution of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA); Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, 2000; EAEA's Policy Statement on Lifelong Learning in Europe, 2001)

5. Motivational state

   A particular condition of psychological trait which leads people to achieve a goal. In language learning, that goal could be mastery of the language or achievement of some lesser aim.

6. Online Discussion : A discussion involving teacher(s) and student(s) taking place on the Internet. There are two major divisions in online discussion, namely synchronous and asynchronous discussion.

7. Resource-based learning (RBL)

   Along with life-long learning, one of the most often-used expressions at the moment is that of 'resource-based learning' or 'RBL'. Simply put, this focuses on the concept of giving the learner greater access to resources (and thus more control of their learning experience).

8. Synchronous Discussion : Synchronous discussion refers to a type of discussion that require that participants in the discussion to be on the computer at the same time.

1.9   Organization of The Study

This study consists of five chapters.

Chapter One deals with the introduction of the whole paper. It contains the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, theoretical framework, key to special terms, and the organization of the thesis.

Chapter Two, contains the further explanation of the related theories used in this study.

Chapter Three, contains the discussion of the research methodology used in this study, consisting of the research design, subjects, instruments, data of the study, data collection, and data analysis technique.

Chapter Four contains the data presentation and the analysis of the data.

Chapter Five contains the conclusion of the whole discussion in the previous chapters, and also some suggestions.