HANGING BRIDGES AND EXCEPTIONAL CANOEING

-An error analysis of the copywriting in 'Kuusamo Lapland: The Call of the Four Seasons'

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1. INTRODUCTION

The changes in the global economic market have also led to a significant overhaul in the domestic employment market, and no less in the north of Finland. When industrial work is more and more often moved to countries with cheaper labour, towns and municipalities need to find out alternative ways to employ people or risk losing them when they move away to seek employment. The Northern Ostrobothnia region, also my place of origin, has attempted to solve this problem in part by focusing on domestic and international tourism. Not only has this created more employment opportunities, it has also created more demands on the companies and services responsible for the tourism in the area.

Once an area or a company decides to offer its services to foreign customers, the demands on marketing and personnel become greater. In addition to customer service and guides that can communicate with the tourists in their own language, marketing material in that language must also be made available. The material and its accessibility play an integral part in creating the right kind of interest in the services, and when it is done well it can significantly increase the number of customers. However, if not enough effort is put into the marketing, the amateurish image may extend to the services it is meant to present, and few people want to spend their time and money on unprofessional service.

With regard to the English marketing efforts made by my home town and the network of municipalities it belongs to, I would like to see the area presented in a way that gives credit to all the various aspects of its people and nature. By doing that, they would create awareness of the area and the things it has to offer. In this paper I will try to take a linguistic viewpoint on how successful a specific part of those efforts is in its attempt to give a positive image of the region. This first section will present the strategy behind the marketing efforts, how they relate specifically to the English speaking habitants of Great Britain, and also the general objective behind the full study.

1.1 Kuusamo Lapland strategy and Great Britain

The Kuusamo Lapland internationalization strategy started in the early 2000s in an attempt to develop the local tourism and its services to better serve international customers. One of the development areas was, and still is, international marketing. Brochures in languages such as English, French, German and Russian were created to cater for potential customers living in different parts of Europe.

The latest update to the strategy is from March 2011. The strategy documentation (Kuusamo Lapland matkalla kansainvälisyyteen 2013; http://www.naturpolis.fi/dynamic/KuusamoLapland-strategiapaivitys-2013.pdf) gives some information about the successes and challenges from previous years, and mentions among other things that the global economic crisis in 2008 caused a significant drop in the number of visitors in the region. However, by 2010 that trend had already started to change for the better. The documentation also lists the vision and goals of the project, and the actions that will help to reach those goals. The shared vision of the municipalities involved in the project is to develop the area to a popular international outdoors holiday resort. The goal is to offer services all year round, focusing especially on winter time and snow activities.

According to the documentation, the critical factors in the success of the strategy are availability (how to book a trip and how to get there) and image. To help create the image and make it well known among the potential customers, marketing is seen as one of the key focus areas. In addition to the brochures already available, the marketing efforts include, amongst others, an online shop, product concepts and collaboration with media and press to help create interest and knowledge about the area.

The strategy lists the target markets that will be the focus of all the different marketing efforts. The bulk of the actions (80%) will be focused on Russia and the Ukraine, the Benelux countries, Germany and Great Britain. Some efforts will be directed towards Southern Europe, and efforts to help raise interest in the growing Asian markets are also considered. The different areas and countries all have their own target groups with specific target marketing efforts. For Great Britain, the focus is especially on people interested in skiing, snow and Christmas. Families and incentive, special interest and theme groups are also included, along with nature tourism.

The strategy states that since the start of the project the number of British tourists increased over tenfold in a few years, until the global economic crisis caused a significant drop in the numbers. However, the numbers have improved by now and Great Britain is still seen as an important target market, especially for winter tourism, which makes up the most of the tourism coming from Great Britain. Of the four target markets, Great Britain is fourth in the statistics of hotel nights spent in the region, and third in how much money the visitors from the target markets spend during their visit.

For the years 2011 to 2013, the strategy states that the most important marketing efforts regarding Great Britain are a marketing campaign in collaboration with different travel agents, along with internet marketing and improving the possibility of purchasing holiday packages online. Where Russia and Germany both get special mentions on the need to create, develop and improve on the different marketing efforts in those specific languages, the English marketing for Great Britain is apparently seen as being linguistically in good shape and thus in no need for focused efforts. This notion will be challenged in the course of this study.

1.2 Motivation behind the study

As a native of the Northern Ostrobothnia region, and with family ties to Taivalkoski and Kuusamo, the Kuusamo Lapland area holds a special place in my life. What is more, as a student of English philology I also have an understanding of the English language and the cultures associated with it, especially the British. So when my home region started to market itself to another culture I know well, and in the language I have extensively studied, I naturally became interested. I wanted to see what was being said and talked about and which of the different areas, aspects and ideas were seen as the most compelling to a British native. Moreover, and more importantly for me, I wanted to see how those ideas were communicated, if the language used was up to the standard required when communicating with an international target audience. Would it succeed in presenting the area in a way that it deserves, or would it fail?

As a Finn, and as a student of English, I am self-conscious about my ability to communicate fluently in English and, in all honesty, that quirk also extends to most other Finns. We are constantly judging ourselves when we communicate in foreign languages, which may well explain why we are not perceived as a talkative lot. As for the British, it is known that they do not mind if a foreigner speaks English with an accent, or if he mixes or forgets his word when trying to communicate with the natives; at least he is trying. This extends and applies to every day communication and talk. However, when it comes to formal communication, especially in writing, we should not take this kindness for granted, nor should we try to take advantage of it.

So it was all these different ideas and attitudes along with the need to come up with a topic for my thesis that led me to find and print out a copy of the English tourist brochure for the Kuusamo Lapland area (*Kuusamo Lapland. The Call of the Four Seasons,* http://www.kuusamolapland.fi/loader.aspx?id=d4faccb2-ba88-4fcb-bb52-baaf3db086b4) and read through it to get a better idea of how the people behind were trying to present and sell the area and its services to the British tourists. My first impression was positive: the brochure looked nice and all the important aspects of the area and what it has to offer were discussed. However, not before long I started to notice things about the copywriting that struck me as odd or even downright annoying. After a while more and more examples became apparent and my attitude changed: I did not feel that the brochure and its copywriting did an adequate job linguistically in trying to convince a native speaker of English to become interested in the services it had to offer. I was disappointed at this missed opportunity.

Nevertheless, I soon realized the opportunities the situation presented. I would be able to apply linguistic training by analyzing the material in the brochure and perhaps find reasons behind the shortcomings of the copywriting. That would help me in my long-overdue attempt to write my pro gradu thesis. What is more, the results and findings would perhaps be useful if applied to correcting some of the errors in the text. The advantages convinced me to start the project, of which more details will be presented next.

1.3 Objective of the study

Although I expressed my initial disappointment and frustration about the brochure's linguistic shortcomings and idiosyncrasies above, those feelings only served as a catalyst for the thought process behind this study. It needs to be stressed that the aim of this paper is in no way to criticize or pass judgement on the copywriting or the person responsible for creating it. Not only would that be irrelevant in a scholarly paper, it would also be disadvantageous to the attempt of improving the copywriting to better suit the needs of the internationalization strategy.

Now that we have made clear what this paper is not about, let us get to the actual objective of the study. As said, there are numerous errors and idiosyncrasies in the copywriting, most of which do not cause great difficulties for a speaker of English to understand. This study is an attempt to identify those errors and idiosyncrasies, analyse them, and find a plausible explanation for their occurrence by using the theories of interlanguage and error analysis. The errors are viewed not as flaws but as linguistic phenomena caused by features in the writer's personal knowledge of language; 'error' is thus a technical term, not a judgement. The analysis will hopefully shed some light on what those features are, and also how and why they have come to be included in the writer's internal grammar. Moreover, some attention will also be paid to how the errors affect the accessibility of the copywriting when seen from the viewpoint of a native speaker of English.

The previous paragraph contains a general description of the objective, which will be condensed to an explicit research question in the following section. Moreover, it contains clues as to the possible relevance of this paper. If successful, this study will hopefully yield results that are relevant to the study of interlanguage, especially in the context of Finns acquiring English as their second language. What is more, the findings may also have practical applications: the errors in the copywriting can be corrected and future versions of the marketing material can avoid the pitfalls that the study has identified. This would quite possibly improve the image that the possible customers in the Great Britain target market have of Kuusamo Lapland. Last, but not least, the study will hopefully demonstrate an ability to apply my education in linguistics and the English language and culture, put it into practice and thus serve as an adequate pro gradu thesis.

We have now presented the background for this study, along with the motivation behind it and the general objective. Some practical applications were also discussed. Next, we need to outline the specific theoretical framework, as well as the methodology used to examine the data. These two sections will then be used to formulate the specific research question for this study.

2. DATA AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section will first describe the source material and data used in this study. After that, the relevant theoretical background and methodology used to analyse the data will also be presented. The section will close by specifying the research question based on the theoretical concepts.

2.1 Source material and data

The source material for the data used in this study is the English travel brochure *Kuusamo Lapland. The Call of the Four Seasons,* available at http://www.kuusamolapland.fi/loader.aspx?id=d4faccb2-ba88-4fcb-bb52-

baaf3db086b4. It is meant to serve as a relatively thorough information package about the Kuusamo area and the different travel services available there. The intended audience is mainly the English speaking residents of the United Kingdom. The brochure is thirty two pages long, and contains both images and textual content presenting and discussing different aspects of the region regarding tourism. The first twenty five pages contain the main advertising copy that is used as the data for this study. The rest of the brochure lists some facts about the area, along with contact details for some of the services providers. Since the latter part of the brochure contains less of the actual copywriting, and mostly uses a list format to present the content, the lack of full length and well-formed sentences caused the exclusion of that part from the data.

The brochure starts by giving a description of the Kuusamo region along with a general account of the different services and how to get there. It then moves on to discuss the services and activities in relation to the four seasons: winter, spring, summer and autumn. Two to four pages are dedicated to each season and the activities and specialties they have to offer. The brochure then presents the different venues for conferences and other events before moving on to explain the local cuisine. The main copy part then ends with two sections, the first discussing the local souvenirs and the second the places of accommodation.

The copywriting consists of body text and captions, the first forming the major part of the textual data that is analysed. Nevertheless, some captions will also be used as data, mainly due to their extensive length. There are hardly any headings in the copy, and the different sections and paragraphs have been separated from each other more with layout design than with typographical and textual means, which at times make the text difficult to follow. Some of the pages are divided into grids of six blocks; two blocks in a row, three in a column. Half of the blocks on a page usually contain text, while the other half is used for images. One column never contains just text or photos. As said, at first read it can be difficult to see which passage of text follows which, does one first read the left column of the page, or go from top to bottom, jumping from one column to the other while progressing downward.

The copy tries to give an image of a place where the effortlessness of modern life comes into contact with mystique and romance of the wild. These two aspects are often paired with each other, and the reader is often reminded about the alleged mystical qualities of the region. The main focus is on the nature and all its possible adventures and activities, while some space is also reserved for conferences and meetings held indoors. As is probably seen convenient in advertising copy, the copywriter rarely uses matter-of-fact language for too long, and will often stray from the factual to the over-blown or even fictional, attempting to lure the reader by exaggerating most aspects of the area. In most cases this approach feels quite foreign, a point which will be discussed more thoroughly in section 3.

Reading through the brochure, it quickly becomes evident that the writer is not a native speaker of English. In addition to the odd typographical error, the language is littered with expressions that sound foreign. There are noun phrases that are constructed in an odd way, even if they are more or less understandable. The grammar in some sentences makes them difficult to understand, and sometimes the errors cause them to change their intended meaning. What is more, some of the longer passages of text that might appear perfectly acceptable grammatically do not actually seem to mean anything. This is the case especially in the parts that attempt to use a more romantic tone to describe the mystique of the Kuusamo Lapland area. All in all, the material offers an abundance of data that can be analysed using the methodology that is discussed in the next section.

2.2 Theoretical background

Before we can start to analyse the data found in the source material, we need to specify the methodology and theoretical background and context for this study. This section will be used to cover the abovementioned topics, first by placing error analysis into a larger theoretical frame in linguistics, and then presenting all the concepts and terminology that are relevant to this study. Lastly, it will discuss the specific EA methodology used in this study. As the concepts of interlanguage, transfer and error are closely related to each other, there may be some content overlap between the sections discussing them.

2.2.1 Historical background

Error analysis as a field of study can be seen as a part of Second Language Acquisition studies. EA is a field of applied linguistics that attempts to describe in part the process of acquiring a second language by identifying, analyzing and explaining the errors a second language learner makes in his production. In the past, the methodology was primarily used in a formal teaching environment to correct the learners in their production. While error analysis can also be used as a means to correct the learner, it is now utilized first and foremost as a descriptive tool. This is true for this study as well. Nevertheless, the pedagogical aspect is not entirely overlooked here since the methodology itself contains a corrective aspect which will be explained later on in this section.

In the 1960s, Corder's series of papers on error analysis broke new ground in this field of applied linguistics. Where earlier studies had mainly suggested that errors were more or less predictable linguistic phenomena that could be viewed as persisting interference from the mother tongue, Corder's studies assigned more significance to the learner's errors, especially to the ones that could not be explained by interference. Corder suggested that errors were the result of a specific linguistic system, and not mere mishaps that occurred in the course of learning a new language. So, while the consensus at the time was tilted toward the behavioristic theory of language learning, Corder attempted to broaden the scope beyond the idea of just drilling in new skills by repetition and correction. Chomsky's theory of language acquisition and universal grammar helped in part to develop SLA studies further, and Corder followed suit with error analysis. It was now clear that second language acquisition followed the same principles as first language learning, and the focus moved to interlanguage and its formation in the course of learning a new language. Error analysis and contrastive studies between languages were also available to help find support for the theory of interlanguage.

2.2.2 Interlanguage

Interlanguage is a theoretical concept that is used in SLA studies. Corder (1981: 2) gives credit to Selinker who coined the term interlanguage believing that a second language learner formed his interlanguage as a sort of a hybrid between his native language and the target language. This idea was based on the large number of transfer errors. However, additional evidence would soon demand a revision of the concept. Children with little or no formal teaching acquired a second language with much less transfer errors. What is more, the errors they produced seemed to occur in similar stages of development in language learning despite dissimilarities in their mother tongues. Thus, the concept of interlanguage developed from a hybrid to a systematic psycholinguistic device with its own developing rules and regulations that are not always dependent on the native or target languages.

Elaborating on that concept, Corder (1981: 89-90) points out that acquiring a second language is not just about progressively restructuring the systems of the native language. It is more akin to the learning of the mother tongue itself, in that it displays evidence of similar dynamic systems and to some extent follows the same sequence of stages. Corder (p. 93) summarises the process of second language learning as 'a mixture in varying proportions of restructuring and recreating'. We have already mentioned the evidence for both sides of the process. Interference errors are the result of restructuring, and the absence of such errors and the existence of errors similar to the ones made by a child learning his mother tongue display evidence for recreating a system.

As with the mother tongue, L_2 learning starts from universal grammar, and becomes more elaborate with the help of external data. The elaboration process and its progress are affected by the learner's previous knowledge of language, usually the mother tongue, which acts as a facilitative tool in the form of transfer: the structures that are similar to the learner's L_1 are learned first (Corder 1981: 102). Selinker (1992: 157-58) stresses this point and adds that the native language must not only be seen as negative and interfering, despite the existence of interference errors. The end result of the elaboration process, although always in state of change and development, is the interlanguage, a series of hypotheses that the learner has about the language and that he puts into test by using them in communication. According to Corder (p. 85), there can even be multiple hypotheses at play at any given time concerning the same grammatical structure, which causes inconsistency in the use of interlanguage. Moreover, there can be two interlanguages used by the same learner at the same time, for example a more developed one for receiving and parsing information and another for producing sentences (Corder p. 75).

One more important notion to be mentioned is that a L_2 learner always has an IL grammar and therefore also a language (Corder: 1981: 54). That grammar may be consistent in some points and inconsistent in others, but it is still a code, a system of structures that can be compared with the grammar of the target language. Corder (p. 66) defines interlanguage as transitional competence, a system that enables gradual merging of the systems at play rather than switching from one code to another. It is this aspect of gradual merge that in part explains the inconsistency in errors. Corder (p. 83) also notes that the learner uses his interlanguage in conversation by choosing a suitable point on the simple-complex –continuum of the code: the sentence must be complex enough to be understood, but also simple enough that the learner feels confident in using it.

2.2.3 Transfer and interference

The terms transfer and interference can be seen as two sides of the same linguistic phenomenon. Both can be used to describe structures in the IL that are derived from NL grammar and are used in IL grammar as well. However, transfer usually refers to structures and features that are acceptable in TL and therefore not erroneous in any way, and which act as a facilitative tool in learning a new language. Interference, on the other hand, is by definition something unwanted and hindering, and is used to denote transferred structures that keep the learner from developing the IL grammar to something more similar to TL. So interference is a kind of negative transfer.

Interference on the level of grammar is not as easy to identify as, let's say, interference in phonology. We are all familiar with foreign accents and sometimes even a person with no formal linguistic training can tell why some sounds in a foreign language are more difficult to produce than others. But when it comes to grammar, the difficulties in producing acceptable TL forms and structures may well be less easily explained.

Interference can be viewed as a false hypothesis that the learner has about how a language functions: what is acceptable and what is not. The hypothesis in this case is based on previous understanding of language, in most cases the mother tongue. It is tested by using the IL code in practice, by producing utterances that are meant to convey information to the recipient. If the communication is unsuccessful, there is an error in the hypothesis and in an ideal case the feedback will cause the learner to correct the hypothesis to something more alike the TL grammar. However, if the communication is seen as successful, there is no need for correction and thus the hypothesis is strengthened and in time may become a fossilized part of the IL grammar. We need to note, however, that successful communication does not always entail that the message is grammatically acceptable. The recipient may have understood the message even though the form was not entirely correct when compared to the TL grammar. The negative feedback may also be missing for various reasons. For example, communication in writing is often less immediate, and the recipient has more time to deduct the correct meaning of the message from the context. In such cases questions and requests of elaboration are not needed form the recipient's part, and the learner misses out on that feedback that would be important to him when elaborating his IL grammar to something more approximate to TL.

Transfer and interference can also happen from other, previously learned second languages. As has already been discussed, a new language is learned by trying to make sense of that language by means of already existing knowledge about language, and that need not only be the learner's mother tongue. Naturally, a multilingual learner poses more demands on the error analysis and interlanguage study since there are more variables that need to be taken into account when attempting to explain the learner's IL grammar.

Corder (1981: 74) states that interference is more likely to occur when an educated adult tries to learn a new language. When the knowledge of the already learned language or languages has become more sophisticated and elaborate, the tendency to make sense of the new linguistic data with the help of that prior knowledge is stronger.

An additional point to be made about interference is that it seems to be connected to the aspect of linguistic frequency (Selinker 1992: 211-12). Frequency in NL or another L2 may even be a possible requirement for transfer: the more frequent a specific structure is in the previously learned grammar, the more likely it is transferred to, and used in, the IL, especially if the TL contains similar grammatical structures.

Selinker (p. 208) summarizes language transfer quite well in the following:

> Language transfer is best thought of as a *cover term* for a whole class of behaviours, processes and constraints, each of which has to do with CLI, i.e. the influence and use of prior linguistic knowledge, usually but no exclusively NL knowledge. This knowledge intersects with input from the TL and with universal properties of various sorts in a selective way to help build IL.

With reference to the scope of this study and in accordance with Corder (1981: 99-100), we can view transfer and interference a sort of recourse to NL grammar on occasions when the learner's knowledge of the TL is somehow deficient or lacking. The NL structures are used to pad gaps in the IL grammar that the learner does not yet know how to fill with TL structures. These sometimes unsuccessful borrowings are the cause for interference errors such as the ones that are studied in this paper.

The systematic nature of those errors helps to create a partial description of the learner's IL code.

2.2.4 Errors

A person will inevitably make errors in his production when learning a new language. It is by studying those errors that we can arrive to a partial description of the learner's state of knowledge about the language in question. The systematic nature of those errors reveals some of the underlying grammar of the learner's interlanguage.

To start off we need to discuss the actual term 'error'. It has, by definition, negative connotations, which in this case are rooted in the aspect of teaching and learning a language in a formal educational environment. Errors are something that must be corrected if a learner wishes to master a new language. Nevertheless, in this study, much like in the field of error analysis in general, the term 'error' is not used in a condemning manner. It is simply the nomination for linguistic behavior that does not, in one way or another, align itself with the structures, rules and regulations of the target language. Selinker (1992: 118) sees the occurring errors as a subset of IL data, a part of IL performance that is deviant from the idealized TL code.

We also need to understand the difference between errors of competence and errors of performance, which can also be referred to as 'mistakes'. A mistake can be viewed as something that occurs less systematically or totally randomly, something which is more connected to the situational circumstances than to the actual linguistic competence that the learner possesses. Corder (1981: 10) makes the distinction as follows:

> It will be useful therefore hereafter refer to errors of performance as *mistakes*, reserving the term *error* to the systematic errors of the learner from which we are able to reconstruct his knowledge of the language to date, i.e. his *transitional competence.*

Let us continue by describing how and why errors occur. We have already determined that in most situations the learner has a hypothesis of how the language in question works, what is allowed when using that language and what is not. The learner then needs to test that hypothesis by using his interlanguage for communicating. This is where errors usually occur. Corder (1981: 11) puts emphasis on the aspect of making errors by describing it as “a device the learner uses to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning.” Therefore, errors are not negative or interfering in any way, but an important indication that the learner is testing his hypotheses, and also what those hypotheses are.

As mentioned before, interference errors, which are particularly important for this study, occur when the learner unsuccessfully tries to replace a missing part of the TL code with some other language’s code. Usually the end result is clearly unacceptable in TL, bearing clear indications of negative transfer from another language, in most cases the native language. These kinds of examples are also the ones that are under study in this paper.

Not all errors are immediately recognizable. As Corder (1981: 42) points out, “superficial well-formedness is no guarantee of freedom from error.” He goes on to make a distinction between overtly and covertly erroneous sentences. Overtly erroneous sentences are the ones that we have already described, sentences with clear indication of interference. Covertly erroneous, on the other hand, are sentences that on surface level seem acceptable, but are such only by chance, and may be inappropriate in some way. Acceptability refers to the surface-level structure of the sentence, its grammar. Appropriateness has to do with the context the sentence is used in; does that sentence, even if acceptable, sound right in that context? So, a sentence can be both acceptable and appropriate (the ideal case), unacceptable and inappropriate (the worst case), or acceptable but inappropriate (the difficult case). These concepts will be discussed more in the section presenting the methodology.

As was already mentioned in the discussion relating to transfer, correcting errors requires feedback. This feedback helps the learner identify which part of his sentence was erroneous, and how. Feedback helps him to restructure or completely abandon the hypothesis that caused the error to occur. Selinker (1992: 155) described this feedback-correction method and its importance as follows (quoting also Corder 1981: 16):

> When a learner is not understood, he or she: 'has a motive to bring his behavior into line with conventions of some social group if he is able'. This is an important idea and one that is widely accepted. This means that IL learning will cease when learners believe they are able to get intended messages across with the IL system they have.

As pointed out above, if the learner receives no feedback about the sentences he produces, he will understand that as a confirmation on the acceptability and appropriateness of his sentence. This, in turn, is a factor that will strengthen the hypothesis that the learner has. But as we have already mentioned before, the lack of feedback may be caused by reasons other than successful communication, or a well-formed sentence. In such cases, the false hypothesis will be strengthened, sometimes to a point where it will become a fossilized part of the IL grammar, which will cause the learner to produce the idiosyncratic and erroneous structures more often. This is usually the cause for persistent errors.

One more aspect regarding errors is how to approach them. The traditional educational approach would be to correct them by replacing the erroneous form with a correct TL-like form, and practicing that until the learner adopts the correct structure. But as we have already stated, this approach is not relevant to applied linguistics and error analysis. Instead of focusing on the immediate correction, the focus is on the reasons behind the error. Among a few other approaches to error treatment, Selinker (1992: 121) list the explanation of errors. In this approach, circumstantial and psychological factors are excluded from the analysis and the error is analysed by determining "linguistically connected causes of error on a descriptive/structural basis". This view acts as the basis for the methodology used in this study, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

2.2.5 Methods

This section will cover the study methods used in this paper and the relevant theoretical background behind them. Following the methodology, the research question and objective will also be outlined and discussed. The methodology is in some parts simplified to better account for the type of research relevant to this study. Nevertheless, all required aspects have been taken into account and the parts and ideas that have been ignored were seen irrelevant here. Lastly, the study and analysis are based on the assumption that the source material has been produced by a native speaker of Finnish. There is no possibility of absolutely verifying this, nor is there a need to. The assumption is nevertheless reasonable, and also helps to delimit the study and research question to better suit the requirements of a pro gradu thesis.

While error analysis is more often based on the study of speech and spoken utterances, it can also been used to analyse written language. Corder (1981: 59) discusses applying error analysis to written text and its difficulties. He argues that error analysis in general can only reach observational adequacy when attempting to describe the learner's language. This observational adequacy is based on textual data. What is missing, then, is the descriptive adequacy, which can be reached by taking into account also the learner's intuitions about his language. Those intuitions would be revealed by closely examining and interviewing the learner. Moreover, Corder sees inadequacies in the data itself. He does not regard textual data as representative of the learner's IL. In his view the sample is biased in two ways: external and internal constraint. External constraint refers to the lack of spontaneity in the language: written text is not produced in a spontaneous discussion, but is in most cases thought through before applied. What is more, the learner uses internal constraint by using language he himself feels confident using, selecting from the code the parts he feels he masters. This puts even more distance between the researcher and the learner's actual IL.

Even if studying textual data without direct access to the learner causes methodological challenges, the study can reach a desired level of adequacy by applying certain systematic methods of investigation. Should a researcher share a native language with the learner, he can use his knowledge about that language to his benefit. More specifically, the solution is to use linguistic intuition to identify and explain the errors in the learner's language. Despite having developing come up with the idea himself, Corder (1981: 24) sees some trouble in this approach, calling it a "highly intuitive process" that depends on "the degree of knowledge of that dialect possessed by the investigator". He also notes that not necessarily all idiosyncrasies in the learner's language can be explained with the help of the mother tongue. Nevertheless, access to the learner's NL is still a clear advantage when attempting to analyse the errors that occur in his language.

As to the actual methods to be used in error analysis, Corder (1981: 21-25) suggests a series of stages as follows: 1) recognition of idiosyncrasy, 2) interpretation and reconstruction of the idiosyncratic sentence, 3) explanation of the idiosyncratic sentence. In the first phase the idiosyncratic sentences must be distinguished from the learner's interlanguage. However, regarding the learner's IL as a language in itself poses some problems: all sentences should be considered idiosyncratic until proven otherwise. Corder (p. 21) deems it a methodological mistake to concentrate only on those sentences that are overtly idiosyncratic, since the (at least superficially) well-formed sentences also tell us something about the understanding of the language. Nevertheless, in this study the focus is only on the superficially idiosyncratic sentences. The first reason for this is that this paper is not an interlanguage study per se. The objective is not to form a complete picture of the learner's competence, but to identify and explain some of the errors that occur in the source material, and perhaps find some systematic consistencies between them. Moreover, attempting to describe the learner's interlanguage in more detail would be too much work for a pro gradu thesis.

Again, we need to find idiosyncratic, or erroneous, sentences in the first phase of the analysis. Such sentences can be overtly erroneous, in other words unacceptable, or covertly erroneous, in other words acceptable but inappropriate in that context. In the second phase we need to make an interpretation of the sentence. If the sentence is covertly idiosyncratic, being grammatical but ill-fitting in that context, the job of creating a well-formed TL version is simpler. We just need to create a TL expression for that idea in that context, a translation equivalent (Corder 1981: 21-22). However, if the sentence is overtly idiosyncratic, there are more difficulties. We can try to make an interpretation for it the same way we do for covertly idiosyncratic sentences. However, if that does not yield any results, we need to make recourse to the native language of the learner, if possible. A shared NL between the learner and researcher becomes an advantage here: the researcher relies on his knowledge of both languages without actually knowing what has been taught to the learner and how, keeping in mind also that the native language may not be the reason behind all idiosyncratic sentences. Nevertheless, the abovementioned recourse can be done by back-translating the overtly idiosyncratic sentence back to the native language, and then translating the NL equivalent in a grammatical way to the TL. This would, again, give us a translation equivalent of the idiosyncratic sentence. We now have a pair of sentence: the idiosyncratic sentence and its well-formed reconstruction in TL, both of which share the same meaning.

The third stage of the analysis is explaining the idiosyncratic sentence. This is done by comparing the sentence pairs and accounting for their differences in detail. As Corder (1981: 24) sees it, this phase incorporates the psycholinguistic aspect as it tries to explain how and why such idiosyncratic sentences occur. The intuition of the researcher again plays an important part here. In addition to having knowledge of the grammar of both languages, and the ability to compare them, the researcher can also intuitively interpret the processes behind the learner's sentences, how they are produced.

Once a possible explanation for the idiosyncratic sentence has been found, it can be marked down as one of the hypotheses that the learner has about the language he is learning. After a series of sentences have gone through the same process, patterns may start to appear which can be seen as a description of the learner's IL grammar and its systematic nature. We need to remember though, that not all aspects of the IL grammar are systematic and there can be inconsistencies in the idiosyncratic forms. However, should we find any consistencies in the learner's idiosyncratic production it would be more proof of an existing IL grammar, and also a partial description of it.

2.3 Research question

Now that we have outlined and described the data that is to be used in this study and the background theories and methodology, we can finally conclude this section by formulating a more explicit research question. The main objective of his study is to try to identify and explain idiosyncratic structures in the source material based on the error analysis methodology and the theory of interlanguage and interference. In addition, I will attempt to find systematic consistencies between the idiosyncratic structures and thus create a partial description of the learner's interlanguage grammar. The next section will deal with the analysis of the data in the source material.

3. ANALYSIS

In this section I will discuss the errors found in the source material, and present possible explanations for them. All examples have been taken from the brochure *Kuusamo Lapland. The Call of the Four Seasons,* available at http://www.kuusamolapland.fi/loader.aspx?id=d4faccb2-ba88-4fcb-bb52-baaf3db086b4. The page numbers in the examples refer to the pages of the brochure pdf –document.

First, I will recap the methodology used in analyzing and explaining the errors. A common method in IL study is to interview the learner in order to understand the grammatical processes behind the IL structures. However, since we are analyzing a body of written text and have no possibility of interviewing the person who has produced the text and the errors therein, we must find an alternative way of explaining them. Corder (1981) proposes that the errors a SL learner makes can be analyzed by intuitive interpretation that is based on the context of the text. Should the researcher have a command of both the languages in question, namely NL and TL, recourse to the common NL is advisable and advantageous. Since we assume that this is the case here, we will adopt Corder's approach to the analysis even if it is a highly intuitive process, and despite the fact that the writer's idiosyncratic interlanguage is not solely explicable by means of his mother tongue.

To paraphrase Selinker (1992: 159), the identification of the errors is a process where we compare what is said to what should have been said to express what is meant. The comparison should provide us with two different sets of text, and way they differ is the starting point from which we will move towards the NL to find an explanation for the error. The latter part of the analysis is where the recourse to the common NL is required as we need to find a plausible reason, if any, for why the writer has chosen to express his idea in specifically that manner.

Some details about the spelling conventions: in the text, italics will be used to denote words and passages that have been lifted from the source material. In addition, words and passages in single quotes are either translation equivalents or semantic values for the original idiomatic expressions. Moreover, double quotation marks are used to signify NL translations.

I will start by analyzing individual lexical items, and then progress to longer noun phrases and more complex grammatical structures. The categories are not mutually exclusive since some examples may appear in more than one part of the analysis. This simple to complex approach in analysis helps to explain the errors made on different levels of grammar, and also to perhaps show how those levels are connected in the writer's interlanguage.

3.1 Individual lexical items

This section will cover the errors found on lexical level of the IL grammar. The errors mainly consist of noun phrases of one or two words, and for this reason a more thorough analysis in a wider textual context is not necessary until in the sections covering more complex grammatical structures. The examples are not dealt with in their order of appearance. Instead, I have chosen to analyze them by grouping similar errors together and discussing them in relation to each other where possible. In addition, the ease of analysis has also affected the order in which the errors are discussed.

Example 1: hanging bridge (p.13)

In the errors listed above, (1) seems to be the most transparent one in terms of analysis and thus the most sensible starting point. A *hanging bridge*, if we count out the more morbid possibilities, would seem to be an erroneous equivalent for the English term ‘suspension bridge’, which would also fit the context of the text, ‘a bridge hanging over the rapids’. How, then, has the writer come up with the IL expression *hanging bridge*. In the Finnish compound noun for ‘suspension bridge’, “riippusilta”, the verb “riippua” ‘to hang’ is used as a modifier for the noun “silta” ‘a bridge’. Therefore, instead of using the correct TL equivalent, the writer has translated the two parts of the Finnish equivalent, the modifier and the noun, and combined them in English to form the IL noun phrase *hanging bridge.*

At this point it might be reasonable to point out a specific aspect of Finnish grammar. The Finnish language frequently uses compounds nouns to express ideas that in other languages would require a more extensive expression. In other words, an idea that would perhaps necessitate the use of a longer prepositional phrase in English is more often expressed as a compound noun or noun phrase in Finnish. Without giving away too much, this grammatical device of the NL can be seen to affect the IL grammar in the coming examples, even if there are no evidence for direct NL transfer in the form of literal word for word translations.

Example 2: ceramic factory (p.21)

Example 3: ceramic pieces (p.21)

Errors (2) and (3) share the same topic and context, namely souvenirs and handicrafts available for purchase in the Kuusamo region. On the surface level they even seem grammatically similar: both are quite clearly idiosyncratic IL structures, noun phrases, and have the noun modified by the word *ceramic.* Nevertheless, the IL processes resulting in these two forms seem to differ from each other.

The process behind (2) is most likely similar to the one proposed for (1). This time, we have the correct TL equivalent in 'ceramics factory', and the difference in the IL and TL forms is the singular/plural distinction in the modifiers. In Finnish, the word "keramiikka" ('ceramics') is a non-count noun, and is only used in the singular. It can also be used as the modifier in the modifier + modified compounds in Finnish, a common NL tool that was discussed earlier. As it happens, the Finnish compound noun for 'ceramics factory', "keramiikkatehdas", has then the singular non-count noun as the modifier for the word for 'factory', "tehdas".

The non-count aspect of the Finnish word "keramiikka" seems to be in play also in error (3), but this time with slightly different results. The text talks about *ceramic pieces being created*, which would suggest that the writer has tried to find a term to describe ceramic artifacts such as cups and plates. However, perhaps not knowing that the plural word 'ceramics' in itself means 'pieces of ceramic', the writer has transferred the NL aspect of singularity to the IL modifier *ceramic* and has also added the noun *pieces* to complete the noun phrase. So, where in (2) the transferred aspect of singularity in the IL form only affected the modifier, in (3) it also brought along the need to add a superfluous noun *pieces* to be modified.

Example 4: service provisions

Continuing with the same theme, we move on to error (4) *service provisions,* where we can see that it is much like the one we talked about in (3). The writer lists a number of amenities available in the Kuusamo outdoors: marked paths and trails and camping spots, to name but few. From this, we can see that simply using ‘services’ would do. In English, the term *provisions* usually refers to food, and none of the Finnish translations for that term really seem to fit this context. In addition, the Finnish translation for ‘services’, “palvelut”, would also give the correct idea, so adding the superfluous *provisions* does not have any basis in the NL equivalent either. We need to remember, though, that not all IL structures can be traced back to NL, or TL, via transfer or interference. There are also other linguistic processes at play, an example of which seems to be displayed here. As such, (4) seems to display the writer’s tendency to use modifier + modified noun phrases, even when just one word would do, or when a completely different grammatical structure would be the most appropriate solution.

Example 5: private restaurants (p.17)
Example 6: regional restaurants and guesthouses (p.17)

The next two errors, (5) and (6), can both be found in the same paragraph discussing local cuisine and restaurants. As a term, *private* means something not accessible to public, which seems like an odd choice of words for a tourist brochure. Another meaning for it is something not run by the government, a privately owned business, which is more likely here, but still feels slightly off the mark because there are not that many government-run restaurants in the first place. *Regional*, on the other hand, means something relating to a specific region. Despite being born and raised in the area in question, I cannot think of any local restaurants or small restaurant chains that would be predominantly regional in their cuisine; the food which is served in the restaurants is predominantly Finnish with some local specialties but not something that would really justify using the term *regional*.

If we try to find a plausible interpretation, we can suggest that the process behind *private restaurants* may well have something to do with the aspect of privately owned business. The term ‘private entrepreneur’ has the word ‘private’ in it, as does the Finnish equivalent “yksityisyrittäjä”*,* where the first part of the compound, “yksityis-“*,* is derived from “yksityinen”, ‘private’. It is possible the writer has tried to stress the aspect of privately owned, local restaurants that serve genuine Finnish food made from local ingredients. Still, it is curious why the writer has decided to use *private,* when neither NL or TL requires it; it would be perfectly acceptable and appropriate to just talk about ‘restaurants’.

Consequently, (5) is a good example of how IL structures are not always something that can be explained as a direct example of NL interference. L_2 learning and the subsequent IL are a result of restructuring and recreating a grammar based on hypotheses made from previous linguistic knowledge and testing those hypotheses in one’s linguistic production. Previous linguistic knowledge is obviously the NL, but can also be other L_2s. So, even if we have proposed an explanation for (5), there may well be other processes in effect, either in place of, or adding to, the one we suggested.

Error (6), while on the surface similar to (5), is more likely an example of using a modifying adjective for a noun phrase, instead of having the same idea expressed by a prepositional phrase. The IL structure *regional restaurants and guesthouses* can be interpreted as actually meaning ‘restaurants and guesthouses in the region’, which would be acceptable and appropriate in the context. However, in Finnish the modifying ‘in the region’ (“alueen”), or to be specific, ‘of the region’, would be placed before the noun phrase, as in “alueen ravintolat ja majatalot”. Therefore, it seems possible that the Finnish tendency of placing the modifier in front of the noun phrase, instead of using a prepositional phrase after it, has been transferred to the IL grammar and produced the IL form, or error, *regional restaurants and guesthouses.* There are more examples such as this one in the following sections but it feels more appropriate to discuss this one here based on the shared topic with the preceding error.

Example 7: persons (p.15)

Although (7), *persons,* is a perfectly acceptable word in English, using the –s plural in this case gives the expression an unnecessary formal air. Instead of saying that

Kuusamo Arena *can accommodate 1,000 persons*, a more appropriate expression would be ‘accommodates a thousand people’. As said, *persons* is an acceptable form of English, but in this case it can be perhaps be viewed more as an over-generalization of the s-plural rule of English. It is the most common way of producing the plural form of a noun, and taking into account that *persons* in itself is not an error, just inappropriate in the given context, the writer has produced this relatively clear IL form based on his knowledge of the s-plural rule of English, over-generalizing it in the IL and disregarding the appropriate use of the irregular, and more common, plural ‘people’. In addition, there are six counts of that same error on the same page, so it is definitely systematic in nature.

Example 8: handicraft forms (p.20)

In error (8), the writer has used the term *handicraft forms* to list the traditional materials used in the handicrafts of the area, materials such as wood, fur, leather and ceramics. It is difficult to say why the writer has not opted to use the actual term ‘materials’ in this case, especially when it is mentioned in the previous sentence. The appropriate NL equivalent, “materiaalit”, would also refer to ‘materials’. On the other hand, using just the term ‘handicrafts’ would refer to the end results, the actual products that are created from the materials, or the processes or skills of creation. As such, *handicraft forms*, or perhaps more appropriately, ‘forms of handicraft’, would also seem to refer to those processes of creation; ‘ceramics’ would even be appropriate in that context. So why use it when talking about materials? We have already ruled out NL interference, or direct translation, because Finns would talk about ‘materials’ and not *handicraft forms*.

One possible explanation for the error in (8) would be to link the construction *handicraft forms* to the errors (3), (4) and (6) above. We have already speculated that the writer has a tendency to create modifier + modified noun phrases in IL, a construction that is quite common in NL, even if in TL that option is not appropriate. Thus, the writer uses multiple words where just one would do (as in 3 and 4), or uses a single modifying word in place of a prepositional phrase (as in 6). The error in (8) would seem to be a result of that tendency, at least in part: *handicraft forms* is a modifier + modified construction. In addition, *forms* is semantically a somewhat vague general term that can easily be used to mean different things, perhaps even materials. This tendency, perhaps in tandem with an attempt to not repeat the term 'materials', is one way to explain the IL process behind the term *handicraft forms.*

Example 9: full service evening meals (p.25)

When talking about the services available in specific wilderness camps, the writer uses the term seen in error (9), *full service evening meals*. Judging from the context, the idea behind the expression is a full scale meal in an environment that would perhaps at first look seem incapable of hosting such an event. As far as appropriate interpretations go, 'supper' would seem to come close if we need to take into account the notion of time (evening) from the original passage, which also discusses the possibility of sleeping outside. All in all, trying to find a direct TL equivalent or interpretation for the error seems again difficult, and the most appropriate interpretations would require remaking or paraphrasing the original text. When considering the NL equivalent of the phrase, we can translate it as "täyden palvelun ilta-ateriat", where "täyden palvelun" means *full service*, and is also acceptable Finnish. The compound noun meaning *evening meals*, "ilta-ateriat", is also an acceptable term in Finnish; WSOY's Finnish-English-Finnish dictionary which translates it as 'supper'. However, it is not as widely used as other Finnish equivalents. In Finnish, the meal enjoyed late in the evening is often called "illallinen" or "iltapala", the former being a more formal event, and the latter being a more informal expression for a more casual event, meaning more or less a snack of a smaller scale. Because of, its informal and casual status, "iltapala" is also the most frequently used variant of the three, also based on hits on Google Search. So how has all this resulted in the IL expression *full scale evening meals*?

At first, we can see that "illallinen" was probably not used as the NL base word for the text because of its formal status. Also, "iltapala", despite its frequency, was probably not used because its connection with a snack; the writer is talking about full scale meals here. So, we are left with a notion of a meal that is enjoyed in the evening, “ilta-ateria”. Based on our material, the writer evidently does not have the word ‘supper’ in active his vocabulary because it cannot be found anywhere in the source text. Also, he or she probably did not try to find “ilta-ateria” in a dictionary, or at least not the same that I have, because that would have yielded ‘supper’ as well. So, we are left with the assumption that the writer has used word for word translation to come up with the IL expression *evening meal*, which is therefore a word-for-word translation and as such a result of NL interference.

Example 10: Oulanka-, Kitka-, and Kuusinkijoki Rivers (p.11)

The next error is probably one of the easiest ones to detect and explain. Error (10) lists some of the local rivers, and the spelling immediately strikes as something not acceptable in English. In Finnish, the names of rivers usually also contain the word ‘river’ (“joki”) in them, so they become sort of compounds consisting of ‘name’ + ‘river’. Thus, the names listed here in full would be ‘Oulankajoki, Kitkajoki and Kuusinkijoki Rivers’. In addition, a rule in Finnish grammar states that to avoid redundancy two or more compounds that share a common last part, a suffix, can eliminate that suffix from all the other members of that list bar the last one. So, if we were to produce a list in Finnish meaning ‘a van, a lorry and a bus’, respectively, we would say “paketti-, kuorma- ja linja-auto”, where the suffix “auto” means a motorized vehicle with four or more tyres. Therefore, the error (10), *Oulanka-, Kitka-, and Kuusinkijoki Rivers,* is a result of the Finnish style of creating names for rivers, and the grammatical rule of listing compounds with a common suffix. It is a clear cut example of interference from NL.

Now that we have warmed up by going through some of the more obvious and easily explainable errors we can move on to discuss more complex and deeper grammatical processes that present themselves through the errors in the material.

3.2 Noun phrases

Some of the errors in the source material display deeper grammatical processes behind the IL structures than just using an incorrect word or translating a NL term word for word. They can be considered as more complex in nature, as cases where the IL grammar displays signs of grammatical interference beyond the lexical level. One example of this variety, namely *regional restaurants,* was already covered in the previous section, mainly due to its closeness in topic to another error, and it serves as a kind of preface to this section. As promised, the next part of the analysis will cover more of the more complex IL structures in the source material, and their possible explanations.

Example 11: multiple day safaris (p.6)
Example 12: several day-long snowmobile safari (p.14)
Example 13: several-day fishing safari (p.10)

In addition to having almost the same semantic value between them, errors (11), (12) and (13) above all display a similar interference process resulting in idiosyncratic IL structures. All three errors can be broadly interpreted as ‘safaris that last for several days’, where the noun ‘safaris’ would be modified by a modifying clause. Even though a similar grammatical structure, that is, a modifying clause, is perfectly acceptable in Finnish, it is more convenient and perhaps even more common to replace the lengthy structure with just one adjective, “monipäiväinen”. The first part of the compound, “moni-“, has roughly the same semantic value as *multiple* and *several* in the errors, that is, ‘more than one’ or ‘many’. In the second part, “päivä” means ‘day’, and the suffix “–inen” can be roughly described as something that adds the adjective nature or function to the compound, like the ‘of’ in ‘a safari of several days’, if we were to explain it using the example at hand. Despite being a highly economical grammatical device in Finnish, creating such adjective compound does not lend itself to be used in English that well, which is clearly displayed in the errors (11) to (13). Even if they are more or less understandable for a speaker of English, they are definitely not idiomatic English. They are perfect examples of idiosyncratic IL structures that bear signs of interference from NL to IL in a manner that has been described above. In addition, the writer has created three different expressions for the same concept, ‘lasting several days’, all of which are clearly idiosyncratic IL structures and not acceptable TL structures. The fact that these IL structures, although different on the surface, are grammatically similar displays the underlying systematic nature of the IL grammar.

Example 14: do-it-yourself or guided trekking (p.12)

The construction in (14) follows the same pattern as the previous errors, with a slight exception. Half of the construction is more or less acceptable and appropriate English, namely *guided trekking.* However, *do-it-yourself trekking* is not. ‘Do it yourself’ generally refers to a craft, to something that is done manually with an end result, for example renovating an apartment. The Finnish translation “tee-se-itse” has the same semantic value, and is thus not that helpful in finding an explanation for this error. Nevertheless, the term does have the idea of doing something alone, without supervision, which seems to be carried over to this construction. The interpretation for (14) would then be that tourists can go trekking on their own or take guided tours. However, the Finnish tendency to place the modifier directly before the modified noun is again displayed by the IL tendency to create a structure to mirror the NL one, namely using *do-it-yourself* to modify *trekking* here. This tendency may also have been amplified by the acceptable TL form *guided trekking,* where *guided* serves as a kind of grammatical pair and a semantic counterpart or opposite for *do-it-yourself.*

Example 15: large-event capacity (p.15)

Error (15) can be found in the passage *The large-event capacity and local knowledge guarantee…*, and is thus the subject, or part of the subject, of that clause. When interpreted, a more idiomatic way to express the idea would be perhaps to say ‘the capacity to organize large events and the local knowledge guarantee’, again using a modifying clause to accompany the word ‘capacity’. However, in this case it is difficult to come up with a Finnish translation that would add up to the IL structure displayed in (14). A word-for-word translation would result in the compound “suurtapahtumakapasiteetti”, which sounds as strange in Finnish as it looks. So the error in question does not seem to be a result of a literal translation of an NL expression. Nevertheless, it seems to display the Finnish tendency to economically place the modifier before the modified word, even if the IL end result does not directly translate to a specific NL expression.

Example 16: pure water rivers (p.10)

A more straightforward explanation can be found for error (16). Again if we interpret the IL structure as something more idiomatic in TL, we arrive to the phrase ‘rivers of pure water’, which utilizes a modifying clause much like the ones we proposed for the previous examples. This time it is also easier to detect the NL expression behind the IL structure. The equivalent Finnish phrase would be “puhdasvetiset joet”, where “joet” is the translation for ‘rivers’, and the compound adjective “puhdasvetiset” means ‘of pure water’, a modifier grammatically very similar to “monipäiväinen” in errors (11) and (12) above. The first part “puhdas-“ means ‘pure’, and the second part “–vetiset” is derived from “vesi” ‘water’ and the plural form of the suffix “–inen” that we already came across in errors (11) and (12), meaning roughly the ‘of’ in ‘of pure water’, that is, ‘made up of something’.

Example 17: modern technical availability (p.14)

When talking about the services available for conference groups and business travelers, the writer has come up with this sentence, containing the error (17) above: *The flexible services and the modern technical availability of Kuusamo Lapland conference and incentive trips offer a fantastic balance of wilderness and exotic adventure*. *Availability* as such means simply that something is available, for example, for use or purchasing. In that sense it could refer to the trips mentioned in the sentence. However, the writer has decided to add also the modifier *modern technical,* which results in a combination that does not really convey any explicit meaning, not on its own or when viewed in connection with *trips*. The paragraph discusses the kinds of programmes available, and how the trips can be advantageous for team spirit and personal connections. The different venues in the area are discussed in the following chapters, along with their specifications regarding accommodation and seating. However, it is not until after four paragraphs that the writer directly mentions something that could be related to *modern technical availability*, a *high-tech presentation event in the deepest heart of the forest*. If we are to take that as a clue to the meaning of the error in (17), we could infer that the phrase *modern technical availability* is an attempt to state that the trips organisers have all the modern conveniences available for a full scale business event, should it be held indoors or out in the woods. In addition, one could also suggest that referring to *balance* in the same sentence the writer has actually meant the balance between the everyday business side with all the technical appliances, and the exotic side of the trips, even if the sentence states something else.

Now that we have at least one possible interpretation for what the phrase could mean, we need to try to explain the creation process behind it. A word-for-word translation to NL does not offer any assistance: "nykyaikainen tekninen saatavuus" does not mean anything in Finnish, nor does it offer much clues as to what the origins of the IL phrase are; it is as unidiomatic as the IL version. Nevertheless, we can still attempt to analyse the original phrase to find out a plausible explanation behind it. We have already discussed the meaning of *availability,* and it is safe to assume that we also know what *modern* and *technical* mean in this context. We have also suggested a meaning for the phrase, that is, the modern conveniences available for conferences and meetings. If we take the abovementioned aspects into account, we can suggest that the writer has tried to create a single noun phrase to convey the idea that all the necessary tools and resources for a modern conference or meeting are available, along with the more exotic aspects of the organized trips. Not satisfied with conveying this information in a separate clause or a sentence, the writer has attempted a more economical approach in the text, resulting in the error displayed in (17).

Example 18: a meeting day-off for canoeing (p.14)

Error (18) can be found in the same paragraph as (17). It is used in the clause *[t]he scope of the programme can alternate between a meeting day-off for canoeing – to a several-day long snowmobile safari*. When looking at the context, we can see that the writer is trying to display two sides of the services available with regards to how much time is needed, that is, several days, or perhaps just one. From this, we can interpret that (18) is actually 'canoeing on a day off from meetings'. Thus, a more appropriate expression would be along the lines of '[t]he scope of the programme can vary from canoeing on a day off from meetings to a snowmobile safari lasting several days'. Now that we have found a plausible interpretation for the error, we also need to find an explanation for it. The NL equivalent does not lend itself for help in this case. A word for word translation for *a meeting day-off* would be "palaverivapaapäivä", which in itself is understandable but not necessary idiomatic Finnish. On the whole, the NL equivalent in this case seems to be closer to the paraphrased interpretation that we came up with for (18). Therefore, the error in question here is not a result of a direct translation, or translation loan, from NL to IL, or interference in the purest meaning of the term. However, we can argue that a certain NL tendency that we have already discussed earlier in this chapter can be seen to be at play here. I am talking about the modifier + modified noun phrase construction, which seems to be over-generalized in the IL grammar to the extent that the IL expressions sometimes become highly idiosyncratic and difficult to understand.

The errors in this section seem to display a definite tendency in IL to create forms that bear specific traces of NL interference. I will discuss the issue more later on when I attempt to draw some conclusions of the IL grammar based on the analysis. Before that, we still need to discuss errors that display more complicated grammatical processes behind the IL structures found in the source material.

3.3 More complex structures

The heading for this section is not meant to suggest that the examples discussed here would be complex in the sense that they are difficult to understand or explain. The notion behind the heading is that we are moving from discussing individual lexical items and noun phrases to parts of grammar that perhaps cannot be pinpointed and analysed as succinctly as the examples in the previous sections. There are fewer errors discussed, but more speculation for each error since the IL processes are not a clear cut as with the other examples. That being said, I believe each example and its analysis are discussed in a manner that is not entirely irrelevant or without merit.

> Example 19: They are ideal for everyday use, gift-giving or interior decoration. (p.21)

In (19) above, the compound gift-giving immediately catches the attention. It is certainly not an idiomatic expression, nor is it grammatically acceptable even if the reader understands its meaning. A more appropriate and acceptable interpretation would be, for example, ‘They are ideal for everyday use, interior decoration, or as gifts.’ An assumed NL equivalent for the original phrase would be something along the lines of “Ne sopivat hyvin päivittäiseen käyttöön, lahjojen antamiseen tai sisustamiseen.” Strangely enough, the Finnish equivalent for our interpretation seems to be the version that would also be just as, or perhaps even more, idiomatic in NL: “Ne sopivat hyvin päivittäiseen käyttöön, sisustamiseen tai lahjoiksi.” The difference between the original text and the interpretation is the change in preposition for ‘gifts’, which in turn is reflected in the second NL equivalent. In both, the act of giving gifts, or *gift-giving,* is replaced by a simple noun ‘gifts’. The preposition changes in the English version, as does the inflection in the second Finnish translation.

Again, as we do not have any documentation of the original Finnish translation, should there even be one, we cannot be absolutely sure of the NL structures that have affected the IL structures displayed in the source material. Thus, we can only propose explanations based on our interpretations and intuitions of both languages. One way to explain error (19) would be to use the first NL equivalent as a starting point, thus proposing an interference effect from NL to IL. The analogical inflections “-öön”, “-een” and “–een” can be seen as the reason for using just one preposition in the IL version, and thus creating the need for a coined word such as *gift-giving* to fit the structure ‘for x, y and z’. However, another explanation can be offered which puts less emphasis on transfer or interference.

As we have already seen, especially in the examples in 3.2, the writer has a tendency to use simpler grammatical structures like modifier + modified instead of using more complex, and sometimes more acceptable and appropriate, prepositional phrases. Some of them can be traced directly to NL translations and therefore can be seen as results of interference and some of them less so. Even if there is no clear NL equivalent that would validate the transfer effect for all such errors, including (19) above, we can still propose that the writer’s IL grammar is in a phase, fossilized or not, where there is a tendency to simplify and perhaps over-generalize certain structures. Both aspects, especially the latter, can be seen to be in effect in (19): the over-generalized simpler IL structure ‘for x, y and z’ results in the need for creating a non-idiomatic noun phrase *gift-giving* to accommodate the use of such structure.

> Example 20: Fishermen from around the world appreciate the catch they get from the rivers, especially the graylings, the native lake trout, which are unique to Kuusamo, as they come from Russia to Kuusamo rivers to spawn. (p.10)

In the second example above, error (20), the writer has joined together a number of clauses which, in themselves, present no difficulty in understanding them. However, the subordinate clauses and how they are structured seem to give a different idea from the one that the writer most likely had in mind. If we strip the subordinate clauses from the example we are left with the following text: *Fishermen from around the world appreciate the catch they get from the rivers as they come from Russia to Kuusamo rivers to spawn.* According to this sentence, it is the fishermen, not the graylings, who come to spawn in the Kuusamo rivers, which is probably not the case. It is difficult to intuitively produce a single sentence that would convey all the information that the original tries to include, but in an acceptable and appropriate way. The problem seems to be the last part, *as they come from Russia to Kuusamo rivers to spawn,* which changes the meaning of the sentence. Without it the error in question here would not exist. Thus, in terms of TL, this is a run-on sentence which would need to be reproduced in more than one sentence to avoid cumbersome grammatical structures such as the one in (20). The same applies to the NL equivalent: if we produce the original sentence in Finnish, we arrive more or less to the same meaning, and a similar run-on sentence in need of reorganization and rebuilding. As the NL version is equally ungrammatical and unidiomatic, we can propose that this IL structure cannot be explained with the transfer effect from NL to IL.

> Example 21: Regional restaurants and guesthouses organize theme trips around different types of food, including trekking, fishing and sauna, while the crowning moments actually come when it's time to sit down to enjoy the meals together. (p.17)

Error (21) has a somewhat similar problem: the writer has attempted to put as much information as possible into one single sentence, and ended up with a structure where *different types of food* actually refers to *trekking, fishing and sauna*, or vice versa. As they are activities and not things that you eat, we can safely assume that this sentence does not convey the correct meaning. Again, as in (20) above, it is difficult to interpret this sentence in a grammatically acceptable way so that it would also contain all the necessary information. The best solution would be to perhaps reproduce it in two different sentences:

> Regional restaurants and guesthouses organize theme trips around different types of food. The trips' activities consist of trekking, fishing and sauna, while the crowning moments actually come when it's time to sit down to enjoy the meals together.

As with (20), the NL equivalent of the original error does not give any clues of the origin of the error. It is as ungrammatical as the IL version and therefore does not explain this error with the interference effect. However, as we have already seen, not all IL structures that are unacceptable in TL can, or must, be explained in terms of interference. In addition, (20) and (21) do display similar grammatical trends, which may in turn be signs of an underlying systematic IL grammar.

> Example 22: This guarantees that you can enjoy beautiful and extremely diverse natural surroundings and observe wildlife, which is endangered in other parts of the world. (p.3)

Error (22) is an example of a more common mistake when learning English grammar, that is, the defining and non-defining relative clause. The writer has added a comma in front of the relative pronoun *which,* because of which the relative clause becomes non-defining; or at least it usually does. In this case the relative pronoun *which* turns the following clause to a connective relative clause. Connective relative clauses are not used to describe their nouns, but instead to continue the story of the preceding clause. Here, it relates to the entire preceding clause, adding up to the notion that enjoying beautiful and extremely diverse natural surroundings and observing wildlife is something that is in danger of becoming extinct outside the Kuusamo region. However, the correct interpretation here would more likely to be conveyed by the use of the defining relative clause:

> 'This guarantees that you can enjoy beautiful and extremely diverse natural surroundings and observe wildlife which is endangered in other parts of the world.'

This version of the sentence connects the relative pronoun *which* to the noun directly preceding it, *wildlife.* Thus the meaning changes to something more appropriate: wildlife is endangered in other parts of the world, but one can still observe it in Kuusamo. However, we can still argue that this interpretation may lack something. It is possible that the writer has attempted to communicate that wildlife in general is endangered in other parts of the world. Or the meaning may also have been that a certain type of wildlife found in the Kuusamo region is in danger of vanishing from other parts of the globe. Making the distinction clear would require more restructuring. However, as we have already pointed out the original error in the sentence, and at least one appropriate TL interpretation for it, we do not need to go into more detail in the intuitive interpretation part of the analysis.

The NL equivalent of error (22) does not lend itself as an explanation for then IL form. The defining/non-defining distinction applies to Finnish as well, with the aid of the relative pronoun “joka” or “jotka” (‘which’, singular and plural, respectively). However, in the case of connective relative clause, where the relative pronoun connects to the entire preceding clause, the Finnish equivalent for ‘which’ is “mikä”. Using the connective relative clause construction in the NL equivalent would sound inappropriate to a speaker of Finnish. Therefore, even though it is possible that even ungrammatical NL structures can be transferred to IL, we can assume here that the IL structure has its base in some other aspect of the IL grammar, and not in NL interference.

> Example 23: Jyrävä, Myllykoski, Kiutaköngäs and other raging natural rapids defy the frost of deep winter with their powerful force, while the surreal ice sculptures of other flowing waterfalls charm their viewers – while their captured powers lie frozen for a moment in time. (p.5)

The example in error (23) is another run-on sentence from this writer. Two subordinate clauses are stacked to the main clauses by using the same subordinating conjunction *while.* The end result is an example of over-decorative language where the latter subordinate clause (- *while their captured powers lie frozen for a moment in time)* seems separate from the part preceding it, to extent that we cannot even be sure to which noun phrase *their* is connected. In addition, we cannot be sure if the writer has intended to use *while* to express time or to emphasize contrast, both of which are aspects that *which* is capable of expressing. Still, we can attempt to interpret the error in a way that would be both grammatically acceptable and also appropriate in the given context.

> Jyrävä, Myllykoski, Kiutaköngäs and other raging rapids defy the frost of deep winter with their powerful force, while the surreal ice sculptures of

> waterfalls charm their viewers as their captured powers lie frozen for a moment in time.

This interpretation has done away with some superfluous adjectives (*natural*; *flowing*), and replaced the latter *while* with ‘as’ which can also be used to denominate time. The notion behind the sentence would now be that some rapids resist the coldness of the winter and keep flowing through the wintertime, but some waterfalls do not, and by freezing they form ice sculptures that can be admired during the cold season. The first subordinate conjunction *while* is used to emphasize contrast (‘but’; ‘whereas’) between the flowing and frozen water. If we are to accept this interpretation as the correct one, we can see that in the original text the writer has added to confusion by using *while* for both of the meanings mentioned above.

The possibility of using ‘while’ for both contrast and time exists in NL as well. The Finnish equivalents for them are “kun taas” and “kun”, respectively. While it is unlikely that the somewhat similar forms of the NL equivalents have had something to do with the IL version and how *while* is used there, it is a possibility that should be taken into account. There is certainly a chance that similarities in the NL equivalents could result in the use of *while* in two different meanings. An analogy of form in NL could somehow trigger a similar analogy in IL, especially when it is grammatically acceptable to use the homonyms for these two different meanings in the TL. Even so, I again propose that the erroneous IL structure has less to do with NL and its structures and more to do with a part of the writer’s IL grammar which seems to display itself in the use of subordinate clauses, as we can also see from some of the other examples in this chapter. A more conclusive discussion will follow in chapter 4.

3.4 Other observations

This is meant as a complementary section to outline some of the stylistic aspects employed by the writer in the brochure copy. We need to remember that a learner’s IL is not just one-dimensional vertical variation in grammatical competence and performance; it is also a decision about the horizontal variance, about the correct tone with which to convey the message. Word choices are a part of that tone, especially in a text which aims to affect the reader in some way, especially advertising copy. The issues discussed in this section are not grammatical errors per se, but stylistic decisions and word choices that catch the attention of an English native speaker, or a person with a native speaker -like command of English.

Example 24: use of the demonstrative ‘this/these’

Looking at the material, it seems the writer has a tendency to frequently use the demonstrative pronouns *this* and *these,* especially in the beginning of sentences. In some cases, they are used instead of pronouns *it, they* and *them*, like in the examples below:

This guarantees that you can enjoy… (p.3)
These can be found… (p.5)
One of the largest of these... (p.5)
These include… (p.12)

Sometimes it used to replace the definite article ‘the’:

This service can be arranged… (p.3)
These unique surroundings… (p.4)
This area is indeed truly a favorite… (p.9)
These opportunities know no limits! (p.14)

As said, they are not necessarily errors in grammar, but they still sound somewhat strange to a native speaker, especially when used as frequently as in the source material. Also, the interpretations, or perhaps suggestions for correction, are evident in the examples above; there is no need to go through each example before we can start discussing the phenomena from the IL theory viewpoint.

The NL versions of the examples listed above may give some clue as to why the writer has such a strong tendency to use the demonstrative pronouns in the way described above. The Finnish language makes use of the demonstrative pronouns “tämä” and “nämä” (‘this’ and ‘these’, respectively), and their different cases, which we need not list here. The Finnish demonstratives can be applied similarly to English ones. However, the words “tämä” and “nämä” also have an additional dimension in their usage. They can applied as a kind of a tool to refer to the idea of the previous sentence and link two sentences together without making use of the main clause + subordinate clause structure and the conjunctions linking the clauses. This use case is also possible in English. In addition, Finnish has no articles, so the use of the definite article is not applicable in the NL. If we put together these two facts, we can find a possible explanation as to why the writer has replaced the definite article with the demonstrative pronoun in the examples above. The need to connect the two sentences together combined with the tool missing in NL (the definite article), and the tool available in both languages (the demonstrative) has lead to the over-generalised use of the latter. Let us look more closely at one of the examples.

> *If you choose to continue to Russia, however, you will need a visa with your passport. This service can be arranged by local tour organisers.*

Above is one of the use cases of the demonstrative in a wider context. As we can see, the noun phrase *this service* refers to the visa arrangement for trips to Russia. If we leave out the possibility of restructuring this passage as a main clause + subordinate clause construction, we are left with the interpretation that was discussed earlier, that a more appropriate expression would be to refer to *the service,* in which the definite article would signal that the service being discussed is indeed the one mentioned earlier in the context, that is, the Russian visa arrangement.

Example 25: ‘exotic’

Another word that keeps making appearances in the material is *exotic.* Again, the word in itself is not an error. Also, when discussing the nature of Lapland and the four seasons with their distinct weather conditions and activities, using the word *exotic* to an English speaking audience is justifiable. To talk about *the exotic Arctic* is to create an image of something foreign and alluring, which is what a travel brochure attempts to do, among other things. However, there are occasions where the use of the word makes one wonder if it is actually necessary. In the brochure, the reader learns about *exotic shopping experiences* (p.3), *exotic wilderness cottages* (p.23), *exotic wilderness camps* (p.25), and *exotic hiking trails* (p.27). These terms paint an odd picture, especially when it comes to the first and last examples. The shopping opportunities in the region are far from exotic, even for a foreigner, and to talk up an average souvenir shop in this manner seems overkill. In addition, a hiking trail is a hiking trail no matter where you go. The scenery and nature may be different from place to place, but it is still a trail in the woods that you walk on.

Example 26: hyperbole in general

On a more general note, *exotic* is not the only case of hyperbole to be found in the material. Advertising copy should make use of some exaggeration when trying to sell a product, but a line must be drawn somewhere. Otherwise, the reading experience becomes a series bewildered moments where the reader is left to find the facts from all the superfluous and confusing content. A case in point:

> *In Kuusamo, you will meet the spirit of snow whose secrets warm you with enchanting memories of the magical frozen North. These unique surroundings invite you to dive with all your senses into the pure essence of Mother Nature, a part of winter's timeless existence.*

Granted, this is not part of the main copy text itself, but a caption which seem to take more liberties in the use of romanticized imagery. Nevertheless, it is a gloriously obfuscated piece of writing, and its effect on the reader is most likely not what the writer intended: confused amusement. And there is more. The brochure copy throws around words such as *exceptional*, *world-class*, *mystical*, *incredible*, *extraordinary*, and *unique*. Again, there is nothing wrong in trying to persuade the reader by moderately spicing up the advertising copy with such words. But when you start to come up with expressions like *exceptional canoeing* (p.9), or *most extraordinary types of guided sports* (p.6), you are probably going a bit too far.

As said, the copywriting is probably a result of a writer who is not fully accustomed to the English language, or advertising copy. In general, Finnish as a language, and perhaps as a nationality, is not one to make much use of superlatives. We tend not say 'best' when 'good' will do. English seems to use such expressions more freely and an accustomed reader or writer knows how to take that into account. But when an inexperienced writer, especially a Finn, takes on the task of writing exciting and alluring advertising copy in English, the results can be what we have seen above: exaggerated, overblown, and making too many promises.

There is no need to sell yourself short, but there are definitely reasons to make sure that your message is understood correctly by your intended audience. Recently the Finnish media has reported of cases where British tourists in Lapland complained that they had not received the service they had paid for. They clearly had a point: the service providers had not delivered on their promises, and the arrangements seemed to have been less professional than expected. This is not to say that the service providers in the Kuusamo Lapland region are amateurs. Nevertheless, if you keep making suggestions in your advertising that make the customer imagine things that you are not able to provide, there is a good chance somebody is going to be disappointed.

Now that we have identified and explained some of the the errors in the material, we can move on to discussing them more extensively in relation to the theoretical background. We will use the next section for making comparisons between the findings and theory, and drawing conclusions based on those comparisons.

4. DISCUSSION

In this section I will discuss the findings presented in the previous section in relation to the theoretical frame and the research question. I will try to find consistent patterns in the errors and discuss the learner's interlanguage based on such possible systematic consistencies. The findings will also be discussed in relation to some other theoretical aspects presented in section 2.

4.1 Systematic errors and features

First we will discuss the consistencies found in the errors and features analysed in section 3. This is done in order of their prevalence in the material.

4.1.1 Modifier + modified construction

If we look at all the errors that we discussed in the previous section, we can definitely see one type of error prevailing over others. More than third of all the twenty six examples were connected to this type of interference error, albeit not always in the same manner. In some cases the interference took something away from the TL expression, in others it added something that was not required. But in all cases the idiomatic expressions could be traced back to one specific aspect of the NL grammar.

I am talking of course about the Finnish modifier + modified construction that can be seen as a possible explanation for many of the interference errors found in the material. As I have stated before, the modifier + modified noun phrase construction is very frequent in Finnish, and also a highly economical way of expressing information. Where languages like English convey an idea by using, for example, prepositional phrases, and at the same time use more space and effort, Finnish is often able to condense that same modifying information to a smaller space, sometimes even into a single compound noun. This is not to say that such a construction is not possible in TL; it is, but it is probably not as frequent or easily adaptable.

Of the errors displaying this type of interference, examples (6), (11), (12), (13), (14), (15), (16) and (18) are of the type where a modifying prepositional phrase has given way to an IL pattern of placing a modifier directly before the modified noun. In some cases the IL construction was a result of an almost literal translation of the NL structure, and the NL equivalent was much easier to construct by means of intuition. Such cases were, for example, *pure water rivers* in (16), and the three different constructions for 'lasting several days' in (11), (12) and (13). In other cases there were no direct NL equivalents that could be plausibly said to be the source of the interference errors, such as *large-event capacity* in (15) and a *meeting day-off for canoeing* in (17). Despite being different in the sense that some were somewhat literal translations from NL and some were not, these errors all shared the same interference pattern: an idea that would have been idiomatically expressed with a modifying prepositional phrase in TL was idiosyncratically expressed with a modifier + modified construction in IL.

Another phenomenon, and a more curious one at that, was the fact that in some cases the learner had followed the modifier + modified construction so strictly that he had had to add a superfluous word to complete the construction. This was evident in the errors (3) *ceramic pieces*, (4) *service provisions*, and (8) *handicraft forms*. In each of these errors the first word would have sufficed to convey the necessary information, but the learner had felt compelled to add another, and usually quite general, noun in order to add up to a modifier + modified construction.

It is not easy to say which phenomenon is a more convincing example of interference in the abovementioned cases: trying to condense too much information to a simple noun phrase, or coming up with a superfluous word to complete a noun phrase when just one word would do. Not only is it difficult, it is also irrelevant. Both of these cases display a prevalent condition of the IL in question: attempting to convey information by using a modifier + modified noun phrase. We have already stated that frequency in NL is a possible prerequisite for transfer and interference. Also, a learner first looks for, and learns first, those TL structures that are similar to the ones he has learned through NL. This is the facilitating aspect of transfer. Both of these aspects are in effect here. As we have learned, the modifier + modified construction is a common and highly economical grammatical tool in Finnish, and is often used to convey information that would require the use of some other tool in English. Moreover, the same construction, though not as common, is also used in English. Based on such comparisons between the two languages, and the idiosyncratic examples analysed in section 3 and their systematic consistencies discussed above, we can safely assume that a part of the learner's IL grammar is the over-generalised use of the modifier + modified noun phrase structure.

This phenomenon also seems to be the most prevalent finding from the data. It is difficult to say with certainty how fossilized this type of interference has become in the learner's IL grammar; more studies of texts by the same learner would be required to make any certain statements about the degree of fossilization. Nevertheless, we can see from the frequency of use that at this stage of the IL development the grammar is quite partial to this type of interference. What is more, the fact that the learner has used basically the same structure but different words to convey the same idea in errors (11), (12) and (13) seems to support the notion that the interference is on the level of grammar (modifier + modified noun phrase), and not just a result of literal translation.

4.1.2 Demonstratives 'this/these'

It was already mentioned in the analysis that using the demonstratives 'this' and 'these' in the way that they are used in the text is not an error as such. That is to say that they are grammatically acceptable and also more or less appropriate in their context. Nevertheless, something about their use sounds foreign. Moreover, the frequent use of the demonstratives is one of the more systematic features in the text, and as such deserves to be discussed here.

We already highlighted two of the consistent types of use for the demonstratives in the text: in place of personal pronouns and replacing the definite article 'the'. As an explanation, we proposed that the over-generalized and idiosyncratically frequent use of the demonstratives was due to the lack of the definite article in the Finnish language, and also due to the need to semantically link two sentences together without using the main clause + subordinate clause structure.

It would be going too far to say that the learner has not learned the main clause + subordinate clause structures of TL, especially when the material contains evidence against such statement. There are plenty of cases in the text where the structure is used without fault. It may be possible that this feature of the learner's grammar is still in a state of flux, and backsliding on the simple-complex continuum still occurs from time to time.

That being said, we still have not accounted for the systematic occurrence of the demonstratives. As we already learned, the Finnish demonstratives "tämä" and "nämä" ('this'; 'these') can be used to link semantically connected sentences together. It can be added that this feature is perhaps more common in the spoken communication where syntactic structures tend to become more simplified and shorter to enable pauses for breathing and feedback. What is more, Laury's study (1997) shows that speakers of Finnish tend to use demonstratives to focus attention to important aspects of the spoken conversation, almost in the way a definite article would be used. Although mainly focusing on the demonstrative pronoun "se" ('it'), Laury also discusses the demonstratives "tämä" and "tuo" ('this'; 'that'), and states that "se" especially is used almost as a definite article in Finnish. This finding is in line with the idiosyncratic and systematic use of the demonstratives in the source material for this study.

Of course, the written text serving as our source material is not the same as spoken spontaneous conversation, far from it. The spatial aspect of the latter is completely removed from the former, and so is the aspect of time in that the act of communication need not happen between two or more people in the same place at the same time. In addition, the text that we have used as a source material is supposed to apply a tone that is more formal than colloquial or conversational speech. Therefore, Laury's findings as such are not directly applicable for this study.

Nevertheless, such results do offer some additional leverage to our proposal that the over-generalised use of the demonstratives, especially in place of the definite article 'the'. Even if Laury's study does not indisputably show our speculation to be true, it would be wrong to leave it without mention here.

The two examples mentioned above were the most prominent types of consistent use of IL features that seem to have their origins in transfer and interference. They can be viewed as part of the learner's IL grammar code, or a description of that code. Next we will discuss some other features of the IL that are less consistent, and perhaps have less to do with transfer and interference.

4.2 Other findings

Apart from the consistent features discussed above, and the few literal translations analysed in section 3.1, the bulk of the analysis in section concentrated on the more syntactic errors in section 3.3. One of them, error (19) to be exact, could be in part explained as a tendency to avoid more complex structures such as prepositional phrases, and as over-generalisation of simpler grammatical structures. This is in line with the observations we made with the modifier + modified noun phrases. Still, the rest of the errors discussed in section 3.3 display less signs of systematic features, and cannot be necessarily be traced back to NL via transfer or interference.

Let us start with a general observation of the sentences in errors (20) to (23). Most of them are definitely run-on sentences that are made to contain so much information that it is difficult if not impossible to convey all those ideas in one syntactic and grammatical construction, that is, a single sentence. The end results are a hodgepodge of main and subordinate clauses where referents get mixed up and the meanings seem to be very different from what they should be.

If the over-generalised use of the modifier + modified construction was in part explained by a tendency to avoid more complex grammatical structures, the errors in 3.3 do not seem to follow that same rule. If anything, they seem to be an antithesis for it. The constructions are ambitious in their attempts to cram all the information in one sentence, but they fail in that attempt and leave the reader confused and scanning the text for the intended meaning. So, even if the examples in 3.3 do not necessarily fall in line with our theory of a tendency to use simpler grammatical structures, they definitely show that such a tendency or intuition from the learner's part would be correct. The learner's competence in constructing longer and more complex syntactic structures in TL is deficient, or at least displays definite signs of inconsistency and back-sliding on the transitional competence continuum. While there are also some examples of sentences where relative clauses or main clause + subordinate clause structures have been constructed correctly, the examples in 3.3 show definite flaws in their use.

All in all, when moving from smaller and simpler grammatical constructions to more complex syntactic structures, the errors in our data displayed less signs of interference, and were much less consistent. As such, this seems to reflect the theory of transfer and interference quite well: the simpler structures are learned first, and thus are included in the learner's active competence or use early on. Frequent use, especially if not checked with negative feedback, causes fossilization, and perhaps even a confidence are in the learner's use of the language. Thus, the more complex features are less used, and when they are used, they can display inconsistency in terms of acceptability in TL.

Now that we have discussed our findings in terms of how they form consistent patterns and as such a partial description of the learner's IL grammar, it is time to take a broader look at how this study with its data and results can be viewed against the theoretical background that was presented in section 2.

4.3 General discussion

As has been mentioned already, error analysis as a method is perfect tool for implementing a study on interlanguage. The errors a learner makes are a part of the interlanguage data and as such just as important as the well-formed sentences. In this study we have a partial error analysis which also serves as a partial description of the learner's interlanguage code.

There are definite systematic features in the analysed errors which makes it easier to suggest that those features are a set and consistent part of the IL grammar. We cannot make any definite statements about the degree of fossilization, but the frequency and inventiveness of use, especially in the case of the modifier + modified construction, may well suggest that the interference is an integral part of the IL grammar. Nevertheless, more study on the same learner would be needed to make more valid statements about this matter.

We need to bear in mind also Corder's view on textual data, and the notion of external and internal constraint. There is no question about the presence of external constraint here: writing a copy for a brochure is not spontaneous conversation, and as such does not offer the same kind of data that a spoken interaction would. However, when it comes to internal constraint there is more room for discussion. In Corder's opinion, the learner applies internal constraint to his production of written language, selecting only the parts that he feels confident in using, and the lack of immediate feedback removes the need to modify his production. This is definitely the case in a teaching and testing environment which is where error analysis was first used: the learners perhaps have a more concrete grasp of the level of competence that they possess and apply their knowledge more or less based on that idea, without necessarily trying to apply structures they know a learner at their level need not master yet.

Let us assume now that the learner in question has already had a significant amount of formal teaching in English. Perhaps he has even finished the upper secondary school ("lukio"), and would thus have studied English for approximately ten years. Unless one studies English as a major subject at a university, those ten years are more or less the maximum amount of English studies a person is be able to have in Finland. A learner at this level would probably feel more confident in using his second language, and would also apply less internal constraint to his production.

This seems to be the case here. With all its flaws, it is not likely that the copy is a product of a university English student. Nor is it simple enough to be written by someone still in comprehensive school. The material in the brochure does not seem to suggest any overt signs of internal constraint. The sentences as such are not simplified in any way. On the contrary, at times they are adventurous and ambitious, which makes the message of the copy difficult to grasp at times. What is more, it is unlikely that someone still in the middle of their compulsory education would be given an opportunity to write a copy of such importance. It is more reasonable to assume that such a task would be given to a person with at least an upper secondary school degree.

Even if information about the learner in question, along with their educational background, would be very useful to the analysis, it still is not relevant here. The analysis was made based only on the assumption that the person who produced the text had Finnish as their native language. The discussion above, some of it speculative, serves only as an example of why we should not take the idea of internal constraint in production of text as a given in this case.

Continuing on the topic of internal constraint and how much of it has been applied in the material, we must also consider the style of the text. The stylistic choices a writer makes depend on the intended audience and genre of the text. Here, the genre is marketing copy and the audience is the English speaking residents of United Kingdom. Both these aspects set standards that need to be followed: the text must be in English, it needs to be accessible and understandable to a native speaker and it must also be persuasive so that the audience will become interested in the Kuusamo region. To meet those standards, the writer needs to be able to produce content which does more than just present the factual information. So the demands are much higher than in basic forms of communication, which usually only aims at passing information. Here, the required tone has no place for constraint, at least not in the sense that the writing should be simplified. The writer needs to base his production on a point on the simple complex continuum, so that the standards are met. In this case the point in question seems to be slightly beyond the learner's competence.

Another part of the theoretical background we should probably revisit here is the idea of two different interlanguages being used at the same time: one for reception and one for production. The IL used for reception, for passive competence, is usually more advanced; we understand more than we ourselves are able to produce, whatever the distance between the two skillsets. In Finland, an average person is almost constantly surrounded by the English language through the media. There are songs sung in English on the radio, and the programmes on the TV have the original soundtrack available, with Finnish subtitles to make them understandable. That way, the passive competence is constantly trained through some level of input. And this comes in addition to the formal teaching that Finns receive at school.

Is it possible, then, that the constantly rehearsed and thus more advanced interlanguage of receiving information in English would create a sort of false confidence on the interlanguage of production? If it were so it would be easier to explain why a learner would attempt to produce sentences that are beyond his competence in terms of the simple – complex continuum of the grammar. As we have already established, interlanguage is a set of hypotheses about language, and the learner learns more about that language by putting those hypotheses to the test. The code is elaborated based on input, communication acts and the feedback from the. So, attempts at producing more elaborate structures are a necessity for language learning. However, outside a formal teaching environment and without any direct communication with another speaker of English, it is difficult to put one's interlanguage into test. There is little or no feedback to help in correcting the possible false hypotheses, should there be any.

We need to remember that in written communication, especially in this case, there is no direct and immediate feedback available. Outside a formal teaching environment the amount of negative feedback in written communication becomes smaller, as the recipients are able to deduct the correct meaning of an expression based on the context. Thus, the lack of negative feedback may cause some interference features to become fossilized in the interlanguage.

Based on the amount of idiosyncratic expressions in the source material, my assumption is that it has not been proofread by a native speaker of English. Moreover, if we assume that it was proofread by another native speaker of Finnish with a similar education in English, the idiomatic expressions could have gone unchecked for the same reasons that they were put there in the first place, and the same reason that we were able to explain them. A person with the same NL affecting the IL would be able to use his linguistic intuition to deduct the meaning behind the idiosyncratic expressions. Of course, the same would apply to some extent to a native speaker of English. However, the process may well be different. When a speaker of English would identify an expression to be definitely idiosyncratic, he would deduct its meaning based on the linguistic clues and the context and most likely would also give feedback if possible. But a native speaker of Finnish, perhaps with similar features in his IL as the writer, might not even fully notice that a specific expression is idiosyncratic. He might pause for a second at a given expression, maybe sensing that something is amiss. However, it is possible that then a process similar to the one we used when explaining the errors would translate the expression to him. He would use his linguistic intuition to back-translate the expression back to the shared NL, even unconsciously, in which case the interference error would go unnoticed. So the same recourse to mother tongue that affected the creation of the idiosyncratic expression, and our explanation of it, would also perhaps explain why a person with the same mother tongue would not even think twice about it and pass it off as acceptable and appropriate English.

The discussion above is meant to place the study and its results against a larger theoretical frame and thus speculate about the possible circumstances, linguistic, educational or other, that may have affected the production to the extent that idiosyncratic expressions have been introduced to the text. Having done so, we can conclude this study in the next and final section.

5. CONCLUSION

In the final section of this paper we will first discuss the impact the interference errors have on the accessibility of the brochure from a native English speaker's viewpoint. The possible practical application of the findings will also be discussed. The section will finish with a self-evaluation of the study process and suggestions for further study.

5.1. Impact on accessibility

First, let us quickly define text accessibility. Text accessibility as a field of applied linguistics focuses on increasing our understanding of what kinds of texts are easy to read and understand, and what are the factors that affect our understanding of those texts. At the same time, text accessibility strives to improve our way of writing in order to make more texts accessible to a larger audience. Nyyssönen (1995: 9) regards text accessibility as something that "makes texts easy or difficult to understand." Text accessibility can be seen as an umbrella term for a variety of topics including linguistic and visual characteristics of texts as well as the linguistic and personal characteristics of the reader. The audience's knowledge of the topic at hand, its general knowledge of the world, and all the different social and cultural aspects need to be considered as well. Linguistically, attention must be paid to the syntactical and lexical choices made in the production of the text, including also the linguistic devices that guide the reader through the text. Here, we will first focus on the linguistic aspect of accessibility, followed by some notes about the choices of topic and how they are presented in the material, that is, the travel brochure for Kuusamo Lapland.

As mentioned before, few of the interference errors identified in the copy are so drastic that they make the text impossible to understand. In most cases, the correct meaning can be deducted from the sentence and the context fairly easily. Of course, idiosyncratic expressions such as *hanging bridge* may first strike you as disturbing, but its correct meaning will quickly become apparent. The syntactic errors discussed in section 3 are the ones that obfuscate the text most. However, they are also less dangerous when it comes to understanding the message of the copywriting. Their biggest drawback is that the reader must pause at the sentence, reading it through a few times before being able to deduct the intended message behind it, or at least a message that would make sense to him.

As discussed above, the idiosyncratic language does not render the text incomprehensible, it just makes it a slower and at times slightly annoying read. Adding to the annoyance is the hyperbolic language mentioned at the end of section 3. The over-zealous expressions that try to make even the most familiar activities seem something new and exciting merely make the text seem foreign. The reader is amused at best, but combined with the interference errors the end result may well be frustration.

Moving on to the topic of assumed audience and its characteristics, we have based this whole study on the assumption that the brochure is intended for a British native with English as his native language. Now we need to consider also the cultural characteristics and knowledge of such person, and how such person understands the different topics discussed in the copywriting. In most cases the cultural differences do not affect the accessibility of the text: the topics are familiar for a person with some knowledge about common outdoor activities and winter pastimes. Still, there are some topics that may cause unnecessary confusion among the assumed readership. There are mentions of Laplanders and their way of life and culture, and also of wilderness camps that can serve as accommodation. Such topics would either need more detailed description or a more general one in order not to cause any confusion. What is more, when praising the local cuisine it might be worthwhile to make sure that the reader knows what kind of ingredients, especially the fish, the writer is talking about; looking up the correct name from a dictionary is not enough when the fish is otherwise unfamiliar to most people.

All in all, the topics discussed above do not make the brochure entirely incomprehensible or even that difficult to understand. Nevertheless, they make the copywriting seem unfinished and slightly amateurish, which might cause a reader to question its reliability. The image that the less than perfect copy gives to the reader about the area, people and services behind it may well be a disadvantage in the quest of luring more British tourists to Kuusamo.

5.2 Practical application and improvement suggestions

In addition to the possible academic applicability of this study, there are also some aspects of it that can be put into practical use. As we remember, this paper started by outlining the internationalization strategy of the Kuusamo Lapland region, which in turn is responsible for its marketing efforts and especially the brochure that was used as the material for this study. It is the people involved in the strategy and responsible for the English marketing who will hopefully find use for the results presented in this paper.

The most obvious use for the results is of course correcting all the interference errors that were covered by the analysis, either by rewriting the copy or using the provided translation equivalents. However, not all the errors in the copy were included in the analysis, so there would still be a variety of idiosyncratic expressions in need of revising even if all the analysed errors were corrected. What is more, only paying attention to a few words and sentences and making changes only to them would most likely make the copy seem inconsistent and incongruous. That is why the easiest and most obvious solution is not advisable.

In order to get the most out of the findings and results, the writer should take them into careful consideration. This way he would be able to at least recognize the most common idiosyncratic features in future texts and do away with them before the finalized version. Even more ideally, he would be able to understand and internalize the concepts of transfer and interference and how they affect his interlanguage. By doing so, and with the help of the feedback available in this study, he would perhaps be able to correct the false hypotheses that were analysed here, and even identify and correct other similar ones as well. What is more, this last point does not apply only to the person responsible for this text: with careful and close consideration and knowledge about language, other people may be able to apply this advice in order to improve their second language learning.

When it comes to other improvement suggestion than the ones mentioned above, a more general advice is perhaps more useful here. When creating marketing material in a foreign language like English for a campaign or a strategy of this magnitude and importance, it would be advisable to entrust the copywriting responsibilities to a professional, either a freelancer or someone employed by an advertising agency. Ideally, this person would either be a native speaker of English or someone with a university degree in it. If hiring such a person is not possible for some reason, a native or a university student should at least be hired to proofread the copywriting. Such a small action could make a vast difference in the end result, and in turn improve on the image the material gives about the region.

5.3 Evaluation of the study and suggestions for further study

In this final section of this paper we will first discuss how this study was successful, what were the possible areas of improvement. After that we will contemplate if and how this study could be used for the benefit of future studies.

Let us start by reminding ourselves what we set out to examine. The research question was if we could identify idiosyncratic structures in the source material and explain them using error analysis methodology and the theory of interlanguage and interference. Also, we wanted to see if we could find systematic consistencies between the idiosyncratic structures and thus create a partial description of the learner’s interlanguage grammar. How we succeeded in this is what we will discuss next.

First of all, we were able to find idiosyncratic structures in the source material. In that respect, there was no lack of useful data. We were able to leave out material that was undoubtedly idiosyncratic when compared to the TL, but were left unused for specific reasons: they either offered little challenge for analysis, or did not fall into the consistent features of the interference errors. This is a point that needs to be mentioned: although our goal was to examine the errors first and look for the consistencies second, some traces of systematic features started to arise even in the stage of identifying the idiosyncratic features, which led to some sifting of data based on that. This can be seen as both a flaw and a merit: on one hand, it influenced the data selection process in possibly skewed the results somewhat; on the other hand it helped in successfully answering our research question. Both notions are valid.

After we had successfully identified the idiosyncratic structures we set out to explain them using the error analysis and interlanguage theories, focusing heavily on the aspects of transfer and interference. Most of the errors were indeed seen as NL interference errors, and could be explained by using intuition and linguistic comparisons between NL, IL and TL. Some errors, mainly the ones concerning more advanced syntactic features, were not explained with the interference effect, but can nevertheless be viewed as valid observations since not all features of the IL are based on transfer and interference.

Once we had found at least one plausible explanation for each error, or at least for the errors that were seen as a product of NL interference, we set out to find systematic consistencies between them. From the material we analysed, two consistent trends arose: the over-generalised use of the modifier + modified noun phrase structure and the over-generalised use of the demonstratives ‘this’ and ‘these’. Both features had numerous examples included in the analysis, and both could be explained with the interference theory. Thus, they could be seen as specific and systematic features of the interlanguage grammar, and also as the final part of our initial research question: a partial description of the interlanguage.

We can see from above that we were able to answer our initial research question with adequate success. However, not all aspects of this study can be seen as being equally successful, and they need to be addressed as well.

In section 2 we outlined the methodology to be used in this study. When doing so we discussed Corder's view of how to analyse errors with EA methodology. Two prominent notions from that discussion were more or less ignored in this study: the disadvantage of using textual data as the material for the analysis, and the need to initially view each sentence as idiosyncratic until proven otherwise. Both of these notions are valid, but they were nevertheless seen as irrelevant to this study. This was mainly due to the fact that a pro gradu thesis need not, and cannot, be very extensive. Using textual data enabled us to work in the EA theory frameset without conducting any interviews to obtain data, and using only the most obvious idiosyncratic structures as the analysed data helped in dividing our time and workload to better suit the needs of a pro gradu thesis.

With regard to other improvement suggestions for this study, the first one we need to mention has also to do with the methodology. It is true that we did come up with an interpretation and an explanation for all of the interference errors; however, we only managed to create on for each error. This affects the plausibility of the interpretation. Selinker (1992: 160) sees this as a common flaw in EA studies, and it is indeed one that could be caused by preconceptions about the data and what it contains: if the researcher is partial to seeing patterns in the errors before analyzing them, the selection process and explanation may be affected by it. Nevertheless, the explanations that we came up with in section 3 can be seen a plausible, even though we proposed no alternatives for them.

The last thing we need to mention is the number of examples analysed in section 3. Although the errors we discussed did prove to be an adequate basis for the discussion in section 4 and also enough material to fulfill what we set out to do, analyzing more data would have given more credibility to the results and possibly yielded more findings and systematic patterns. We did come with a partial description of the interlanguage, but with a more extensive set of data we could have expanded that description as well.

From this notion we can easily move on to our first suggestion for further study. The same material could be used as the basis for a more extensive and thorough material to find support for our previous findings and to come up with new ones. Although the material is limited, the study would probably still yield additional results. What is more, the amount of material combined with the extended study would also enable the researcher to take into account the need to consider all sentences as idiosyncratic until proven otherwise.

Another possibility would be to find more texts from the same learner and analyse them in a similar way to get a more thorough description of his interlanguage. If possible, the material could be analysed in sequence in order to monitor the development of the IL code, and examine which features become fossilized and which do not. Moreover, getting in touch with the learner would also possibly enable the utilization of interviews to add to the data.

Finally, the results and findings from this study, and from the possible future studies, can also be measured against other interlanguage studies based on material obtained from native speakers of Finnish learning English as their second language. This would help to see if there are consistent interference features in the interlanguages and perhaps also explain them. Taking also into account different contrastive studies between the two language systems would help to expand our understanding of transfer, interference and their effect on the interlanguage even further.

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