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Title: Corpus of Learner English in Malta (CLEM)

#### Abstract

The presentation will briefly outline the compilation of the Corpus of Learner English in Malta (CLEM). CLEM (v.2.0, 2014) is a 933,063-word collection of written language essays representing three national benchmark examinations. In a country where English has official status, such high stakes examinations are considered to be indicative of learners' proficiency levels in English and determine perceptions of standards. Part of the purpose for compiling a learner corpus is (1) to determine what Maltese learners of English achieve by the end of their compulsory schooling and at pre-tertiary level, and (2) to identify types of learner errors. However, while in the process of categorising errors, the discussion on whether it is 'learner English' or 'Maltese English', or both, is revisited. A small-scale study involving data from CLEM (v.2.0, 2014) will be presented. It is part of a larger project that seeks to categorise dominant linguistic features of L2 learners' use of English, with a special focus on lexis and grammar in writing. Preliminary results from the study will be considered and discussed in view of further investigations.

Keywords: learner corpora, Maltese learner English, SLA, ESL.