

Fossilization among university students - A concern of SLA in Ghana

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Abstract

The study adopted a qualitative case study approach to gather data and analyse the responses that final year university students in two universities in Ghana provided. The data used for the analysis consisted of students' written test. From the study, recurrent errors were identified and classified into four types, namely morphological fossilization, syntactic fossilization, semantic fossilization and pragmatic fossilization. A total of 840 fossilized errors were found in the study, with semantic fossilization recording the highest form of fossilization error with 300 out of the 840 representing 36% out of the total number, followed by syntactic fossilization, morphological fossilization and pragmatic fossilization each of them recording 180 fossilized errors depicting 18% respectively. Based on the findings of the study, causes of fossilization in students' writing were identified as language transfer, transfer of training and overgeneralization. The study proposes the adoption and adaptation of proper pedagogical approaches as well as the integration of technology to minimize fossilization in English (L2).

Keywords: Morphological, Syntactic, Semantic, Pragmatic, Fossilization, Language Transfer

1 Introduction

The phenomenon of fossilization that Han (2012) terms as truncated learning was first brought into existence by Selinker (1972). Fossilization which can be termed as lack of learning has become concomitant of some Ghanaians, particularly, university students in Ghana.

“The conception of fossilization (Selinker, 1972) as a central phenomenon of SLA”, according to Han (2012) “stems first from a generic, impressionistic observation, as encapsulated in an oft-cited quote” Bley-Vroman (1989):

It has been realised through the work of Han (2012) and Bley-Vroman (1989) that few adult learners of English language are proficient and successful. However, once learners of a second language are given ample time to study and learn, many of them could attain a high proficiency level in the language.

According to Han (2012, p. 477), researchers have uncovered that,

“the percentage of L2 learners able to achieve native-speaker competence is nil to 5 percent (Bley-Vroman, 1989; Selinker, 1972, Birdsong, 1999; Montrul and Slabakova, 2003; White and Genesee, 1996), meaning that the vast majority, that is, 95 percent or more, of L2 learners stop short of that level of attainment”

Selinker and Lamendella (1978), see fossilization as:

... permanent cessation of interlanguage learning before the learner has attained target language norms at all levels of linguistic structure and in all discourse domains in spite of the learner’s positive ability, opportunity, and motivation to learn and acculturate into target society”(p. 187).

Bley-Vroman (1989) refers to fossilization as follows:

“It has long been noted that foreign language learners reach a certain stage of learning—a stage short of success—and that learners then permanently stabilise at this stage. Development ceases, and even serious conscious efforts to change are often fruitless. Brief changes are sometimes observed, but they do not “take.” The learner backslides to the stable state.” (pp. 46–47).

And similarly, Tarone (1994) states:

A central characteristic of any interlanguage is that it fossilizes—that is, it ceases to develop at some point short of full identity with the target language. In other words, interlanguage leads to fossilization which may manifest as morphological fossilization, syntactic fossilization, semantic fossilization and pragmatic fossilization.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The problem of fossilization which can be seen as language perception blind spot among second language learners of English is rampant among Ghanaian students, even those at the tertiary level. Language perception blind spot is a serious problem in ESL in Ghana, because learners who make fossilization errors are helpless as they do not know that they are making errors in their discourse (Lomotey, 2018). Fossilization is deeply rooted or seated errors among Second language learners that become highly impossible to be corrected.

In a similar study, Baah-Bentum (2013) laments that the Queen’s language is under threat and that the standard of the Queen’s language seems to be sinking by the day. He continues buttressing the point by saying that even when one listens to most people being interviewed on TV or radio these days, one cannot fail to agree that there is something basically wrong with most people’s way of speaking and writing of the Queen’s language. The low standard of the Queen’s language has permeated all aspects of our lives. So English is being ‘crucified‘ in Parliament, on the pulpit, in classrooms, offices and consulting rooms. The story is the same even at Presidential debates (Baah-Bentum, 2013). Similarly, Mireku-Gyimah (2014) also asserted that poor teaching and learning of the English language at the Junior and Senior High Schools have been identified as a primary cause of poor English use at the tertiary level even though several interventions have been made to uplift the language at those lower levels. In other words, the deviant usage of English has become fossilization among university students in Ghana.

Similarly, Han (2012) and Selinker (1972) see fossilization as a mechanism that underlies surface linguistic material which speakers tend to keep in their interlanguage productive performance, no matter what the age of the learner or the amount of instruction he receives in the target language. This means that fossilization is a deep-seated issue that becomes highly difficult to eradicate and can become a trans-generational problem unless consistent and conscious efforts are made by the learners of English (L2).

Furthermore, according to Han (2012, p.478),

“conceptual development over the years is that by and large, the scope of fossilization has expanded from being local to global”.

In other words, fossilization usually affects “not just discrete or isolated linguistic elements, as initially assumed, but rather, the whole of the interlanguage system” (Han, 2012, p.478). It was against this background that the researchers found it extremely significant to carry out the study on fossilization among university students in Ghana so as to identify the types and causes of fossilization in English (L2).

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To identify types of fossilizations among university students.
2. To analyse the causes of the fossilizations among Ghanaians as ESL learners.
3. To propose some pedagogical measures to minimise fossilizations.

1.4 Research Questions

The study sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. What kinds of fossilizations are common in the participants’ writing?
2. What are the causes of the fossilizations?
3. How can fossilizations be minimised in Ghana?

1.5 Literature review

The word “interlanguage,” which refers to an imperfect use of linguistic system created in the course of L2 learning, is synonymous with “fossilization”. In other words, fossilization can be seen as synonymous with interlanguage (Han, 2012).

Selinker (1972) and countless researchers have claimed that fossilization might have really led to the field of SLA (Han and Selinker, 2005; Long, 2003). However, the general perception of fossilization has drastically changed over the years. In the contemporary view, fossilization remains a central characteristic of interlanguage (Bley-Vroman, 1989) and “continues to serve as a touchstone for the adequacy of theories of SLA” (Han, 2012). Larsen-Freeman (2006) claims that, “fossilization provides the stage where issues central to SLA play out. In order to account for learning, the province of SLA, we should be able to say not only what it is, but also when and why it cannot or does not occur”

According to Han (2012), research on fossilization, though seems to accentuate a negative aspect of SLA, nevertheless has unique and critical contributions to make to L2 pedagogy.

Han (1998, 2004a) gives “a two-tier definition” as follows:

“Cognitive level: Fossilization involves those cognitive processes or underlying mechanisms that produce permanently stabilized interlanguage forms.”

“Empirical level: Fossilization involves those stabilized interlanguage forms that remain in learner speech or writing over time, no matter what the input or what the learner does.”

(2004a, p. 20)

It is an indisputable fact that, the main objective of this “two-tier“ definition is to differentiate a theoretical and an empirical level at which fossilization can be described and theorized.” (Han,2004, p.20 and 2012).

Larsen-Freeman’s (2006) claim that “because using a language requires using its elements accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately (Larsen-Freeman, 2001), surely inaccurate

forms are not the only evidence of fossilization” (p. 194). A paramount concern with the comparative approach, as Larsen-Freeman (2006) further notes, is its predication on “a particular view of language—a view of monolithic, homogeneous, idealized, static end-state competence, where language acquisition is seen to be a process of conformity to uniformity” (p. 194). She advocates, instead, a dynamic view of language which presumes no end and no state. While the no-end/no-state view is highly debatable in the context of L2 learning, fossilization researchers should certainly heed her admonition, namely that “While the concept of fossilization is inherently target-centric, researchers of it must take into account the fact that the target is not monolithic and is always moving, although, of course, different aspects of language change at different rates” (p. 195), and be highly circumspect when determining instances of fossilization. The researchers would like to stress that language blind spot is synonymous with fossilization.

2 Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative case study to gather data and analyse the responses that 60 final year level 400 students in two universities in Ghana provided with a specific reference to the test on *Correct Usage* in English to enable the researchers to arrive at the answers to the research questions in the study. In other words, the purposive sampling strategy was used to select the study site and participants. Sixty (60) final year university students in Ghana were selected for the research. These students had studied or had been taught English language from the basic level up to the university level in Ghana. The researchers’ choice is in consistency with Parahoo (1997) as well as Shughenssy and Zechmeister (1990) who also say that a purposive sampling method is usually adopted in the study based on the respondents’ ability to provide the useful data. That is to say that, in order to verify and validate the problem fossilization among university students in Ghana, the researchers found it extremely necessary to give some constructions in English that were morphologically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically wrong to assess them to find whether those sentences were wrong or not. The main method used to collect data was the results of the Correct Usage Test the researchers conducted in 2018/2019 academic year in two universities in Ghana. In short, the main steps that were adhered to and followed in this study are as follows: data collection, identification of fossilized constructions, classification of the fossilization and the frequency of the fossilization identified. The researchers adopted the fossilization classification of

Selinker (1978) and Error Analysis approach by Richards and Schmidt (1971, 2002), James (1998), Dulay et al (1982) and Richards to analyse and classify the fossilization errors in the students' test. Data collected consisted basically of the test that the researchers conducted in two universities in Greater Accra region in 2018/2019. The data were then analyzed accordingly.

3 Results and Discussion

According to Selinker and Lamendella (1978), fossilization can be classified as individual fossilization and group fossilization. This work has been classified as morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic fossilizations.

Fossilization refers to the process in which incorrect language becomes a habit and cannot easily be corrected (British Council, 2019, Tiago et al, 2017). Errors in general take time to correct but a fossilized error may never be corrected unless the learner sees a reason to do so. It was revealed in the data that a lot of errors or deviations that were made might have occurred due to fossilization (Tabiri, 2019). In other words, it was found in the study that all their many errors could be attributed to fossilization. The analyses together with the classification of some of the fossilized errors are as follows:

Summary of the fossilized errors

1. These students are *talkatives*.
2. Last but not *the* least is the Presiding Elder of the Church.
3. Drivers in Accra are fond of *double parking*.
4. *Birds of the same feathers flock together*.
5. John, *put off* the light in the bedroom.
6. As I have a vehicle, and I can drive (myself), I usually *send* my children to school every day.
7. Please, don't *drink* all the soup.
8. Happy *Mother's Day*.
9. Nii Abenapokyempah Kwa was born on February 12, 1920 in Accra to NiiKwa and Mma Don, *all* of blessed memory.
10. The wedding ceremony between Abena Agnes Konap and John Kofi Kokompe, *all* of Tesano Congregation will come off at Ghana Technology University College on Saturday, August 25, 2018 at 10 am prompt. You are all cordially invited.
11. My mother has *delivered a bouncing baby boy*.
12. *The inter-universities* quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon.
13. Will you listen to me *always class* when I give pieces of advice?
14. "I would like to inform you at this very *onset* of this course that there are more questions than answers"

The above examples of fossilization can be categorised and analysed as follows:

Types of fossilization

The four main types of fossilization that were found in the study are: morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic fossilization.

3.1 Morphological fossilization

According to Thakur (2010), the word morphology is made up of the elements of [morp], which means ‘form or shape’, [-log], which means ‘study of’, and [-y], which indicates that the word is a noun. The form [-o], which comes between morp- and -log has no meaning of its own, but is put there for word formation purposes. In other words, morphology in linguistics can be defined as the branch of linguistics which deals with the study of the systematic ways in which particles are combined in acceptable manner to form words in a particular language (Appah & Agboamecdo, 2008). All the words or expressions that were wrongly formed and written by the students are classified as morphological fossilization. Some of the constructions of morphological fossilization are:

1. Happy Mother’s Day.
2. My mother has delivered a bouncing baby boy.
3. Last but not the least.

From the above construction, the correct form of the utterance should have been: “Happy Mothers’ Day!

This is because the celebration is meant for all mothers in the world. Therefore writing “Happy Mother’s Day!” is an error. The apostrophe indicating the possession should be placed after “s” to depict plural form.

Also, there is an omission of the preposition “of” in the expression, “my mother has delivered a bouncing baby boy.” This sentence may be correct if only the mother is a medical officer or precisely, a midwife, but it cannot be correct if the writer is referring to his or her mother to have been given birth to a baby.

“Last but not the least,...” the correct or impeccable version should be “Last but not least,...” in other words, the insertion or addition of the article “the” renders the expression incorrect or unacceptable.

‘Last but not least is Mrs. Mary Adongo’, they added the definite article “the” This is a fixed expression or idiom in English that does not allow addition of the article “the”.

3.2 Syntactic fossilization

According to Thakur (2010), the etymological meaning of syntax is putting things together in an orderly manner. In other words, it is the study of the ways in which could be arranged together to form acceptable sentences. All the constructions in English that cropped up as a result of syntactic fossilization are:

1. These students are talkatives/talkertives.
2. Will you listen to me always class when I give pieces of advice?
3. The inter-universities quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon.

Considering the structure or construction of the sentence, one realises that, “These students are talkatives/talkertives“ is unacceptable syntactically or grammatically. This is because the word, “talkative” is an adjective in English which does not take the plural morpheme “s”. Similarly, the word “talkertive” does not exist in English, and therefore one cannot add a plural morpheme “s” to the word which even does not exist in the language. The students

might have been influenced by a wrong analogy of the noun, “talker” to write “talkertives” In other words, the existing words in English are as follows: “talkative” which is an adjective and “talker” which is a noun form of “talkative” and not “talkertive”.

Also, one of the fossilized constructions that was found is the following interrogative statement:

“Will you listen to me always class when I give pieces of advice?” instead of

“Will you listen to me always, class, when I give you pieces of advice?”

All the 60 students did not see anything wrong with the sentence, and that lays emphasis on the fossilization errors when it comes to punctuations. Without inserting commas in the above sentence, the sentence may appear meaningless and senseless.

Again, another syntactic fossilization is,

“The inter-universities quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon.” instead of the students writing “the inter-university quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon,” all the students wrote,

“The inter-universities quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon.” What makes the sentence a syntactic fossilization is the use of “inter” together with plural nouns.

3.3 Semantic fossilization

Semantics is the science of the study of meaning (Sekyi-Baidoo, 2002). In this part of the study, semantic fossilization is considered as the use of language forms that exist in the target language but do not depict the meanings second language learners of English (L2) intend to express in the specific linguistic or language contexts (Wei, 2008). Some of the semantic fossilization errors are as follows:

1. John, put off the light in the bedroom.
2. Please, don't drink all the soup.
3. As I have a vehicle, and I can drive myself, I usually **send** my children to school every day”.
4. Nii Abenapokyempah Kwa was born on February 12, 1920 in Accra to NiiKwa and Mma Don, all of blessed memory.
5. The wedding ceremony between Abena Agnes Konap and John Kofi Kokompe, all of Tesano Congregation will come off at Ghana Technology University College on Saturday, August 25, 2018 at 10 am prompt. You are all cordially invited.

Semantically, the expression, “put off” in English does not mean to switch off or put out”. In other words, *put off* means to postpone. *Put out* means to turn off or extinguish (a light or fire), and hence emphasizing a semantic fossilization.

Also the expression, “please, don't drink all the soup” is one of the semantic fossilizations that was found to be impeccable in the sight of all the students who took active participation in the study.

In English, one does not drink soup, but eat soup. This semantic fossilisation might have occurred due to the students' L1 interference. In other words, in Twi it will be impeccable to say “Nom nkwan no”, meaning “drinks the soup”. (Tabiri, 2019).

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Again, the sentence, “As I have a vehicle, and I can drive (myself), I usually send my children to school every day”

One of the group fossilization in Ghana is the difficulty in using the verb “take” correctly. Learners usually opt for “send” instead of using “take” in English in Ghana. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English(2003) terms *person to place* with regard to the use of the word “send”, in which sense it means to ask or tell someone to go somewhere, so that they can do something for you there”

The researcher considers the expression as semantic fossilization as there is no way that the most suitable word or verb in this context can be “send” This is because, the writer said, “As I have a vehicle, and I can drive myself, I usually **send** my children to school every day”. In other words, once the person does not ask his/her driver to take the children to school, then the most suitable word is “take” and not “send”. One sends someone to a place when one does not go to the place himself/herself. This is one of the popular or common fossilization in Ghana due to improper or poor language teaching/learning of English(L2).

“So then, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to...” “Na afei Honhom Kronkron somaa wɔn saa no, wɔsɔi mu kɔɔ...” (Acts 13:4)The expression, “ sent out” is translated as “soma” This fossilization might have cropped up due to poor teaching/learning of the target language.

Moreover, the two sentences were found to be semantic fossilization:

“Nii Abenapokyempah Kwa was born on February 12, 1920 in Accra to NiiKwa and Mma Don, all of blessed memory.”

“The wedding ceremony between Abena Agnes Konap and John Kofi Kokompe, all of Tesano Congregation will come off at Ghana Technology University College on Saturday, August 25, 2018 at 10 am prompt.”

The “all” highlighted in the above sentences are used incorrectly. In other words, the correlative conjunction has been wrongly used which lays emphasis on the fossilized use of “all”. The only usage of “all” which can be considered as correct is, ‘You are all cordially invited’

3.4 Pragmatic fossilization

According to Thomas (1983), a pragmatic deviation or deviance can be described as pragmatic failure, and that pragmatic failure takes place in the cross-cultural communication and refers to the “inability to understand what is meant by what is said”. Some of the examples of pragmatic deviations that can be attributed to pragmatic fossilization are as follows:

1. “I would like to inform you at this very onset of this course that there are more questions than answers”
2. Birds of the same feathers flock together
3. Drivers in Accra are fond of double parking.

“When a lot of well-meaning Ghanaians use the words onset, they actually mean outset (Noble-Atsu, 2013). It is common among Ghanaians to use onset instead of outset in their discourses. It is a fact that onset is often used with regard to the beginning of something, which is usually not favourable. For example, we talk about the onset of a disease, bad weather, and heavy rains. Therefore, the following statement is incorrect.

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“I would like to inform you at this very **onset** of this course that there are more questions than answers” The correct form of the above sentence should have been:

“I would like to inform you at this very **outset** of this course that there are more questions than answers”

Pragmatically, the expression, “Birds of the same feathers flock together” is a wrongly articulated proverb in English (L2), French (L3) and even Twi(L1). As it is a well known saying that can be described as a universal proverb that denotes and connotes people who have the same beliefs and ideologies move and do things together, altering the construction will make it a universal pragmatic deviation in all the three languages, namely twi, English and French. The acceptable and standard translations in each of the three languages are as follows:

1. Anoma a won ntakra sɛ na ɛtu bom (Twi)
2. Birds of a feather flock together (English)
3. Qui se ressemble s’assemble (French)

The researchers think that the learners’ L1(Twi) might have influenced them to write, “Birds of the same feathers flock together” This is because “the same” which was added to modify the proverb in Twi is “ɛsɛ”, and it appears that as the learners have the same proverb in their Mother Tongue, they tried to transliterate verbatim into English language. In short a pragmatic fossilization can lead to a universal pragmatic deviation particularly when it comes to common proverbs.

Finally, another pragmatic fossilization that was found in the data is “Drivers in Accra are fond of double parking” This expression is considered acceptable even among many educated Ghanaians, hence making it a national or group fossilization.

“Double parking” is a coined terminology or Ghanaianism among drivers, and some pedestrians and passengers (Noble-Atsu, 2013). In other words, the expression is one of the Ghanaian fossilizations which is used to describe how some of their own driver-friends carelessly park side by side at both edges of the road, thus leaving very little room for other vehicles and pedestrians to operate. Some drivers insult their colleagues who they think, are guilty of “double parking” (Noble-Atsu, 2013). The correct English equivalent of “double parking” is “parallel parking.”

It is expedient to note here that fossilization, particularly pragmatic fossilization, is not zero learning but incomplete learning.

In a related study, fossilization is a linguistic phenomenon in its own right and identified or manifested as deviant forms from target language. It usually occurs at all levels, from phonological layer to pragmatic (Wei, 2008)

The various types of fossilization are grouped and summarized as follows:

Types of fossilization	Frequency	Percentage
Morphological fossilization	180	21.4%
Syntactic fossilization	180	21.4%
Semantic fossilization	300	36%
Pragmatic fossilization	180	21.4%

Total	840	100%
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Table1 : Classification of fossilization

Table 1 represents the classification of the types of fossilization, namely morphological fossilization, syntactic fossilization, semantic fossilization and pragmatic fossilization that were identified in the data that were analysed. The table shows that semantic fossilization recorded the highest form of fossilization error with 300 out of 840 representing 36% out of the total number followed by syntactic fossilization, morphological fossilization and pragmatic fossilization each of them recording 180 fossilized errors depicting 18% respectively. All the four types of the fossilization that were found in the data were classified and analysed.

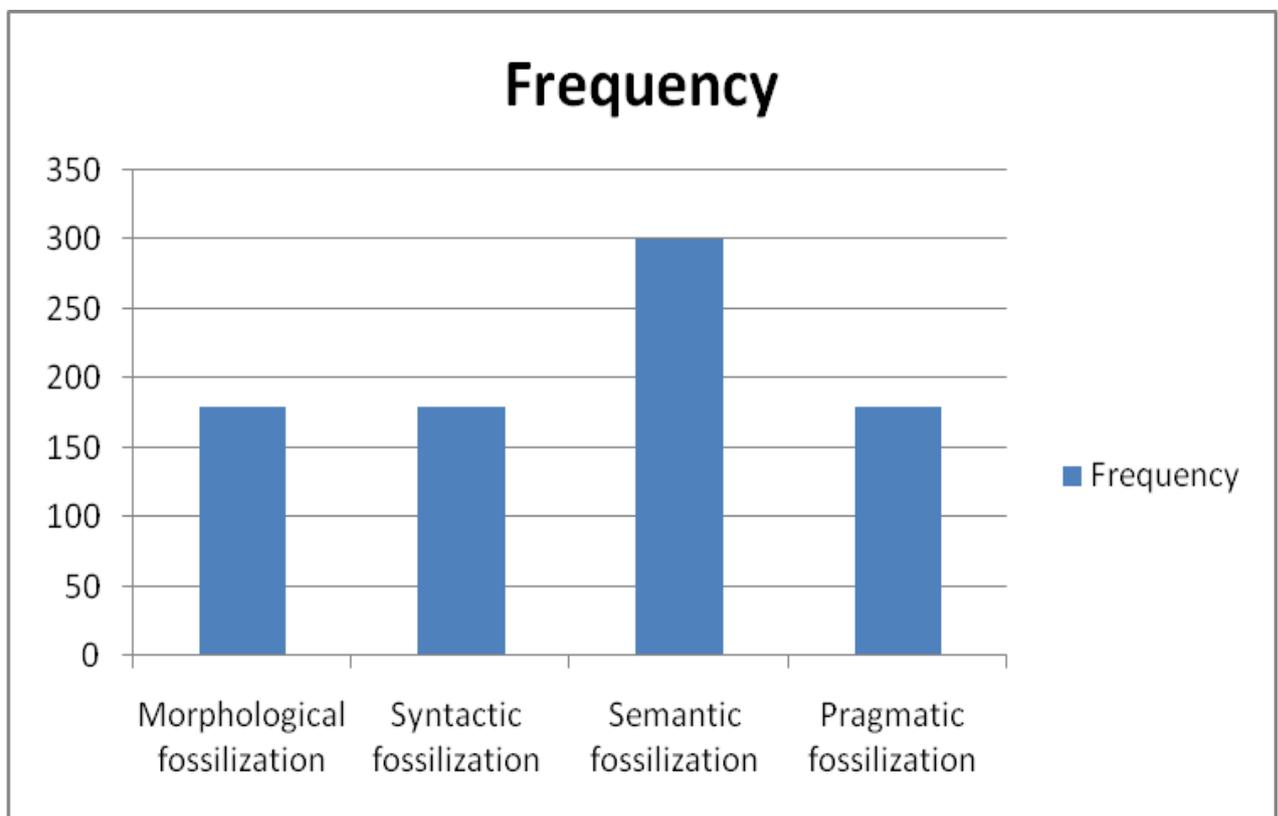


Figure 1: Frequency of types of fossilization

4 Possible causes of fossilization

In this study, three main causes of fossilization among university students were found to be language transfer, transfer of training and overgeneralization (Selinker, 1978).

The possible causes of learners' fossilization are as follows:

4.1 Language transfer

According to Selinker (1978), learners' inter-language systems are usually influenced by their first language (L1), and they find it extremely difficult to produce acceptable or impeccable second language output. Some constructions of fossilization errors that can be attributed to language transfer are as follows:

1. Birds of a feather flock together.
2. "Nii Abenapokyempah Kwa was born on February 12, 1920 in Accra to NiiKwa and Mma Don, all of blessed memory."
3. "The wedding ceremony between Abena Agnes Konap and John Kofi Kokompe, all of Tesano Congregation will come off at Ghana Technology University College on Saturday, August 25, 2018 at 10 am prompt."
4. Please, don't drink all the soup

4.2 Transfer of training

It is an irrefutable fact in pedagogy that wrong method of teaching and learning a Second language can lead to negative transfer of learning and hence promoting fossilization in the target language. In other words, deficiency in formal instruction in English can be regarded as one of the main causes of fossilization of errors. Examples of fossilization of errors or sentences that can be ascribed to transfer of training are as follows:

1. "I would like to inform you at this very **onset** of this course that there are more questions than answers"
2. Drivers in Accra are fond of double parking.
3. "As I have a vehicle, and I can drive (myself), I usually send my children to school every day"

4.3 Overgeneralization

According to Ellis (2000), overgeneralization is about using the existing L2 knowledge by extending it to new interlanguage (IL) forms. Some examples of fossilization errors are as follows:

1. John, put off the light in the bedroom.
2. The inter-universities quiz competition will take place at the University of Ghana, Legon.
3. These students are talkatives/talkertives.

Similarly related studies by Selinker and Lamendella (1980) identified the main causes of fossilization in the Second Language (SL) to be language transfer and transfer of training. It is therefore incumbent upon learners and instructors of L2 to be conscious of first language interference and effective method of teaching and learning English (L2)

5 Pedagogical implications in research

As L1 interference seems to impact negatively on learners' performance, it would be highly expedient for language instructors to teach learners the similarities and differences in both first and second or target language so as to enable learners to be abreast of those convergent and divergent areas of difficulties in order to make a conscious effort to overcome them accordingly.

Also, it appears the problem of fossilization is insurmountable pedagogically as it is part and parcel of all second language learners of English language (L2). That is to say that

fossilization cannot be eradicated from teaching/learning of any foreign language, but its negative influence can be minimised.

What needs to be done is to adopt, adapt and improve the proper strategies and approaches for teaching and learning English in Ghana. In other words, the integrated approach as well as communicative language teaching approach needs to be enhanced and emphasised at all levels in Ghana while discouraging and phasing out the traditional grammar and memorization without helping learners to understand and acquire all the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) chronologically in contexts.

Considering the deep-seated issue of language fossilization among Ghanaian students or learners of English (L2), it would be pedagogically expedient to use the principles of the activity method (using real/concrete objects, real life situations) and guide learners to use language morphologically, syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. That is to say that lecture method cannot be used to eradicate fossilization in English.

Finally, as students are technologically inclined, it would also be advisable to integrate or incorporate technology when teaching English (L2) or French (L3) in Ghana so as to ensure extrinsic motivation as well as active participation of learners in a language class.

6 Conclusion

This qualitative study has identified and analysed four types of fossilization among university students in Ghana. The four types of fossilization that have been discussed in the study include morphological fossilization, syntactic fossilization, semantic fossilization and pragmatic fossilization.

It is clear from the available evidence that semantic fossilization recorded the highest form of fossilization error with 300 out of 840 representing 36% out of the total number followed by syntactic fossilization, morphological fossilization and pragmatic fossilization each of them recording 180 fossilized errors depicting 18% respectively.

We can deduce from the foregoing discussions that fossilization is concomitant of Second Language Acquisition.

In other words, the study has discussed some deep-seated and inevitable errors that have become concomitant of students' daily discourses. It is realised from the discussion that fossilization is becoming part and parcel of teaching English as a Second language in Ghana as fossilization happens to be a concern when it comes to the teaching and learning of English (L2) as a Second language in Ghana.

The findings of the current study have shown that there are three main causes of fossilization among university students in Ghana. The three causes are: language transfer, transfer of training and overgeneralization.

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