A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GRAMMATICAL ERRORS OF ESL/EFL UNDERGRADUATE ARABIC SPEAKERS

ABSTRACT

THESIS

SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF

Doctor of Philosophy

in

LINGUISTICS

By

SALMEEN ABDULRAHMAN ABDULLAH AL-AWAID

Under the Supervision of

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DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS
ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH (INDIA)
2010
Abstract

This comparative study is basically concerned with investigation of the difficulties that Arab EFL learners encounter in the use of English prepositions, articles, plurals formation rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case. The study analyzed the errors in the use of the above mentioned grammatical categories generated by 80 EFL undergraduate Arabic speakers pursuing their undergraduate study in the year 2009 at Aden University. The study was conducted with a view to make comparative analysis of grammatical errors by rural and urban undergraduate EFL Arab learners and to find out if there was any statistically significant difference in the error rate between them as well as to provide the possible explanations of the causes of errors made by these students. Therefore, the subjects of the study were divided into two groups: SG1 and SG2. Each group consisted of 40 students. The students of group one (SG1) consisted of students having rural background mainly coming from different parts of Shabwah province. They were enrolled in the second semester, department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Aden University. The group two (SG2) consisted of students representing urban background, enrolled in the sixth semester, department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, Aden university. Another important purpose of this study has been to determine which type of errors occur more frequently -“interlingual errors” or “intralingual errors”. To achieve this comparative analysis, the subjects of both
groups were given a test consisting of eight parts for the purpose of examining their ability in the usage of previously mentioned components of grammar and to find out which type of errors they make more frequently. Then t-Test analysis at 0.05 level was used by the researcher to determine if there was statistically significant difference in the error rate between the two groups as well as to determine if there was statistically significant difference between errors which were made due to the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI) and those errors which were due to intralingual sources. This empirical research was comparative and descriptive one that attempted to find out if there was significant difference in the error rate between the two groups as well as if there was significant difference between the interlingual and intralingual errors. The results of the study indicated that Arab EFL learners have serious difficulties in dealing with the investigated components of grammar. The statistical results of the study clearly demonstrated that there was statistically significant difference in the error rate between the two groups almost in all the investigated components of language in favor of SG2, except the plural formation where the t-Test results indicated that there was no significant difference in the error rate between the two groups. However, the performance of both groups was poor as indicated by the results. The results of the test also showed statistically significant difference between interlingual errors and intralingual errors in favor of intralingual ones i.e. the intralingual errors occurred more frequently than interlingual ones.
Overview of Thesis

The present thesis consists of five chapters followed by nine appendixes.

In the first chapter, the researcher concentrated his focus of attention on the research problem and the purpose of the study in order to propose the questions and hypotheses of the study. In this chapter also the background, significance, limitations of the study and English education situation at Aden University were discussed.

In the second chapter, the researcher reviewed the literature which was relevant to subject matter of the thesis. Therefore, the contemporary thoughts, state of thinking and researches in the areas of Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis and the field of second language learning were introduced. This chapter has eleven sections. Section (2.1) discusses the notion of Contrastive Analysis. Section (2.2) deals with the criticism of Contrastive Analysis. Section (2.3) and (2.4) shed light on the notion of Error Analysis and its basic underlying assumptions i.e. Idiosyncratic Dialect, Approximative systems and Interlanguage hypothesis. Section (2.5) and (2.6) deal with the interlanguage shaping process and the factors influencing the second language learner’s language. In these two sections concepts such as language transfer, fossilization, intralingual interference, sociolinguistic situation, modality, age, successions of approximative systems, and universal hierarchy of difficulty were elaborately discussed. Section (2.7) discusses the types of errors as they are viewed by different scholars. Section (2.8) deals with the sources and causes of EFL/ESL learners’ errors. Therefore, concepts such as interlingual
source of errors and intralingual sources of errors were discussed. Section (2.9) discusses the significance of second language learner’s errors. Section (2.10) introduces briefly the findings of some previous studies that have been conducted on EFL Arab learners. Section (2.11), discusses the concept of second language acquisition.

In the third chapter the researcher described in detail the research methodology chosen for this comparative study. Therefore, the context of the study which was the Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Aden University, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, the participants, instrument of the data collection and the procedure were discussed.

In the chapter four, the research has dealt with the analysis of the data where the researcher discussed the statistical results of the test, therefore, a comparative analysis of grammatical, interlingual and intralingual errors committed by SG1 and SG2 i.e. rural and urban undergraduate EFL Arab learners in the use of aforementioned components of grammar was made by using t-Test analysis at 0.05 level. In addition to this comparative analysis, the researcher made contrastive analysis of the differences between the Arabic and English components of grammar investigated by this study. Also the possible explanations of sample of the errors made by both groups were provided in this chapter. Further, through these statistical results, the ten proposed hypotheses of the study were tested and paved the way for drawing the right conclusions of this comparative study.
The fifth chapter in this dissertation is the conclusion which introduces the summary of the study and discusses results of the study based on the decisions made on the ten proposed hypotheses. Thus, the salient findings, conclusions, implications, general recommendations and suggestions for further study were presented in this chapter.
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ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY
ALIGARH (INDIA)
2010
Certificate

I hereby certify that the thesis entitled "A comparative study of grammatical errors of ESL/EFL undergraduate Arabic speakers" submitted by Mr. Salmeen Abdulrahman Abdullah Al-Awaid for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistics has been completed under my supervision.

It is further certified that the thesis submitted by him is his original work and to the best of my knowledge this work has not been submitted earlier anywhere.

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Supervisor & Chairman

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This work is dedicated to:

1. The great founder of Aligarh Muslim University (A.M.U) Mr. Sir Ahmed Khan.

2. Prof. Dr. Abdul-Aziz Saleh Bin Habtoor the chancellor of Aden University.

3. Dr. Saeed Bin Saeed Ba Faiath the founder of Faculty of Education, Shabwah.

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Most Gracious, most Merciful.

It is the merciful

Who has taught the Qur'an.

He has created man and

Taught him articulate speech.

(The Qur'an, 55: 1- 4)
Chapter 1

Introduction

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1.1. Background

Until the late 1960s, errors were viewed as signs of learning failure not to be tolerated. They were considered as something that should be prevented, crimes that should be avoided and problems to be overcome. However, after the emergence of Error Analysis (Corder, 1967), the L2 learners errors have been looked at positively.

According to Littlewood (1984) the new notion developed claims that second language learners should be viewed as actively constructing rules from the data they encounter and gradually adapting these in the direction of the target language system. According to this new view, learners’ errors need not be seen as signs of failure. On the contrary, they are the clearest evidence for the learner’s developing systems and can offer the investigators insights how they process the data of language. Brown (1976) states: they “can be taken as a sign that processing (or) learning is taking place” (cited by Huang, 1987: 2).

Corder observes the learner’s errors are indicative both of the state of the learner’s knowledge, and of the ways in which a second language is learned (Richards, 1974). According to Corder (1982: 52) a language learner is engaged in the task of discovering the system of the target language. On the basis of the language data which is available to him, he makes a set of hypotheses about how language works. In constructing these hypotheses he makes use of whatever information or explanation may be given him by the teacher or the textbook. When he attempts to communicate in the target language, inevitably he will form false or provisional hypotheses, either
because the data is insufficient to form correct hypotheses straight away, or because he receives misleading information about the language that through incomplete information or ambiguous information which may lead him to draw the wrong conclusion i.e. erroneous utterances.

Therefore, making errors in learning a second language is a natural phenomenon among the L2 learners. These errors become the focus of attention for their greater importance. Many scholars have paid their attention to find out the sources and causes of the L2 learners. Their ultimate goal was to discover the optimal teaching methods, syllabus etc. A result of this attention numerous studies on EFL/ESL learners have been conducted by many researchers.

The researcher believes that the Error Analysis approach is the best to provide the possible explanations of the causes and sources of the errors made by EFL Arab learners. Therefore, the outcome of this study is hoped to be helpful to Arab students who are learning English as second language, useful to the researcher himself and to teachers of English as a second language, and a good contribution to the advancement of knowledge.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

From my experience as an English teacher for three years at different levels in the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Aden University, I have observed that an overwhelming majority of the freshmen as
well as advanced undergraduate students commit numerous errors in the use of some important aspects of English grammar when they write or speak.

This problem includes errors in using the English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary "to have" (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case. These errors in the usage of the mentioned components of grammar reflect serious difficulties that Arab EFL learners encounter in learning English as a foreign or second language. The wrong or misuse in the selection of the aforementioned aspects may sometimes cause failure to the students in getting their intended meaning across or make their linguistic production both spoken or written ambiguous. This is what the author of this study observes, and definitely that affects the quality of their speaking or writing.

Therefore, this study basically attempts to throw some light on the continuous difficulties relative to the use of the above mentioned components of language among two groups of EFL Arab learners pursuing their undergraduate study program at two faculties of Aden University. Students of group one (SG1) consisted of rural students (villagers) mainly coming from different parts of Shabwah province. They were enrolled in the second semester, department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Aden University. This faculty is located in Ataq town in Shabwah governorate, rural area around 350 km from Aden city. This faculty is governmental belongs to Aden University. Students of group two (SG2) were enrolled in the sixth
semester, department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, Aden university. This faculty is located in Aden city (urban area) and it is also governmental belongs to the same university.

Although the students of group one (Rural) and the students of group two (Urban) study English for six years prior to their entering the university, unfortunately, their English proficiency remain low. It is believed that the overwhelming majority of these EFL learners pass from level to another in their education promoting without being able to use appropriately what they have learned previously.

The problem, therefore, is that students who are enrolled in advanced levels and are expected to be linguistically competent continuously commit serious errors in the usage of some important components of English language and there is lack of information concerning these permanent difficulties that EFL Arab learners encounter in their learning process of English.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to make a comparative analysis of the grammatical errors committed by both rural and urban EFL undergraduates Arab learners, find if there is any significant difference in the error rate between students of group one (rural) and students of group two (urban) and to find out the sources and causes of the errors made by both groups (SG1, and SG2) in the use of the selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary "to have"
As we mentioned somewhere earlier, Arab EFL learners at the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, and at the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, encounter serious difficulties in the usage of aforementioned aspects of English grammar. These difficulties are reflected in numerous errors of various types which cannot be attributed only for the learners’ mother tongue interference (Arabic). Therefore, the researcher believes that a careful study of the difficulties that undergraduate EFL Arab learners encounter in the use of such aspects of English language will reveal other sources and causes of the errors made by these students, the areas of difficulty and will help in proposing some solutions of such difficulties as well.

The purpose of this study, therefore, is fourfold one i.e. making comparative analysis of grammatical errors made in the use of the English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case by the two groups, finding out if there is any significant difference in the error rate between the two groups, providing the possible explanations of the causes of these errors and although EA does not look at errors as something that should be eradicated, the researcher suggests some recommendations to deal with EFL Arab learners’ errors.
This purpose was based on the researcher's analysis of EFL Arab learners' errors in a test was designed and given to the two groups of EFL Arab undergraduate learners who were classified as rural and urban. Each group consists of forty students. SG1 comprised (rural) students enrolled at the first level (second semester) in the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, and SG2 (urban) had students studying at the third level (sixth semester) in the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden. Both faculties are belonging to Aden University.

The test consists of eight sections aiming at examining the ability of the two groups' students in the use of the above mentioned components of grammar. Objectives of the study can be outlined in the following:

1. To make a comparative analysis of the grammatical errors committed by both rural and urban EFL undergraduate Arab learners.

2. To find out if there is any statistically significant difference in the error rate between both rural and urban EFL undergraduate Arab learners groups.

3. To find out the sources and causes of the grammatical errors made by both groups i.e. rural and urban EFL/ESL Arabic speakers.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study stems from the fact that most of the studies of ESL/ EFL which have been conducted with a view to identify the errors or difficulties that Arab learners of English encounter while learning
English were confined to one or two aspects or types of errors, maximum in some cases three. For instance, Habash (1982) identifies errors in the use of English prepositions, Naser (1983) confines his study to ESL Arab learners' problems in the use of English prepositions, articles and irregular verbs, Al-Mekhlafi's (1999) study was confined to the errors in the formation of English questions. Assubaiai (1979) identifies errors of subject verb agreement, tenses and modals. In this connection also Mourtaga (2004) states “in fact most of the studies dealt with the identification of ESL/EFL writings errors confined themselves to one type of errors. For instance, Almutairi (n.d) and Maalej (n.d) identified errors in the use of articles, Lakkis and Abdel Malak (2000) identified errors in the use of prepositions, Hadded (1988) identified errors in English tenses, Barton et al, (1998) identified awkward sentences, but not individual errors within the sentence, finally Farooq (1998) identified errors in simple past tense and count nouns” (p. 4).

Therefore, this study, unlike the above mentioned studies which are confined to identify one or two areas of difficulty, covers the most problematic areas that EFL Arab Learners encounter when learning English including the identification of the students’ difficulties in the use of the English prepositions, articles, plural rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case. It also goes beyond the identification to provide the possible explanations of the students’ errors when
they use the aforementioned aspects of grammar and suggest some recommendations for solution to these problems.

This study is also significant because it is a serious attempt in getting a better understanding of such difficulties which continually encounter these learners. Moreover, the importance of the study is embedded in its findings which may give insightful remarks into nature of the obstructions of EFL Arab learners associated with the process of English language learning.

It is important since it is expected to be a good source of valuable information to the EFL Arab teachers of English as a second language in general and to the teachers of English at Aden University in particular because this information are necessary in finding solutions for EFL Arab learners’ learning problems. This study is also hoped to be a good source of knowledge for language syllabus designers. Finally, the results of this study may also help the interested people in field L2 learning to have a better understanding of the process language learning or acquisition.

1.5. Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses have been proposed to be investigated in case of two aforementioned faculties as EFL contexts:

1. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the selected prepositions, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.
2. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the articles, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

3. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the plural formation rules, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

4. *When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past form of irregular verbs, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.*

5. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past participle tense form of irregular verbs, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

6. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of copula or the auxiliary “to have”, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

7. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of conjunctions, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

8. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of relative pronouns, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.
9. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of genitive case markers, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

10. When the test results are analyzed in terms of interlingual and intralingual errors there will be no statistically significant difference between errors that were made by the students due to interlingual interference and errors that were made by them due to intralingual sources.

1.6. Research questions

This comparative study aims to find answers to the following four research questions:

1. Is there any statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2?

2. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled in the second semester at the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Aden university have difficulty in using of the selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case?

3. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled in the sixth semester at the department of English, Faculty of Sciences,
Arts and Education, Aden, Aden university have difficulty in using of the selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case?

4. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled at the above mentioned English departments receive certain interference when using the selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case from their mother tongue (Arabic) (interlingual sources) or from the target language (English) (intralingual sources)? If yes which type is more frequent “interlingual errors” or “intralingual errors”?

1.7. Limitations of the Study

Needless to say, that having limitations is very normal thing to every study because they are inevitable to every researcher. Therefore, it is useful to reveal some of these limitations to show what challenges that the researcher experienced when conducting this study. First, the subjects of this comparative study were limited to two English departments at Aden University. Second, the female students were excluded from participation in this study due to their very
low ratio at the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah. This has led the researcher to exclude the female students' participation at the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden from this study. Third, the samples were also limited to two colleges of Aden University which share the same materials, syllabus etc. Fourth, the test designed was limited to the errors of misuse or wrong selection. For instance, it does not deal with errors of redundancy or deletion.

1.8. English Education at Aden University (A.U)

Aden University is one of the largest universities in the Arabian Peninsula. It is located in Aden city. Aden /’adæn/ city was the capital of the South Arabian Federation in British colony days of Aden then it became the capital of South Yemen after independent. Now it is the second largest city in Yemen after unity with north Yemen.

It offers the B.A, MSc, M.A, BSc, MEd, and higher diploma in various disciplines including Sciences and Humanities. It was founded in 1970 that was when its nucleus college was established. Now it has 17 faculties scattered in the nearby provinces of Aden. As far as English Education is concerned, four – years undergraduate programs are offered at various Faculties of Education at Aden University.

In addition to these English undergraduate programs, the M.A and higher diplomas in ELT, Linguistics and Translation are also offered at the Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education. The English four- year undergraduate
programs are basically concerned with training and preparing some high school students to participate in the process of teaching English in the preparatory and secondary schools, in various provinces nearby Aden city. Usually these students are required to take entrance exam which basically tests their grammar and their reading comprehension capacities, before they being officially admitted at an English department at A.U. Therefore, hundreds of students are enrolled in the English undergraduate program at various Educational Faculties administrated by A.U. In fact, the students who are enrolled annually in this program have various motivations i.e. not all are interested, for example, to be English teachers.

They may come to the English undergraduate program because English currently is the fast dominating language in the world. It is language of science and technology, politics, education, industry, medicine, and mass media. In fact, it is very difficult for anybody to get a job if he/she does not have a good command of English, since English nowadays is used widely in the field of business, industry and various other professional fields.

Therefore, English is the medium of teaching in the Faculties of Medicine, Science and Architecture at A.U. In the four-year English program at A.U Language Courses, Linguistics Courses, Literature courses and Faulty and University Requirement Courses are offered. For example, during the four years of study around 37 papers are taught. These papers include courses such as Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing, English Grammar, Poetry, Short Story, Novel, non-fictional Prose, Drama, Phonetics and Phonology,
Translation, ELT Methodology, research project, Material Production, General Linguistics, Language Testing, Teaching School Texts, and English Curriculum Design. The ultimate goal of these courses is to help the students to communicate efficiently in the target language.

However, teaching and learning of English at A.U is associated with many difficulties and problems. Examples of such problems are that they lack of native speakers of English teachers and some of local English teachers lack communicative competence, linguistic competence and professional skills.

They are basically interlanguage teachers and this escalates the problems of teaching and learning at this university. According to Allwright and Kathleen M. Bailey (1991) teachers who are non-native speakers of the target language may perhaps be expected to have a rather special problem in terms of their ability even to notice learners’ errors. They may ask what their own place is on the interlanguage continuum.

Therefore, non-native teachers cannot be expected to treat errors that they cannot detect. Moreover, their own target language grammar may not include all the phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic or discourse rules needed to recognize and treat all the learners’ output.

Other problems are related to the materials of teaching, crowded classes and to some learners who are not interested in English classes. Other problems related to the materials, technique, methods of teaching used and the lack of labs and audio-visual equipments at the departments of English at A.U.
1.9. Overview of Thesis

The present thesis consists of five chapters followed nine appendixes. First chapter is divided into nine sections. Section (1.1) discusses briefly different scholars' new views on the L2 learner's errors. Section (1.2) which is the most important section discusses the problem of the study. Section (1.3) expresses clearly and precisely the aims and purpose of the research in hand. In Section (1.4) the researcher introduces the significance of the study. In section (1.5) the hypotheses of the study were stated obviously. Section (1.6) states the research questions. Limitations of the study were presented in section (1.7). In section (1.8) the researcher discusses English education situation and problems at Aden University.

Chapter two reviews the literature related to subject matter of the study. It has eleven sections. Section (2.1) and (2.2) discuss the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) and its criticism. The notion of Error Analysis and its fundamental underlying assumptions were discussed in sections (2.3) and (2.4). Sections (2.5) and (2.6) describe L2 learner's language and the factors shaping or influencing this language or system. Section (2.7) makes a distinction between different types of errors. Section (2.8) discusses interlingual and intralingual sources of errors. Section (2.9) discusses the significance of L2 learner's errors. Section (2.10) introduces a brief discussion of the findings of some previous studies that were conducted on EFL Arab learners. Section (2.11) discusses the concept of second language acquisition.
Chapter three describes elaborately the methodology of the study. In this chapter, the venue, participants, instrument, and the procedure of the study were discussed.

The fourth chapter presents the results of the study. On the basis of the statistical results of the errors made by both groups and the total number of interlingual and intralingual errors, the researcher made a comparative analysis between the two groups and between the errors which were made by the subjects due to their mother tongue interference (MTI) and those made by them due to intralingual sources. The t-Test analysis at 0.05 level of significance was used by the researcher to determine if there was a significant difference in the error rate between the two groups in the use of aforementioned grammatical items and between interlingual and intralingual errors. Contrastive analysis of the differences between Arabic and English investigated components of grammar by this comparative study was also made. Moreover, the possible explanations of errors exemplified in this study were also provided in this chapter. In addition these statistical results helped in testing the proposed hypotheses by this study which enabled the researcher to draw the conclusions of this study.

The fifth chapter in this dissertation presents the summary of the study and discusses the results of the study based on the decisions made on the ten proposed hypotheses. Thus, the findings, conclusions, implications, general recommendations and suggestions for further study were presented in this chapter.
Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

2.1. Contrastive Analysis (CA)

2.2. Criticism of Contrastive Analysis

2.3. Error analysis (EA)

2.4. The Basic Assumptions Underlying EA

2.4.1. Idiosyncratic Dialect

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2.5. The Interlanguage Shaping Process

2.6. The Factors Influencing L2 Learner’s Systems

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2.8.2.1. Over-generalization Errors

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2.8.2.3. Incomplete Application Of Rules

2.8.2.4. False Concepts Hypothesized

2.9. Pedagogical Significance of Learner’s Errors

2.10. Previous EA Studies Conducted on Arab EFL Learners

2.11. Second Language Acquisition
2.1. Contrastive Analysis (CA)

The systematic comparison of specific linguistic characteristics of two or more languages is called “contrastive analysis”, which is an attempt to establish linguistic universal and language-specific characteristics of languages. Originally such contrastive research was done within the historical linguistics tradition. When William Jones in 1786 compared Greek and Latin with Sanskrit, he found systematic similarities between these languages. Then, in the course of the nineteenth century, a number of contrastive linguistic studies appeared. Usually the term “contrastive linguistics” used as synonym for “contrastive analysis”. The former term originates from Whorf (1941), while bibliographies of the latter are found in Hammer and Rice (1965), Thiem (1969), Selinker (1972), Baush (1977), Palmberg (1977), Siegrist (1977) and James (1980) (Els. et al, 1984). Contrastive Analysis was first developed by Fries (1945). However, with publication of Lado’s book *Linguistics Across Cultures* in 1957, CA emerged as a theory of pedagogical significance in the field of second language teaching. CA is based on the behaviorist theory of learning in psycholinguistics and structural approach in linguistics. The advocates of CA state:

The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner (Fries, 1945:9)

We assume that the student who comes in contact with foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him and those elements that are different will be difficult (Lado, 1957:2)
what the students has to learn equals the sum of the differences established by the contrastive analysis (Danathy, Trager, & Waddle, 1966:37: cited in Bebout, 1974:8)

However, CA is by no means “dead”, interest in it is no longer so widespread nor so uncritical as it was during the fifties and sixties (Bebout, 1974).

Contrastive studies are of two main types: theoretical and applied. Theoretical contrastive studies, as Fisiak (1985) puts it, give an exhaustive account of the differences and similarities between two or more languages, provide an adequate model for their comparison, and determine how and which elements are comparable, thus defining such notions as congruence, equivalence, correspondence, etc. Theoretical studies, on the other hand, are languages independent. They do not investigate how a given category present in language A is presented in language B. Instead, they look for the realization of a universal category X in both A and B. Thus, theoretical contrastive linguistics does not have a direction from A and B or vice-versa, but rather the direction is from X to A and B (Keshavarz, 2004). Wilkins (1972) points out that the importance of CA is that the errors and the difficulties that occur in our learning and use of a foreign language are caused by the inference of our mother-tongue. If the structure of the foreign language differs from that of the mother tongue we can expect both difficulty in learning and error in performance. Therefore, learning a foreign language is essentially learning to overcome these difficulties. There will be no difficulty is predicted and teaching is not must when the structure of the two languages are the same. In this case, simple exposure to the target language will be enough. Teaching will be directed at those points where there are structural differences between the
two languages. Lado (1957: 2) clearly referred to this fundamental assumption. He states:

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture – both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by natives.

On the basis of this hypothesis, structural linguists begin identifying areas of complexity for L2 learners with a view to design well-organized teaching materials to overcome these areas of difficulty. They do this through systematic comparing and contrasting of the structure of the learners’ native language and that of the target language. This technique was called contrastive analysis.

Horn (1980:205) defines CA as a “one in which the similarities and differences between two (or more) languages at a particular level are explicated in the context of a chosen theoretical framework”. In this connection, Verma and N, Krishnaswamy (1989) claim that when a learner starts learning a second language, there is a ‘clash’ between the system of the first language and that of the second and when one language system becomes more or less a habit, the learning of a second language becomes rather difficult. According to them contrastive studies may be useful in discovering language universal, studying problems in translation, studying language types, etc.

One of the basic principles of CA methodology says that both systems have to be described equally well, especially when the two languages confronted are genetically and typologically different (Filipović, 1980).
Weinreich (1953) claims that the greater the difference between the systems, i.e. the more numerous the mutually exclusive forms and patterns in each, the greater is the learning problem and the potential are of interference.

Powell, 1980) argues that the basic concept behind CA was that a structural ‘picture’ of any one language could be constructed which might then be used in the direct comparison with the structural ‘picture’ of another language. Through a process of ‘mapping’ one system onto another, similarities and differences could be identified. Identifying the differences would lead to a better understanding of the potential problems that a learner of the particular L2 would face. However, Corder (1973) who is one of the most opponents of CA, states:

We must nevertheless assume that taken over all the time needed to learn second language reflects the degree of differences there is between it and the mother tongue (p:30).

According to Wardhaugh (1970) the contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) may be divided into two versions, a strong version and a weak version. In accordance with this distinction Wardhaugh argues that the strong version is quite unrealistic and impracticable, in spite of the claim made by those who write contrastive analyses that their work is based on it. This is simply because practically the linguist does not have an over-all contrastive system within which he can relate the two languages in terms of mergers, splits, zeroes, over-differentiations, under -differentiations, reinterpretation, and so on, which will enable to predict difficulties that cause errors in learning an L2. In this connection, Lado in the preface of *Linguistics Across Cultures* (1957: vii) made the strongest claim: “The plan of the book rests on the assumption that we can
predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with native language and culture of the student".

The underlying assumptions of the 'strong version' of CAH outlined by Lee (1968:186 as cited in Keshavarz, 2004:8-9) are below:

1. The prime cause, or even the sole cause, of difficulty and error in foreign-language learning is interference coming from the learners’ NL;
2. The difficulties are chiefly, or wholly, due to the differences between the two languages;
3. The greater these differences are, the more acute the learning difficulties will be;
4. The results of a comparison between the two languages are needed to predict the difficulties and errors which will occur in learning the foreign language;
5. What there is to teach can be found by comparing the two languages and then subtracting what is common to them, so that what the student has to learn equals the sum of the differences established by the CA.

The idea of the strong version as a powerful predictive device remained dominantly prevalent for quite a long time i.e. from the fifties until the late of sixties.

On the other hand, the weak version, according to Wardhaugh has certain possibilities for usefulness; in spite of their suspicion in some linguistic circles. The weak version requires from the linguist to use only the available
linguistic knowledge to account for observed difficulties in second language learning. In other words, the prediction of those difficulties and, controversially, of those learning points which are easy are not required. Due to the failure of the ambitious claim of the strong version, the weak version shifted the emphasis of the hypothesis from the predictive power of the relative difficulty to the explanatory power of the observable errors. It takes into account the linguistic interference as an evidence to explain the similarities and differences between systems.

Oiler and Ziahosseiny (1970) proposed a third version of Contrastive Analysis on the basis of their analysis of the spelling errors committed by some EFL/ESL learners with different mother tongue languages. Contrary to the prediction of the strong version of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, they noted that English spelling proved to be more difficult for learners whose native language used a Roman alphabet (Spanish, German, Slavic) than those whose native language used a non – Roman alphabet (Chinese, Japanese, Semitics). Similarly, according to the weak version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis students whose native uses Roman alphabet would be expected to do better than other group because of greater positive transfer. However, Oiller and Ziahosseiny’s data proved that this was not the case. Thus, they rejected the strong and weak versions as being too strong too weak respectively, in favor of their version, which they called the Moderate Version. They claim that the moderate version has more explanatory power than the other two version since it concentrates on the nature of human learning, and not just on the
contrast between two languages. Thus, the necessity of teaching and learning a second language or foreign language has paved the way for the emergence of CA by comparing the structures of two or more languages with a view to find out the differences between them which are considered the major sources of error in the process of second language learning (Keshavarz, 2004).

2.2. Criticism of Contrastive Analysis

Major proponents of contrastive analysis, e.g., Politzer (1965) and Di Pietro (1971), are now faced with both theoretical and experimental criticism. Studies by Banathy and Madarasz (1969), Buteau (1970), Duškova (1969), and Whitman & Jackson (1972) with Japanese/English, Czech/English, mixed European/French and English/Hungarian language learning situations have shown CA’s ability to predict the relative frequency of errors types or the order of difficulty of a given linguistic structures to range from moderately good to extremely low. Other studies of second language learners’ errors conducted without specific attempts to test predictably of CA (e.g. Richards, 1971a, George 1972, French, 1949) have found that the great majority of the errors either could not be traced to sources in the subject’s native language or could readily and adequately be explained with reference to other sources (Bebout, 1974). They concluded that CA failed to be a good predictive device. The quotes below (cited by Bebout, 1974:10) support this view:

Contrastive linguistic analysis - no matter how refined - can only point toward a potential learning problem . . . error analysis can tell us intensity of this difficulty or the size of the problem (Banathy & Madarasz, 1969:92)
In this study, the probability of errors could not be assessed only from the degree of divergence of the two linguistic structures, and consequently other factors must be hypothesized (Buteau, 1970:139).

Corder (1967) points out that in the classroom teaching situation, teachers noted that many of the errors with which they were familiar were not predicted by the linguist anyway. He states:

Teachers have not always been very impressed by this contribution from linguist fro the reason that their practical experience has usually already shown them where these difficulties lie and they have not felt that the contribution of linguist has provided them with any significantly new information (Corder, 1967:162).

Contrastive analysis was criticized for equating difference with difficulty, on the one hand, and difficulty with error, on the other hand. It was pointed out that while difference is a linguistic concept, difficulty a psychological one. Therefore, difficulty cannot be predicted from difference. This assumption that difficulty led to error was shown to be of doubtful validity (Jackson and Whitman, 1971). Hence, the central claim of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis that linguistic difference between L1 and L2 led to error as result of learning difficulty was put in doubt (Husain, 1996). As cited by (Kühlwein, 1980:314) James summed up nine arguments often brought forth from a pedagogical point of view against contrastive linguistics:

1. Interference from L1 is not the sole source of errors in L2 learning. There are other sources which CA fails to predict.
2. The predictions of student errors in L2 made by CA are not reliable.
3. CA is based on, and perpetuates a native view of language structure.
4. There are no established criteria for comparability.
5. CA endorses a teacher-centred rather than a learner centred approach to foreign language.

6. CA only conceives of interference in one direction, from L1 to L2.

7. We expect the strongest habits to exert most interference, so why is it that the weaker L2 habits interfere with L2 third language than L1 habits?

8. The degree of typological difference between L1 and L2 is not proportional to the interference strength.

9. Interference is an otiose idea: ignorance is the real cause of error.

Thus, CA is criticized theoretically and experimentally for its attribution of errors to the differences between the mother tongue and the target language, on the one hand, and for ignoring other important factors such as learning and communication strategies, overgeneralization, and transfer of training etc which may influence the learners' production in the target language on the other hand.

2.3. Error analysis (EA)

"Error Analysis" is the term used to describe the errors generated by learners or speakers of a second language. The purpose of this analysis is to identify the common difficulties in learning a language, the strategies used by the learners and the reasons or causes of the errors that occur. It is believed that errors produced by learners reflect the universal learning strategies (Marzuki & Zaidah, n.d).
The failure of contrastive analysis in providing adequately acceptable explanations for L2 learners’ errors was the starting point of Error Analysis. In other words, the realization of the limitations of CA approach led to the development of a new approach which was more psychologically oriented toward an explanation of second language acquisition (Corder, 1967, 1973; Richards 1974). The influence of the Chomskyan view of language acquisition with its innateness principles and the questioning of the validity of the behaviorist learning theory with its principles of stimulus-response and habit formation have both played an important role in paving the way for a shift in focus from investigating the characteristics of language to an explanation and exploration of the characteristics of the learner and his language (Obeidat, 1986). This linguists’ shift of attention has led them to discover that the learners’ errors’ were systematic. Chomsky (1966:44) states that

Language is not a ‘habit structure’. Ordinarily linguistic behavior characteristically involves innovation, formation of new sentences and new patterns in accordance with rules of great abstractness and intricacy. This is true both of the speaker, who constructs new utterances appropriate to the occasion, and of the learner, who must analyze and interpret these novel utterances. There are no known principles of association or reinforcement, and no known sense of ‘generalization’ that can begin to account for these characteristic ‘creative’ aspects of normal language use (cited in Obeidat, 1986:20).

In response to this shift a number of scholars such as Banathy and madarsz (1969), Buteau (1970), Whitman (and) Jackson (1972) Richards (1971, 1973) and George (1972) conducted various studies to confirm or disprove the predictive power of CA. They have concluded that a great majority of errors could not be traced to sources arising from the subjects’ native language. Duly and Burt were concerned about CA’s close relationship with the somewhat
discredited verbal learning theory of interference. While George’s criticism focused on the connection between the complexity and infrequency in language.

However, with the publication of Corder’s influential paper “The Significance of the Learner’s Errors in 1967, Error Analysis (EA) emerged as a theory and method of importance to both language pedagogy and the study of language learning. In this paper Corder asserts the significance of the L2 learner to the teacher, language investigator and to the learner himself. Obeidat (1986) argues that in EA study, the errors are important source of information about the process of second language acquisition. He state that:

Corder’s main contribution to EA has been to promote the study of errors not only for diagnostic purposes alone, but also as means of determining the learning strategies of the second language learner and comparing them with those of the first language learner (p.25).

George (1972) puts it briefly:

“... at the beginning of sixties the word error was associated with correction, at the end with learning” (cited Obeidat1986: 20).

To Richards (1971), EA means “the field of error analysis may be defined as dealing with the differences between the way people learning a language speak, and the way adult native speakers of the language use the language” (p.12).

Brown (1980) posits a distinction between EA and CA. In this regard, he states that:

Error analysis became distinguished from contrastive analysis by its examination of errors attributable to all possible sources, not just those which result from negative transfer of the native language. ... errors--overt manifestations of learners’ systems--arise from several possible general sources: interlingual errors of interference from the native

Strevens (1971) puts it:

... error analysis has suddenly found a new importance and from being mainly a technique for short-circuiting the practical difficulty of bilingual comparison. CA it has suddenly become a vital source of information about the progress of a learner towards his eventual competence in the language and a crucial component in our search for adequate theories of language learning and language teaching (cited in Bebout, 1974:11).

The second language learners' speech until the late 1960s was mostly regarded by people as a faulty version of the target language. The notion of “interference” reinforces this view: existing habits prevent correct speech from becoming established; errors are signs of learning failure and as such, not to be willingly tolerated. However, the new approach to the child’s first language encouraged a change of approach in the second language context. The notion developed that second language learners too could be viewed as actively constructing rules from the data they face and gradually adapting these rules in the direction of the target language system. If this is so, then the speech of second language learners, like that of the child, can be analyzed in its own terms. This means that learners' errors should not be viewed as signs of failure. Contrastively, they are the clearest evidence for learner's developing systems and can offer us insights into how they process the data of the language. From this perspective, it is no longer surprising if contrastive analysis is limited in its power to predict errors. If learners are actively constructing a system for the second language, we would not expect all their incorrect hypotheses about it to be a simple result of transferring rules from their first language. We would
expect many of their incorrect notions to be explicable by direct reference to
the target language itself. This is, in fact, exactly what error analysis reveals
(Littlewood, 1984:22).

Ellis (1994) points out that the study of errors is carried out by means of
Error Analysis (EA). In the 1970s EA supplanted Contrastive Analysis (CA),
which sought to predict the errors that learners make by identifying the
linguistic differences between their L1 and the target language. The underlying
assumption of CA was that errors occurred primarily as a result of interference
when the learner transferred his native language "habits" into the L2.
Interference was believed to take place whenever the "habits" of the native
language differed from those the target language. CA gave way to EA as this
assumption came to be challenged. Whereas CA looked at only the learner's
native language and the target language (i.e. fully-formed languages), EA
provided a methodology for investigating learner language. For this reason EA
constitutes an appropriate starting point for the study of the learner language
and L2 acquisition. According to Ellis, EA constituted the first serious attempt
to investigate learner language in order to discover how learners acquire an L2.
EA has made substantial contribution to SLA research. It served as a tool for
providing empirical evidence for behaviorist / mentalist debates of the 1970s,
showing that many of the errors that learners make cannot be put down to
interference. It helped, therefore to support the claims made by Duly and Burt,
and others regarding the 'creativeness' of much learner language. Corder
That Error Analysis confirms or disproves the prediction of the theory lying behind bilingual compassion. In this sense EA is an experimental technique for validating the theory of transfer. But EA goes beyond this; it aims at telling us something about the psycholinguistic process of language learning. We hope to be able to draw certain conclusions about the strategies adopted by the learner in the process of learning. In this sense, error analysis is part of the methodology of the psycholinguistic investigation of language.

Abbott, Greenwood, Douglas Mckeating and Peter Wingard, (1981) see that the job of EA is involving collecting errors, studying and classifying in various ways with a view to provide, suggest the possible causes and explanations. They further divide the process of EA into five stages as follows (1) Recognition, (2) Interpretation, (3) Reconstruction (4), Linguistic Classification, and (5) explanation.

Bartholomae (1980) points out that the error analyst is primarily concerned, however, with errors that are evidence of some intermediate system. He claims that this kind of error occurs because the writer is an active, competent language user who uses his knowledge that language is rule-governed and who uses his ability to predict and form analogies, to construct hypothesis that can make an irregular or unfamiliar language more manageable. When we investigate the pattern of error in the performance of an individual writer, we can better understand the nature of those errors and the way they “fit” in an individual writer’s program for writing. According to Kroll and John Schafer (1978) error analysis, the most recent approach in ESL has moved further toward the process side of the spectrum. According to them error
analysts are cognitivists, not behaviorists, in their psychological orientation. They regard errors in the speech and writing of foreign students learning English in much the same way that Frend regarded slips of the tongue or that Kenneth Goodman views "miscues" in reading "as widows into the mind". Thus, the errors help the teacher identify the cognitive strategies that the learner adopting in the process of learning. Khalil (1985) differentiates EA from CA. In this connection he states:

One of the main arguments in favor of Error Analysis in general has been that, unlike CA, EA deals with actual errors that are made by the language learner. Thus EA is based on empirical data and permits a realistic, as opposed to probabilistic, analysis of errors (p.337)

Recent form of EA focuses on the response of the native speaker rather than on the production of the second language learner. According to Vann, Daisy Meyer, and Frederick Lovenz (1984), Ludwing (1982) noted:

. . . The aims of error analysis have changed in the ten to fifteen- years history of that field. While earlier studies concentrated on frequency and types of errors in an effort to discover linguistic and communicative strategies of the learner Richards 1971, Burt and kiparsky (1975), more recent work has focused on measuring native speaker reaction by determining which error interfere with comprehension or are irritating or unacceptable to receiver (p.428)

According to Sardana (1992) EA is associated with applied linguistics, and is of immense interest to linguists as well as teachers. It involves (1) the identification of actual errors, (2) the description of errors in linguistic terms, (3) the explanation of some of the probable sources of errors, and may or may not therapy, i.e. a linguistic evaluation and the application of the results to teaching methods, syllabus design and material production. In EA, the analysis of errors can be made by reference to pedagogical, sociological and
psychological factors. EA, then, is a systematic investigation of language, since; it gives a description to the L2 learner’s interlanguage. In this sense Corder (1981:29) deems EA as a “clinical approach to the study of the learner’s language”. According to Corder (1973), there are important practical and theoretical uses of EA. On the one hand, the most obvious practical use of the analysis of errors (applied error analysis) is to the teacher. Through the analysis of errors teacher will know something about the effectiveness of his teaching materials and his techniques of teaching. Because errors tell him what parts of the syllabus he has been following have been inadequately learned or taught and need further attention. They enable him to decide whether he can move on to the next item or whether he must devote more time to the item he has been working on. According to Sridhar (1981), the goals of applied error analysis are:

1. Determining the sequence of the presentation of target language items in textbooks and classroom, with the difficult items following the easier ones;

2. Deciding the relative degree of emphasis, explanation, and practice required in putting across various items in the target language;

3. Devising remedial lessons and exercises; and finally

4. Selecting items for testing the learner’s proficiency.

On the other hand, the theoretical use of Error Analysis, as what Corder (1973) claims, is the job of the useful applied linguist who should understand what is happening when the learners learn the language. The application of a scientific
disciplinary to the solution of practical problems provides feedback to theory. The application provides confirmation or disproof of theory. In this respect, some scholars who tested the prediction power of CA have been referred to. Therefore the study of learners’ errors is such an application i.e. the application of a scientific discipline to the solution of practical problems. According to Corder the psycholinguists claim that the nature of the mother tongue will facilitate or make difficult the learning of certain aspects of second language as predicted by the psycholinguist. By comparing the two languages certain features of L2 are identified as different from those of the mother tongue, which are predicted to be difficult for the learners. Thus, the psycholinguistic theory of “transfer” may be confirmed or disproved through the study of errors which is part of an ‘experiment’. Therefore, EFL researchers regard error analysis to be a more developed research paradigm because it deals with the second language learners’ real production of language.

2.4. The basic Assumptions Underlying EA

Corder believes that the L2 learner’s own grammar of the target language is constructed by him based on his own experience, exposure he is exposed to in this language and the help he receives from his teacher through the formal language teaching process as well. In this connection, Corder (1981:52) states:

... at any moment in a learner’s career he has what we can call a ‘grammar’ that is, a set of rules for making sentences. The only thing is, of course that rules are not always those of the target language.
The process by which the learner's grammar is built has been called “Creative Construction hypothesis” (Brown, 1973; Burt and Dulay, 1974b). Scholars proposed various terms for the grammar produced or created by the learner himself. For example, Corder (1971) gives the term ‘idiosyncratic dialect”, Nemser (1971) calls it “approximative system” and Selinker (1969, 1972) refers to it as “interlanguage”.

All three argue that it is valuable to view the learner’s set of hypotheses about the target language as a language in its own right. Since these views or assumptions concerning the learner’s created grammar are the basic reasons for recent works in error analysis it is necessary to discuss briefly each of them.

2.4.1. The Idiosyncratic Dialect

The term “idiosyncratic dialect” was first introduced by S.P Corder in his paper titled: “Idiosyncratic Dialect and Error Analysis” in 1971, to describe a concept very similar to Selinker’s “interlanguage”. He believes that the learner of a second language has a motive to bring his language performance more into line with conventions of those of the target language speakers, as possible as he can, that is, if he is able to do. This required and expected instability in the characteristics of a learner’s language is due to the context changing of his rules, that is continuously developing of his grammar. Corder regards the L2 learners’ language a peculiar dialect of the target language, different from it in many important aspects and probably having some features of his mother tongue. Corder proposal is based on the following two considerations:
1. Any spontaneous speech intended by the speaker to communicate is meaningful, in the sense that it is systematic, regular and consequently is in principle, describable in terms of a set of rules i.e. it has a grammar. The spontaneous speech of the second language learner is language and has a grammar.

2. Since a number of sentences of that language are isomorphous with some of the sentences of his target language and have the same interpretation, then some, at least, of the rules needed to account for the learners' language will be the same as those required to account for the target language.

On the basis of these two considerations he considers the learners' language as a dialect in the linguistic sense: "two languages which share some of rules of grammar are dialects" (in Richards, 1974:158). According to Corder the "idiosyncratic dialect" of the learners of a second language is regular, systematic, and meaningful, i.e. it has a grammar and it, in principle, can be described in terms of a set of rules, some sub-set of which is a sub-set of the rules of the target social dialect. Corder makes a distinction between dialects which are the languages of a social group (social dialects) and dialects which are not the languages of social groups (idiosyncratic dialects). He calls the latter dialects due to linguistic justification and not social one. Corder also shows the difference between "idiolects" and what he called "idiosyncratic dialect". He makes this distinction by saying that an "idiolect" is a personal dialect but which linguistically has the characteristics that all the rules required
to account for it are found somewhere in the set of rules of one or another social dialect. According to him an “idiolect” is some sort of a mixture of dialects. In the case of what he is calling “idiosyncratic dialects” the state of affairs is different. In these some of the rules required to account for the dialect are not members of the set of rules of any social dialect; they are peculiar to the language of that speaker. In common all idiosyncratic dialects have these characteristics that some of the rules required to account for them are particular to an individual. Such idiosyncracies which exist in the individuals’ language causes problems, that is, some of their sentences can be interpreted easily. This is because the ability to interpret a sentence depends partially on the knowledge of the conventions underlying that sentence. Therefore, the sentences of an idiolect do not cause the same problems of interpretation because somewhere there is a member of that social group who share the conventions with the speaker. There is a natural feature or characteristic of “idiosyncratic dialects” in that they are normally unstable. Corder attributes this instability to the reason that “the object of speech is normally to communicate, i.e. to be understood. If understanding is only partial, then a speaker has a motive to bring his behavior into line with conventions of some social group, if he is able”. Corder sees that teachers work on the assumption that a group of learners having the same mother tongue and having had the same background of learning the second language speak more or less the same interlanguage at any point in their learning career, and that what differences there are can be ascribed to individual vitiation in intelligence, motivation and perhaps attitude. This belief
reinforces the notion of teaching a “class” as opposed to an “individual” (in Richards, 1974: 158-160). Corder furthermore differentiates three other idiosyncratic dialects, in addition to the second language learner’s language (L2 idiosyncratic dialect). There are those of the poetry (“deliberately deviant”), the speech of an aphasic (“pathologically deviant”) and the language of the infant acquiring his mother tongue. Corder also claims that every sentence of the second language learner is to be regarded as idiosyncratic until shown otherwise. Therefore, a learner’s sentence may be superficially “well-formed” and yet be idiosyncratic. Corder calls such sentences overtly idiosyncratic as opposed to those overtly idiosyncratic, i.e. sentences which are superficially ‘ill-formed’ in terms of the rules of the TL (Keshavarz, 2004).

2.4.2. The Approximative Systems:

According to Chomskyan linguistics human beings have an innate capacity to acquire language. This capacity is activated when an individual is introduced or exposed to an authentic language exposure. However, it was widely believed that simple exposure is not enough nor effective. Therefore, it is imperative for the learner to be involved in testing and revising the hypotheses he formulates concerning the target language. In order to clarify how the learner processing the acquisition of the target language, Nemser (1971) termed the L2 learner’s language as “approximative system”. In this term he describes the deviant linguistic system actually adopted by the learner in an attempt to speak or write in the target language. Thus, these approximative systems have various characters in accordance with the learner’s proficiency level, learning
experience, communication function, personal learning characteristics, etc. He classifies the language systems represented with their functions as follows:

1. The target language (TL) that in which communication is being attempted; in the case of a learner it is the language he is learning when he uses it.

2. The source language (SL) is that acting as a source of interference (deviations from the norm of the target language); it is normally the learner's native language.

3. An approximative system (AL) is the deviant linguistic system actually employed by the learner attempting to utilize the target language. Such approximative systems vary in character in accordance with proficiency level; variation is also introduced by learning experience (including exposure to a target language script system), communication function, personal learning characteristics, etc (in Richards, 1974: 55).

Nemser's assumption is threefold as quoted below:

1. Learner speech at a given time is the patterned product of a linguistic, AL, distinct from SL and TL and internally structured.

2. Successive stages AL's of successive stages of learning from an evolving series, AL...n, the earliest occurring when a learner first attempts to use LT the most advanced at the TL at the closest approach of AL to TL (merger, the achievement of perfect proficiency, is rare for adult learners).

3. In a given contact situation, the AL's of learners at the same stage of proficiency roughly coincide, with major variations ascribable to differences in learning experience (Nemser, 1974: 56).

Thus, from the above assumption, Nemser maintains that the speech of a target language is structurally organized, manifesting the order and cohesiveness of a system. However, this approximative system is frequently changing with atypical rapidity and due to new elements which are intruded in the process of learning. This system is also subject to radical reorganization through the massive intrusion of these new elements as learning proceeds. Nemser stresses
that the learner speech should be studied in its own terms not only by reference to SL and TL.

The learner systems are, by definition, transient. Nevertheless, it is obvious that evidence for AL is abundantly present in the patterning of errors in the perception and production of a given target language learners sharing the same native language. Nemser also indicates to a process having similarity with concept "fossilization", when he states that effective implies preventing or postponing, as long as possible, formation of permanent intermediate systems or subsystems (deviant phonological and grammatical structure). Nemser refers to them as stable varieties of AL, which are found in immigrant speech that, speech of long - time uses of TL who, often having attained considerable fluency in this language, have yet obviously reached a plateau in their learning.

Another subgroup of stable is formed by utility systems, such specialized 'little' languages of limited semantic function, and requiring limited grammars and lexicons, as the system used by taxi - drivers, hotel - reservation clerks, bartenders and other group with frequent but circumscribed requirement to communicate with foreigners. The structural independence of an approximative language (AL) from the source and target systems is noted in the frequent and systematic occurrence in non- native speech of elements not directly attributable to either the source language (SL) or the target language (TL). Similarly an 'internal' interference resulting from the extension of the productive processes of target language (TL) and pattern confusion occurs frequently in the grammar. It can be said that the demands of communication
force the establishment of phonological, grammatical and lexical categories, whereas the demands of economy force the imposition of the balance, and order of a language system. Moreover, according to Nemser, various evolutionary stages of approximative language differ not only in amount but also in type of interference (using ‘inference’ to cover both external and internal types).

Earlier stages are apparently characterized by the extensive underdifferentiation of the target language (TL) phonological, grammatical and lexical categories, with the learner extending the distribution (grammar and lexicon) and semantic domains of the limited number of formal elements he has acquired. Later stages are characterized by the addition, as interference types, of reinterpretation, hypercorrection and analogy. Approximative languages (AL’s) differ from normal languages in that AL speakers do not usually form speech communities. Nevertheless, it is likely that AL speakers frequently provide reinforcement for the speech behavior of each other. It is noticed that they frequently communicate with each other more easily than with TL speakers. Moreover, AL features are sometimes disseminated among learners under special conditions, are sometimes transmitted between generations and even become conventionalized in TL.

2.4.3. Interlanguage

The term ‘interlanguage’ has been widely accepted by majority of the linguists in the recent years to refer to the second/foreign language learner linguistic system. However this term “interlanguage” was first introduced by
Selinker (1972) as “the separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from learner’s attempted production of a target language (TL) norm (in Richards, 1974:35). Selinker assumes the existence of a “latent psychological structure “in the brain which is activated when one attempts to learn a second language. Selinker’s fundamental assumption is that those adults L2 who achieve native-speaker “competence” (perhaps 5%) in learning a second language have somehow reactivated the latent language structure which described by Lenneberg. According to him Lenneberg (1967) assumes the concept “latent language structure” which, (a) is an already formulated arrangement in the brain, (b) is the biological counterpart to universal grammar, and (c) is transformed by the infant into the realized structure of particular grammar in accordance with certain maturational stages. He assumes also that those (5%) L2 learners who achieve native-like competence go through very different psycho-linguistic processes than the majority of L2 learners who failed to achieve native-like competence. In this regard he refers to the two notions which he calls them as “attempted learning” and “successful learning”, where the former notion is independent and logically prior to the notion of “successful learning”. For him the vast majority of L2 learners who fail to achieve native-like competence in the target language (LT) as representative by a learner who will not succeed because from the beginning of his study of a second language (L2) focus on one norm of the language he is attempting to produce (TL). With this statement he idealizes the picture of the notion “target language” (TL) by stating:
The second language the learner is attempting to learn is here restricted to mean that there is only one norm of one dialect within the interlingual focus of attention of the learner (in Richards 1974:34). Selinker emphasizes that we concentrate our focus on the analysis of the observable data to which we can relate theoretical predictions; that is the utterances or sentences which are produced when the learner attempts to communicate in a target language (TL). This gives clarification of the reason why sentences or utterances created by most of learners of L2, are identical to the hypothesized corresponding sentences which would have been produced by a native speaker of the target language (TL) had he tried to express the same meaning as the learner.

According to these observations based on L2 learner’s attempted production of target language, Selinker hypothesizes the notion of the existence of a separate linguistic system, which he calls “Interlanguage” (IL) (Selinker, 1972- cited in Richards 1974:35).

An interlanguage is defined as a transitional state between mother tongue and target language. It has own rules of use register, it has own systematic grammar. According to Selinker’s hypothesis of the existence of the latent psychological structure which is activated when one attempts to learn a second language, on the basis of the state of his interlanguage the L2 learner progresses, and formulates his own hypotheses about the target language (LT) as well. However, as a result of hypothesizing, the learner will commit errors. In fact, these errors are evidence that the learner is testing his hypotheses about the nature of the second language he is learning by revising or rejecting a hypothesis to account for the error and moving closer to the target norms.
When the learner's interlanguage became more developed his/her grammar will resemble that of the target language grammar. An interlanguage cannot be accounted just by transfer or intralingual characteristics, but it also might be regarded to consist of the interactions of the two languages. That is why Selinker considers an interlanguage as a system that is distinct from both the second and the first language (Selinker; 1972; Corder, 1973; Richards, 1974).

Furthermore, Corder (1978) claims that the concept "interlanguage" implies that significant generalizations can be drown about the process of foreign language learning. One of these possible generalizations is that beside the language continuum of development or change, foreign language learners do exhibit similarities in their learning of the target language and consequently in their interlanguage grammars. According to Schumann (1974) "interlanguage hypothesis regards the speech of a second language learner at any point of time in the acquisition process as a systematic attempt to deal with the target language data. Therefore, the utterances of such a learner are not mistakes or deviant forms, but rather are part of a separate but nevertheless genuine linguistic system.

Sardana (1992) points out that the term "interlanguage" is used to describe a kind of intermediate language between the native language and the target language, and follows a set of rules by the individual learner in his attempts to follow the norms of the target language i.e. to express meaning which he may already have, in the language which he is in the process of learning. It is an unstable but dynamic system, and continues to change as the
learner tries to approximate the target language system. It is a series of
approximative system or overlapping states, each one a well defined state,
gradually moving towards the target language system. What may be called
“interlanguage” refers to a learner’s ventures in a target language, from the
beginning of his attempts in that direction till the achievement of the target
language. An interlanguage is a reflection of the L2 learner’s continuous
development in the process of L2 learning in which elements of the mother
tongue and those of the target language may be observed overlapping resulting
in a fresh category of mixed language. Some confusion in the learner’s mind is
due to his inadequate understanding of the target language itself. This
confusion also may be reflected in his interlanguage. Thus in his attempts to
produce the target language, the learner produces an interlanguage which
contains errors or deviant structures which should not be viewed as
pathological symptoms of failure or as evils that need to be eradicated in order
to facilitate the path of progress. They may in fact be the normal, inevitable
features of the learner’s progress towards the target language, i.e. evidence of
his success rather than failure in task of language learning.

Bridges (1990); Emery (1987), Swan (1995) claim that a learner’s
interlanguage is distinguished from the full-fledged language of a competent
speaker by the fact that the former exhibits features indicating the incomplete
mastery of the code. The learner’s language is characterized by linguistically
incorrect and/or contextually inappropriate forms and expressions. Both types
of deviations are labeled ‘errors’ when they are result from a lack of
competence in the language. In addition to linguistic and pragmatic deviations, an interlanguage may exhibit certain forms that are linguistically and pragmatically correct but sound 'unnatural' or 'strange' (cited in Mahmoud, 2005:2).

According to Husain (1996:32), the assumptions underlying the concept of interlanguage were that:

1. Interlanguages were distinct from either L1 or L2 at any given point of time.
2. Interlanguage takes shape as evolving series and,
3. That interlanguages of different languages roughly coincide at the same stage of proficiency.

Dickerson (1975) proposes that interlanguages like real languages should be seen as having variable rules: "like native speakers, second language learners use a language system consisting of variable rules. Their achievement of the target comes about through gradual change by using, overtime, greater proportions of more target like variance in an ordered set of phonetic environments" (cited in Spolsky, 1979:255). Bickerton (1975) regards the 'interlanguage system' as the product of a psycholinguistic process of interaction between two linguistic systems, those of the mother tongue and the target language (cited by Corder, 1981:87). Ellis (1986) further comments with approval on Selinker's (1972) definition of interlanguage as having three basic features which are: permeability, dynamism, and systematicity. All languages, of course, possess these factors; what distinguishes IL is its degree of
permeability and of dynamism. But like all natural languages, it always remains systematic. It is therefore a type of natural language (cited in Alan and Davis, 1989: 461). Sridhar (1976) claims that there are three revolutionary phases in the attempt to understand and explain the nature of a foreign language learner’s performance. These phases are: Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis and Interlanguage. He also argues that these three approaches are complementary rather than competing approaches to the realization of the second language learner makes mistakes.

According to the interlanguage hypothesis, second language speech:

1. Rarely conforms to what one expects native speakers of the target language to produce;
2. Is not an exact translation of the native language;
3. Differs from the target language in systematic ways;
4. And that the forms and utterances produced by a learner are not random (Selinker et al, 1975: 30)

2.5. The Interlanguage Shaping Process

As it is understood from the interlanguage hypothesis, according to Selinker, the psychologically pertaining data of learning or acquisition of a second language is found in a skeleton comprising of the learner’s utterances in his mother tongue, the interlanguage utterances created by the learner, and those utterances of the target language produced by native speakers. With reference to this theoretical skeleton, Selinker proposes the existence of five
central processes in the latent psychological structure, which are processes associated in second language learning and shape the utterances of interlanguage in adults by “activation of genetically” determined “latent the psychological structure” we have discussed earlier.

These five processes are: language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of second language learning, strategies of second language communication, and overgeneralization of the target language linguistic materials. All or many of second language learners make use of these processes. Before discussing these five psycholinguistic processes, it is first necessary to have a look at the notion “fossilization” introduced by Selinker which he deems as the most essential fact, which any adequate theory of second language will have to explain or account for. The concept of “fossilization”, according to Selinker, is a mechanism which he also assumes to be existed in the latent psychological structure discussed above. In this connection he states:

Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules, and subsystems which speakers of a particular NL (Native language) will tend to keep in their IL (Interlanguage) relative to a particular TL (Target language), no matter what the age of the learner or amount of explanation and instruction he receives in the TL (Selinker, 1972 in Richards, 1974: 36).

In a clarification of the mentioned five processes above, Selinker states that if it can be experimentally indicated that fossilizable items, rules and subsystems which occur in interlanguage performance are a result of the native language (NL), then we are dealing with process of “Language Transfer”; if these fossilizable items, rules subsystem are resulted from identifiable items in
training procedures, then we are dealing with the process of “transfer”; when
the fossilizable items, rules and subsystems arise from identifiable approach
followed by the learner to the material to be learned, then we are dealing with
“strategies of second language learning”; in case the fossilizable items, rules
and subsystems are a result of an identifiable approach by the learner to
communication with native speakers of the target language (TL), then we are
dealing with strategies of second language communication; and finally the fifth
process is that if the fossilizable items, rules, and subsystem resulting from a
clear overgeneralization of the target language (TL) rules and semantic
features, then we are dealing with the overgeneralization of target language
(TL) linguistic materials. Selinker (1972:37) also pointed out “that each
process forces fossilizable material upon surface IL utterances”. In addition to
these five major central processes fundamental in learning L2, Selinker
emphasizes the following minor processes which also account for the surface
forms of interlanguage productions: “spelling pronunciations”, “cognate
pronunciation”, “Holophrase learning” (Jain, 1969).

Corder (1981) attributes the phenomenon of ‘fossilization to the
learner’s lack of motivation. He claims that the learner continues to upgrade, or
elaborate, his understanding of the target language only so long as he has a
motive for doing so. When his interlanguage grammar reaches that state of
elaboration which enables him to communicate adequately for his purposes
with native speakers, his motive to improve his knowledge or elaborate his
approximative system disappears. Hence, probably the phenomenon of
‘fossilization’, where a learner’s interlanguage ceases to develop however long he remains exposed to authentic data in the target language. For example there are many foreigners in the community of the target language whose language fossilized in this way in some respect or other.

According to Ellis (1985), there are three phases in interlanguage:

1. Innovation (acquisition of new form)

2. Elaboration (complexification that occurs as the learner discovers the contextual uses of a form)

3. Revision (adjustments that are made to the entire system as a result of innovation and elaboration) (p.31).

The concept of interlanguage demonstrates and explains particular processes such as simplification and generalization. Simplification is defined by Ellis as “the reduction of the target language “and describes generalization as “the extenuation of an L2 rule to a context in which it does not apply in the target language” (Ellis, 1997: 30). According to Sardana (1992) the underlying postulates of ‘interlanguage’ hypothesis are:

(1) Second language learning is a cognitive process of acquiring implicit knowledge of the second language by making and testing hypotheses about the second language

(2) Language is rule-governed. Hence longitudinal and cross-sectional studies of learner’s interlanguage reveal similarities in development.

(3) Language acquisition is a dynamic system, not a cumulative. It is a process of elaboration.
2.6. The Factors Influencing L2 Learner’s Systems

In the previous sections, the linguistic systems of the second language learner were discussed. These systems were termed as “approximative systems” proposed by Nemser (1971), “idiosyncratic dialects” proposed by Coder (1971) and “interlanguage” suggested by Selinker (1972). The study of these systems is, therefore, the study of the language systems of language learners. According to Keshavarz (2004), these notions have brought new dimensions to the study of second language learners’ errors because the study of learner’s language involves an analysis of: (a) the learner’s NL utterances, (b) the learner’s IL or idiosyncratic utterances, and (c) utterances produced by native speakers of the TL, i.e. the target language norms. According to Richards and Sampson (1974) the second language learners’ systems are influenced and characterized by certain significant factors. They mentioned seven factors which may influence and characterize these second language learners’ systems. These factors are listed below:

1. Language transfer
2. Intralingual interference
3. Sociolinguistic situation
4. Modality
5. Age
6. Successions of approximative systems
7. Universal hierarchy of difficulty

The above mentioned factors are discussed below:
2.6.1. Language Transfer

Richards and Sampson (1974) refer to the language transfer by stating that "sentences in the target language may exhibit interference from the mother tongue". According to them "language transfer" was considered to be the major source of difficulty by linguists doing contrastive analysis. Ellis (1994) pointed out that L1 transfer usually refers to the incorporation of feature of the L1 into the knowledge systems of the L2 which the learner is trying to build. He also distinguishes this learning process from other processes which involve the use of the L1 for purposes of communication. Both translation and borrowing the use of L1 to deal with some communication problems are examples of communication transfer, such as are code-mixing and code-switching. Transfer was understood within a behaviorist framework of learning. It was assumed that the 'habits' of the L1 would be carried into the L2. "Interference" or "negative transfer" resulted in the cases where the target language differed from the L1. In cases where the patterns of the L1 and the target language were similar, positive transfer would occur. Odlin (1989) asserts the significance of the "transfer" in the process of second language acquisition. He states:

Despite the counterarguments . . . there is a large and growing body of research that indicates that transfer is indeed a very important factor in second language acquisition (cited in Ellis, 1994: 29).

Language transfer is reflected in all aspects of language that is in phonology, syntax semantics, and pragmatics. Moreover the manifestation of the transfer may not always be as errors, but sometimes may manifest itself as avoidance, overuse, and facilitation.
Lu (2004: 1) defines language transfer as "the application of native language rules in the attempted performance in a second language, in some cases resulting in deviations from target – language norms and in other cases facilitating second language acquisition". However, language transfer is not only confined to L1 transfer. Odlin (1989) defined transfer as "the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (cited by Lu, 2004:1). Di Pietro (1971) points out that if a learner has properly learned the rules of the other language, he will be able to apply them whenever he has not learned the rules; he will have to revert to those of his native or to those of other languages he knows. He adds that language teachers often observe a tendency among some students to confuse the language they are studying with others studied previously or concurrently. According to him, the process of interpreting particular grammar of one language in terms of another is called "transfer". The mistakes that result from this process are said to be due to "interference". Corder (1981) claims that the learner's possession of his native language is facilitative. Errors in this case are not to be regarded as signs of inhibition, but simply as evidence of his learning strategies. Lado (1957) argues that foreign language learners rely almost entirely on their native language in the process of learning the target language. Thus "language transfer" is an important factor involved in the process of L2 learning, which works in very complicated ways and deeply influence and shape the L2 learners linguistic systems.
2.6.2. Intralingual Interference

According to Richards and Samson (1974) the term "Intralingual" refers to items produced by the learner of L2 which reflects not only the structure of the mother tongue, but generalization based on partial exposure to the target language. Based on an analysis of English errors produced by speakers of a number of unrelated languages families; Richards noted subcategories of error types which seem to be common to speakers of diverse languages as they develop hypotheses about the structure of English. As the case of L1 learners, attempts to derive the rules in accordance with the data to which he has exposed; and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor target language. Such L2 learner's hypotheses resulting systematic intralingual errors to involve overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and semantic errors. Torrey (1966) Richards (1971a) and Brndhiprabha (1972) propose that many intralingual errors represent difficulty of what are often low level rules in the target language, such as differences between the verb inflections in "I walk, she walks". Inferring that rules such as those concerning subject – verb agreement, prediction, negation, etc, are acquired, considerable amount of difficulty in L2 learning is related to selectional restrictions and to surface structure and contextual rules of the language (cited in Richards, 1974:6).

Krashen (1976) argues that, many of the errors in the second language are 'developmental' rather solely a result of inference. According to him mother tongue interference is not significant source of errors.
Littlewood (1984) points out that many of L2 learners' errors incorrect notions are explicable by direct reference to the target language itself. These errors are precisely what error analysis is attempting to reveal. Those errors which are not due to transferring from the mother tongue are called "intralingual". These errors show the L2 learners are processing the second language in its terms and suggest that the L2 learner is employing similar strategies, which are often similar to those produced by the child in the mother tongue. Thus, intralingual interference suggests that previous knowledge of the target language may influence and characterize later learning of that language.

2.6.3. Sociolinguistic Situation

Richard and Sampson (1974:6) state that "different setting for language use result in degrees and types of language learning". According to them the distinction can be made in terms of the effects of the socio-cultural setting on the learner's language and in terms of the relationship holding between the learner and the target language community and the linguistic marker of these relations and identities. The learner's motivations for learning the target language the effects of the socio-cultural setting are included here. In the process of language learning, the distinction is made between compound / co-ordinate bilingualism (Weinreich, 1953; Ervin and Osgood, 1954; Lambert, 1961) which rests upon an assumption that different settings for learning may motivate different process of language learning. For example two language may be learned in the same socio – cultural setting or in two different settings
(Richards and Sampson, 1974). Bell (1976:132) makes a distinction between three types of bilinguals:

1. The monocultural bilingual is likely to be one who has learned the L2 for utilitarian purposes, access to the technological information available in the language, the pursuit of research in academic subject, etc, perhaps limited to a reading knowledge of the L2, using it as a ‘library language’.

2. The bicultural -co-ordinate bilingual, is more to have learned the L2 for integrative reason- getting to know the people, tourism, etc , and to have studied the literature and other aspects of the culture of the L2 speech community.

3. The bicultural- compound bilingual, an example of this type is the second-generation immigrant, who has acquired two L2s and two cultures, that of the home and that of the host society, simultaneously. The above types of bilinguals illustrate that they learned the L2 in different contexts.

Lambert (1972) emphasizes the significance of the social psychological perspective in the process of second language learning. In this connection, he argues that if the student is to be successful in his attempt to learn another social group’s language, he must be both able and willing to adopt various aspects of behavior, including verbal behavior, which characterizes members of the other linguistic – cultural group. He claims that the learner’s ethnocentric tendencies and his attitudes toward the other group are believed to determine his success in learning the new language. The L2 learner’s motivation to learn is thought to be determined both by his attitudes and by the type of orientation
he has toward learning a L2. According to Lambert the orientation here is instrumental" in form if for example, the purpose of language is learned reflect the more utilitarian value of linguistic achievement, (i.e., getting a head in one's occupation). When the learner is oriented to learn more about the other cultural community (i.e., as if he desired to become a potential member of the other group), the orientation here is what Lambert calls “integrative” (Lambert, 1967, in Pride and Holmes, 1972:345).

Corder (1981) claims that the learning of second languages does not take place very largely in a formal educational setting. According to him probably the overwhelming majority of bilinguals in the world have not learnt their second language in the classroom. In most multilingual communities throughout the world the learning of a second language takes place in an informal situation of language contact as a result of exposure to the second language being spoken by native speakers, conversing with each other or with learner; that, in situation resembles those in which the child acquires his mother tongue. This is because in such setting the learner confronts the language as means of conveying messages. Therefore, he pays attention to the most salient features of the speech signals in the first instance and bases his account of the language on these features, while in the classroom the case is different because the data is written, does not betray obviously salient features. Also in this setting the learner does not receive any teaching as well as the date to which he is exposed is not selected or organized. Thus, the effect of the social situation is clearly illustrated in the above discussion. Consequently the process
of learning a second language is to be viewed from socio-psychological perspectives.

2.6.4. Modality

The learner's language may fluctuate according to this factor, the modality of exposure to the target language and modality of production may influence the learner's language. Richards and Samson claim that the production and perception of the L2 learner may involve the acquisition of two partially overlapping systems. Vildomec (1963) notes that interference between the bilingual's languages is basically on the productive rather than receptive side. Nemser (1971a) proposes that two different systems may be internalized in the target language depending on the modality. He observed that in the productive modality, phonological replacements are different depending on whether the learner was imitating utterances he heard or producing speech spontaneously. George (1971) describes learning difficulties derived from audio-lingual introduction to *is, has*, in unstressed positions, which may realized as /z/ leading to identification as *She is a book, Her name has Sita*. Other instances of modality which influence the learner's approximative systems are spelling pronunciation and confusions of written and spoken styles (Richards and Sampson, 1974).

2.6.5. Age

In the domain of second language learning, it has been noted that children learn L2 more easily and more proficiently than do adults. This phenomenon is attributed to the fact of losing the necessary flexibility for
mastery of an L2 in the process of biological maturation. The evidence that is
language learning is an easier process at an early age comes from various
sources. It is observed most strikingly in any language contact situation, such
as a situation in which groups speaking on language live in proximity to and
interaction with speakers of another language. Cases that have been most
widely noted involve the language acquisition of new immigrants and of
children brought up by bilingual parents. In such circumstances as these it has
been found that whereas with adequate exposure children become completely
bilingual, being able to speak both languages with a fluency and accuracy that
makes them undistinguishable from monolingual speakers, adults brought into
contact with the second language for the first time never succeed in ridding
their speech in the second language of traces of the mother tongue. Therefore,
the contrast between child and adult that it seems as if the child still learning
language as he learned his mother tongue, while the adults has lost this ability

The most common explanation for this observation is that there is a
‘critical period’ during which the brain is flexible and learning can occur
naturally and easily. Since this period ends around puberty, adolescents
and adults can no longer call upon these natural learning capacities.

Collier (1988) argues that successful language acquisition depends on the
learner’s age. In one of the earliest studies on second language learning
Lenneberg (1967) claims that there is a certain period in acquisition of a second
language. In this period, which is identified critical period hypothesis in
language acquisition, Lenneberg hypothesize that the acquisition of language is
an innate process determined by biological factors which limit the critical
period for acquisition for a language from roughly two years of age. Lenneberg believes that after lateralization, which is a process by which the two sides of brain loses plasticity and lateralization of the language function is normally completed by puberty, making post-adolescent language acquisition difficult (Gömleksiz, n.d.).

However, Kasai (2004) points out that there is a hypothesis that adult learners show a better performance in a formal second language learning environment, while children do better in an informal environment. Kasai summaries, that, when time and exposure to a second language is controlled adults and adolescents generally being faster at initial stages of second language learning than children, while older children progress faster than younger children in acquiring morphological and lexical aspects of L2.

2.6.6. Successions of Approximative Systems

As it has been discussed earlier the second language learner’s system lacks the stability due to the fact that the learner is constantly formulating, testing and revising his hypotheses about how the target language works and consequently improve it continuously. Additional reason for this unstable system is that the circumstances for individual language learning are never identical. Therefore, the acquisition of lexical, phonological and syntactic varies from one individual to another. This claim gets support from the fact that it is rare for an L2 learner to use an error or overuse a give structure 100% of the time. However, Whinnom (1971) states that “the general direction which the learner’s system makes may be predictable” (Richards and Sampson, 1974:
11). According to Richards and Sampson most studies of second language learners system have dealt with learner's production rather than his comprehension of language, therefore, they raise the question as to whether the grammar by which the learner understand speech (receptive competence) is the same as that by which he produces speech (productive competence). They assume that the learner hears a significant number of deviant sentences. They also note another phenomenon, which is an evidence of the instability of the learner's approximative system in that there are many elements which are observed to go through a stage where they are sometimes used and sometimes omitted. Therefore, when rules for items or structure unique to learners' approximative systems are to be written they will have to be embodied in a format reflecting their probability of occurrence. They stress the autonomy of approximative systems by citing evidence from studies done by Brier (1968), Nemser (1971) and Naban (1971) which indicate that many phonological errors found in the speech of second language learners are unique to the approximative system. Richards and Sampson claim that the existence of such novel data is strong for the autonomy of approximative system as distinct from both native and target system. This claim of autonomy for approximative system does not, however, preclude their dependence on either L1 or L2 systems (p.12).

2.6.7. Universal Hierarchy of Difficulty

Richards and Sampson (1974) point out that this factor is concerned with inherent difficulty for man certain phonological, syntactic or semantic
items and structures. They claim that some forms may be inherently difficult to learn regardless of the background of learner not only for non-native speakers of a given language, but also for native speaker as well. This claim is supported also by findings of Delattre, Liberman and Cooper (1962). According to Delattre, Liberman and Cooper the English pairs /v/-/ð/ and /f/-/θ/ are very hard to distinguish not only for non-native but also for native speakers as well.

Richards and Sampson state that “if a hierarchy of difficulty is postulated for learners of a given language background, it must include not only interlanguage difficulties but also take into account a possible universal hierarchy of difficulty” (p.13). They also assume that the concept of difficulty affect the learner’s organization of what he perceives (learning strategies) and the organization of what he produces (communication strategies). Regarding identifying the areas of difficulty in terms of interlingual difference for the learner, they assume that it is feasible to compare categories across languages, but practically may not be possible.

Richards and Sampson state that what is in syntax in one language may be vocabulary in this regard they quote Torrey (1971):

Many aspects of language learning are very difficult to analyze into specific responses, and even where it is possible the responses are various and at different levels (one item may belong to two levels in one language and four in another)... degrees of learning would have to be examined in terms of specific instances rather than with the general category of responses. (Cited by Richard and Sampson in Richards, 1974:13).

They argue that what the L2 learner finds difficult will also depend on the degree and nature of what already he has acquired of L2. In other words, the
learner’s knowledge of the L2 will form part of the data by which he infers the meaning of new elements. According to Richards and Sampson the concept of difficulty in language learning has been defined by psycholinguists in terms of such factors as sentence length, processing time required, derivational complexity types of embedding, number of transformations, and semantic complexity. Thus, the L2 learner’s difficulties in comprehension have been discussed in the above. As for production, the learner output is organized in terms of what he finds easiest to say. Definitely, what the learner says is not necessarily identifiable with what he knows about the target language. This is because he may avoid a word or structure which he finds difficult to say. This may force the learner for example to choose a particular tense instead of the required one. (I’m going to telephone you tonight instead of I’ll telephone you tonight).

Richards and Sampson maintain that facility and economy of effort may explain why first learned words and structures tend to be overused and may resist replacement by later taught items (Richards and Sampson in Richards, 1974, p.14). Thus, in the light of the above discussion it can be said that universal hierarchy of difficulty influences the L2 learner’s system. We can also say that first language interference is the major source of the learners’ errors, but it is one possible source among many others.
2.7. Types of errors

Erroneous forms used by second language learners in their attempt to express themselves in the target language are usually called errors and are of special interest to second language learner/teacher. Linguists have defined errors variously as breaches of the code or deviations from the norm "... the term ‘breach of the code presumes that the learner is familiar with the target language code, but is somehow unable to follow it or use it in his own performance” (Sardana, 1992: 17). Corder (1973) sees the term “error” tends to be reserved for willful or negligent breaches or a rule which is known or, ought to be known or is thought to be known by the offender. Taylor (1976) defines “error” as “any deviation unacceptable to the majority of speakers of every major dialect of the given language”. Gass and Selinker define errors as “red flags” those provide evidence of the learner’s knowledge of the second language. Edge (1989) defines errors as forms that cannot be corrected by the language users themselves even though they have been taught.

Chomsky (1965) makes a distinction between (competence) which refers to a native speaker’s knowledge of his language and (performance) which refers the speaker’s actual uses of his language for communicative purposes. According to him although a native speaker of a given language has a perfect knowledge of the systems of his mother tongue, but he nevertheless might generate utterances which are judged as “ungrammatical” by other native speakers. According to Corder the production of “ungrammatical utterances” by native speaker of a given language is not result of imperfect knowledge
because they can be corrected by the same speaker when his attention is drawn to his mistakes. Therefore, these ungrammatical utterances are adventitious artifacts of linguistic performance and do not reflect a defect in this native speaker's knowledge of his own language as he is normally immediately aware of them when these ungrammatical utterances occur and can correct them. In accordance with this Corder proposes that it is must to systematically differentiate between “mistakes” which are due to memory lapses, physical state such as tiredness, and psychological conditions such as a strong emotion etc, which arise from failures to utilize a known system correctly (performance errors) and systematic errors which are typically produced by second language learners who do not yet have a full command of some institutionalized language system (competence errors) or have not yet internalized the formation rules of L2. According to Corder mistakes are erroneous or ill-formed utterances which are the result of some failure of performance. They may contain what he calls slips of the tongue, false starts, changes of mind, and so on, which are normally correctable by the speaker himself. These mistakes have no significance in the process of language teaching. The noticeable thing about “mistakes” is that they are increased in frequency under conditions of nervous, tiredness and stress or uncertainty or when the speaker is absorbed in some non-linguistic activity. One more thing regarding “mistakes” is that they are unpredictable as they occur suddenly and unconsciously. It is believed that they are random failures of performance. Similarly, it is quite reasonable to expect that L2 learner will exhibit such slips lapses in the performance, since
he is subject, liable and exposed to similar external and internal conditions. On the other hand the term “error” refers to the systematic errors of the second language learner which are salient characteristic of his linguistic system or knowledge of the L2 at a given stage of learning, i.e. his “transitional competence”. In contrast to “mistakes”, “errors” are of great significance to the process of second language teaching/learning since they provide evidence of the system of the language that the L2 is using (i.e. has learnt) at a particular point in the course (Corder, 1973, 1974, 1981).

D. H. Hymes (1971) goes further beyond Chomsky’s grammatical competence to emphasize the child’s or the learner’s communicative competence (CC) who acquires or studies a language. In this connection, he states:

We have then to account for the fact that a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others (in Pride and Janet Holmes, 1972: 277).

Thus, Hymes’s “communicative competence” implies that the learners’ utterances are termed errors or mistakes if they were not used appropriately. According to Brown (2000), a “mistake” refers to a performance error in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly, while an “error” is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner (Fang & Xue-mei, 2007). Noss (1979) classifies errors into three types. He puts them:
1. Mistakes. These are errors of form or lexical selection which the defendant (learner) has made through carelessness, bad habits, or perhaps simply a desire to communicate rapidly rather than precisely. The defendant (learner) knows the correct rule of the appropriate lexical item, but has failed to apply or produce it in this instance.

2. Mismatches. These are errors which the defendant (learner) has made by selecting a wrong or unnecessary ambiguous syntactic pattern or lexical item through real ignorance of the correct and precise item.

3. Gaps. These are of omission, whereby the defendant (learner) has failed to produce any lexical item or syntactic pattern in place where it obviously needed. The result may be an unfinished or abandoned product, or merely a noticeable hiatus in the flow of oral or written production (p. 3)

According to Noss, these three types of errors have implication to the legal consumers. Errors which are not confusing or misleading are called “harmless”. Errors which leave the consumer in serious doubt as the meaning intended are called “confusing errors”. Errors which convey a completely wrong meaning to the consumer are called “misleading errors”. Noss seems to caution legal practitioners and users to avoid these types of errors in order not to indict a defendant unnecessarily (Marzuki and Zaival, n.d.).

Burt and Kiparasky (1972) posit a distinction between two categories of mistakes those of “Global mistakes” and those of “Local mistakes. They state:

Global mistakes are those that violate rules involving the overall structure of sentence, the relation among constituent clause, or, in a simple sentence, the relations among major constituents

Local mistakes cause trouble in a particular constituent, or in a clause of a complex sentence. These are relative notions; something that is global in one sentence may become local when that sentence is embedded in a bigger sentence (p.73).

On the basis of Burt and Dulay’s global/ local distinction Hendrickson (1976) distinguishes between a student’s linguistic and communicative proficiency levels. According to him a global error is a communicative error that causes a
native speaker of English either to misinterpret a written message or to consider the message incomprehensible within the total context. On the other hand, a local error is a linguistic error that makes a sentence appear ungrammatical or unidiomatic but, nevertheless, causes a native speaker of English little or no difficulty in understanding the intended meaning of a sentence, given its contextual framework.

According to Baruah (1992), pupils’ errors can be broadly divided into two types:

1. Errors resulting from carelessness (i.e. ‘slips’) and

2. Errors resulting from a systematic violation of the rules of the language code.

Feris (2002) introduces the dichotomy between “treatable” and “untreatable” errors as a pedagogical distinction. According to her, treatable errors are related to a linguistic structure which occurs in a rule-governed way. They are treatable because the student writer can be pointed to a grammar book or set of rules to resolve the problem. Examples of such errors include verb tense and form; subject – verb agreement; article usage; plural and possessive noun endings; sentence fragments; run-ons and common splices; some errors in punctuation; capitalization, and spelling. Untreatable errors, on the other hand, are idiosyncratic, and the student will need to utilize acquired knowledge of the language to self-correct them. Untreatable errors include most word choice errors, with the possible exception of some pronoun and preposition usage, and
unidiomatic sentence structure (e.g. problems with word order or with missing or unnecessary words).

Corder (as cited by Ellis, 1994:56) distinguishes three types of errors according to their systematicity:

1. Presystematic errors occur when the learner is unaware of the existence of a particular rule in the target language. These are random.
2. Systematic errors occur when the learner has discovered a rule but it is the wrong one.
3. Postsystematic errors occur when the learner knows the correct target language rule but uses it inconsistently (i.e. makes a mistake)

According to Dulay and Burt (1973, 1974), there are four types of “goofs”:

1. Interference like goofs: this type of ‘goof’ reflects the structure of the learner’s mother tongue.
2. Developmental goofs: on the basis of inadequate data of the target language, learners over generalize the structure of the target language.
3. Ambiguous goofs: this type of goofs are either interference- like or L1 developmental goofs.
4. Unique goofs: these goofs cannot be described as developmental goofs or as L1 interference.

2.8. The Sources of Errors

In contrast to Contrastive Analysis, the sources of errors are not predicted in Error Analysis. This characteristic of EA is attributed to the fact
that in CA the task of correlating errors to their sources can be done easily by predicting that the causes of errors was interference coming from the learner's mother tongue. In this analysis the psychological reality of errors is not provided. Another reason for this claim is that EA cannot give a clear picture of the learner's communicative competence. Hence, it does not predict how a particular learner will cope with the demands of a situation of language use. An underlying assumption is that the learner's language is unstable system. According to Richard (1974) this instability implies that the learner's system is continuously being modified as new elements are incorporated throughout the learning process and such developing systems are evident in learner's errors. During the past four decades, empirical studies in the second language learning have realized that the L2 learner's errors are due to two major sources which are called as “interlingual” and “intralingual”. The “interlingual errors” are explained in terms of language transfer, while “intralingual errors” are explained by reference to a series of various strategies and factors such as “Overgeneralization” (Richards, 1971; Selinker, 1971), “Simplification” (George, 1972; Richard, 1975), “Linguistic Development” (Corder, 1967), “Strategies of Communication” (Selinker, 1971), “Language Instruction” (Stenson, 1974) “Target Language Complexity” (Schachter, 1974) and “Overproduction of Target Language Features” (Schachter and Rutherford, 1979).

It should be kept in mind that overlapping and the possibility of multiple explanations when attempting to assign the sources and causes of errors are
expected due to the lack of precise criteria (Richards, 1981). According to Ellis (1994) it is very difficult to distinguish or identify the different types of intralingual errors that Richards describes.

The comprehension that second language learner’s errors are potentially essential for the understanding of the process of second language acquisition. Therefore, the psychology of second language learning is current focus in the literature on modern language teaching. However, what is not apparent is (a) arrive at principle means for accounting for errors which will more fully determine their source and cause than contrastive study of the contact languages, (b) how to interpret their significance in a meaningful conceptual framework, and (c) whether, because of these methodological difficulties, it is possible to effectively use error evidence in a linguistically oriented and/or learning theory based programme of language (Jain, 1974). As Corder (1973:283) explains, in a sense, nothing is ‘fully’ learnt until everything is ‘fully’ learnt since there is an absolute interdependence involving all the different levels of language, its structures, and the hierarchies to be found within the system. It is, therefore, inevitable that during the process of learning errors will be made while this system is being perfected, and these, in turn, have various causes (MacDonald, 2003:96).

Thus, in Error Analysis the mother tongue interference is considered to be a source of errors, but it is not acknowledged as the only source or cause of EFL learners’ errors. Therefore, the recognition of the possible sources of errors which extend beyond just interlingual errors in the process of L2
learning, indeed, was considered one great contributions of error analysis approach. In short, the sources of L2 learners’ errors are of two types:

1. Interlingual sources which cause interlingual errors
2. Intralingual sources which cause intralingual errors

2.8.1. Interlingual errors

According to the notion of CA, the major source of errors in the second language learners’ performance is directly attributed to the interference from the learner’s mother tongue. According to Corder (1992) the term “interference” is often used to refer to the presence of some features of the learner’s mother tongue in his performance in the target language which are incorrect to the rules of the target language. However, Corder objects the usage of the term “interference”. He states: “this usage carries no sense of an inhibiting process at work as a proper use of the term should, and I believe it should be abandoned” (p. 20). He also objects to the term “transfer”. In this connection he states:

The term “transfer” is inappropriate for reference to the phenomenon, since nothing is being transferred from anywhere to anywhere. What is happening is that the speaker is using certain aspects of his mother tongue to express his meaning because his interlanguage lacks the means to do it (p: 26)

In the field of linguistics this term was first used by Sandfield in 1938. Previously, Sapir (1927) had noted existence of a mutual influence between languages, whereas Bloomfield (1933) had already coined the expression “borrowing” (MacDonald, 2003). Weinreich (1953:1) refers to this phenomenon as “those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result familiarity with more than
one language i.e. as a result of language contact, will be referred to as "INTERFERENCE phenomena".

However, Schachter (1992) sees that "transfer" is not a process at all, and is in fact a misnamed phenomenon—an unnecessary carryover from the heyday of behaviorism. According to her what is currently viewed as evidence for the process of transfer is more appropriately viewed as evidence of a constraint on the learner’s hypothesis testing process which is both a facilitating and a limiting condition on the hypothesis testing process, but it is not in and of itself a process (in Gass and Selinker, 1992). Tarone (1969) categorize transfer into three types:

1. Negative transfer refer to situation in which the learner’s attempt to use inappropriate sound patterns and elements of the mother tongue in place of the patterns of the target language.

2. Positive transfer refers to the situation where the learners do not face any difficulty in producing an item which is common in the native and the target languages.

3. Divergent negative transfer is another type of situation where the second language learners perceive the target language elements as most difficult. It takes place in the case of the purely non-cognate situation.

Lott (1983, cited by Ellis, 1994:59) distinguishes three categories of transfer errors:

1. ‘Overextension of analogy’ occurs when the learner misuses an item because it shares features with an item in the L1 (for example, Italian...
learners use ‘process’ to mean ‘trial’ because Italian ‘processo’ has this meaning).

2. ‘Transfer of structure’ arises when the learner utilizes some L1 features (phonological, lexical, grammatical, or pragmatic) rather than that of the target language. This is what is generally understood as ‘transfer’.

3. ‘Interlingual/ intralingual errors’ arise when a particular distinction does not exist in the L1 (for example, the use of ‘make’ instead of ‘do’ by Italian learners because the ‘make/ do’ distinction is non-existent in Italian).

Ellis (1994), however, claims that transfer errors are more common in the phonological and lexical levels of language than in the grammatical level. (Grauberg (1971, cited in Ellis, 1994: 62) found that interference accounted for 25% of the lexical errors produced by adult German learners of L2 English, 10% of their syntactic errors, and none of their morphological errors. Several scholars have recognized the interference of learners’ mother tongue in learning a second language which manifests itself in the form of interlingual errors. Chan (1975) in his study of English speakers learning Spanish as a second language found 51% interlingual errors, George (1972), Dulay and Burt (1972), lane (1989) and Tripp (1970) also found errors which were due to the interference from the mother tongue. Nickel (1981) found 80% of errors caused by interference from the mother tongue.
2.8.2. Intralingual errors

These types of error are caused by the target language (TL) itself. Apart from resort to L1 transfer, the learners in ignorance of a TL from any level and any class do either of two things: either they can set about learning the needed item, engaging their learning strategies, or they can try to fill the gap by resorting to communication strategies. Learning strategies are used for code breaking while communication strategies are encoding and decoding strategies. Both types of strategy can be the source of error (Sattayatham & Somechoen Hunsa, 2007). According to Richards (1974) ‘intralingual errors’ are “items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of mother tongue but generalization based on partial exposure to the target language. The second language, in this case, tries to derive the rules behind the data to which he has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother nor target language” (Richard, 1974:6).

Richards (1971) identified four types of intralingual errors as mentioned below:

2.8.2.1. Over-generalization errors

Jakobovits (as cited in Richards, 1974: 174) defines generalization or transfer as “the use of previously available strategies in new situations ... in second language learning ... some of these strategies will prove helpful in organizing the facts about the second language, but others, perhaps due to superficial similarities, will be misleading and inapplicable”.

Overgeneralization errors occur when a L2 learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures in the target language. For
example *he can sings*, and *he sings*. Corder (1973:289) regards overgeneralization as an inevitable process in learning the second language. George (1972), Schuman (1974), Jakobovits (1969) and Duškova (1969) observed the process of overgeneralization as strategy adopted by the L2 learner based on his limited experience of the target language.

### 2.8.2.2. Ignorance of rule restriction

These types of errors arise when the L2 learner fails to understand or observe the restrictions of the existing structures. In this case the learner shows tendency to apply rules of the target language to context where they do not apply. An example of this:

*The girl who I saw her.*

According to Richards (1974) some rule restriction errors may be accounted for in terms of analogy and other instances may result from the rote learning of rules. Analogy plays an important role in the misuse of prepositions.

### 2.8.2.3. Incomplete application of rules

These types of errors involve the occurrence of structure whose deviancy represents the degree of development of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances. Richards observed for example, systematic difficulty in the use of declarative word order in questions. According to Richard (1971), these errors frequently come about due to the faulty presentation of these structures either in the teaching process or in inappropriate materials (MacDonald, 2003:113).

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2.8.2.4. False concepts hypothesized

According to Richards (1970) this type of errors is a class of developmental errors which derive from fault comprehension of distinctions in the target language. These errors are attributed to poor gradation of teaching items. For example the use of ‘was’ as a marker of past tense in ‘one day it was happened’. Krashen (1976) gives the same four categories given by Richard (1970).

Larsen- Freeman and Long (as cited in MacDonald, 2003:108-109) in their summary of intralingual errors, identify four main types of sources of errors:

1. Overgeneralization (Richards, 1974) which is caused by the learners’ failure to observe the boundaries of a rule as in *I wonder where you are going. The speaker has probably overgeneralized the rule of subject-verb inversion and applied it to an embedded WH- question.

2. Simplification (George, 1972) where, for example a learner fails to add a plural marker to a noun when preceded by a cardinal number more than one such: *I studied English for two year . It has also been named ‘redundancy reduction’ since the number already signals plurality and therefore no information is really lost.

3. Communicative – based errors (Selinker, 1972) usually derived from the learners’ attempts to communicate a particular form or structure by using certain strategies which may result in error although the communication has been successful as when a learner uses *airball for balloon.
4. Induced errors (Stenson, 1974), are caused by the incorrect sequencing or presentation of an item in such a way as to create confusion in the learners’ IL grammar. The example given: *She cried as if the baby cries* instead of ‘she cries like a baby’, owing to the teacher defining ‘as if’ meaning ‘like’ without explaining the linguistic context for its correct usage.

In fact both Richards and Dulay and Burt put greater emphasis on intralingual cause of errors from a more mentalist creative – construction point of view as opposed to the association made in the 70s of the habit formation behaviorist account of L2 acquisition with its stress on the negative effect of language transfer. At present there is a somewhat more balanced view that recognizes that interference tends to co-occur with other causes of error which are attributed the confusion and false hypotheses formulated by the learner as regards to the forms and structure of the TL system itself (MacDonald, 2003).

Cowan (2008) identifies the four sources of grammatical errors made by the L2 learners:

1. **Performance errors**

   This type involves some ungrammatical sentences produced by English learners that may be caused by the same factors that contribute to errors made by native speakers of English. In other words, it is a processing mistake that occurs while a language learner or a native speaker is in the act of speaking or writing. Consider the following example where the verb has a plural form even though the subject is singular:
No matter where you live, the great taste of your favorite flavor are just around the corner.

2. Imperfect learning errors

This type occurs when English learners simply have not internalized a rule and/ or the restrictions that apply to that rule. For example a learner who produces a sentence such as:

*Does he goes to school every day?

This wrong question shows that the learner has probably not mastered the rules forming English yes/ no questions.

3. Overgeneralization

This type occurs when a learner applies a grammar rule to forms that do not take. For example:

*Mom made bill to go to the party.

4. Influence of the Native Language errors

This type of errors involves many of ungrammatical sentences that English language learners produce resulting from the transferring of grammar rules from their native language to English. For example, the Spanish verb, which is the closet equivalent to the English modal verb “can”, is followed by the infinite form “ir” (to go) as shown below:

Podemos ir en taxi

We can to go in taxi

“We can go by taxi”

*We can to go by taxi
Verma and Krishnaswamy (1989) consider that the mistakes made in the second language learning are often due to:

1. The gravitational pull of the first language/mother tongue;
2. Internal analogy and overgeneralization
3. Pronunciation according to spelling
4. Bad teaching
5. Exposure to the non-standard variety used outside the classroom
6. The attitudes of community, those in power, the policy of government and other factors,
7. Failure to understand the nature of the second language
8. Lack of adequate vocabulary; and
9. The cultural gap between the two systems.

According to Faerch et al. (1984) learners' errors are due to internal and external factors. According to them the learner's motivation, the capacity he has for studying L2 and his attitude to the target language and culture are theclearest instances of the internal factors that affect the process of second language learning and may lead students to commit errors which are attributed to such internal factors. On the other hand, the teaching or teaching materials are examples of external factors that cause induced errors i.e. the teacher, the syllabus and methods sometimes may lead the learners to commit errors of various types. Therefore, these errors are, for instance, due to over-emphasis on fluency to the detriment of form, confusion as result of providing the
learners with too much or wrong information e.g. when many synonyms are given for a concept out of its context.

2.9. Pedagogical Significance of Learner’s Errors

The significance of second language learners’ errors have been stressed in the field of error analysis by many scholars. Pit Corder (1967:167) in his influential article “The Significance of Learners’ Errors” asserts this significance by stating:

They are significant in three different ways. First to the teacher, in that they tell him, if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and, consequently, what remains for him to learn. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language. Thirdly, they are indispensable to the learner himself, because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn. It is a way the learner has of testing his hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning.

The errors then are an inevitable part of the process of language acquisition. Therefore, the systematic study of learners’ errors is very significant in the field of second language learning. It gives a guideline to the teacher and syllabus designer for designing a remedial course of the target language. Accordingly on the basis of this systematic study on the basis of the learners’ errors those concerned people may evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching materials and the teaching methods/technique they use. In this respect, Corder (1973) states:

Errors provide feedback, they tell the teacher something about the effectiveness of his teaching materials and his teaching techniques, and show him what parts of the syllabus he has been following have been
inadequately learned or taught and need further attention. They enable him to decide whether he can move on to the next item on the syllabus or whether he must devote more time to the item he has been working on. This is the day-to-day value of errors. But in terms of broader planning and with a new group of learners they provide the information for designing a remedial syllabus or a programme of reteaching (265).

Wilkins (1972) points out that in deciding what should be the linguistic input to language teaching materials, teachers and investigators should certainly examine and seek an explanation for the errors that are typically made by different groups of learners. Learners’ errors indicate the difficulties they encounter in learning L2.

Corder (1967) believes that with the most widespread hypothesis about how languages are learned, the study of errors takes on a new importance and will contribute to a verification or rejection of the new hypothesis which states that a human infant is born with an innate predisposition to acquire language; that he must be exposed to language for the acquisition process to start; that he possesses an internal mechanism of unknown nature which enables him from the limited data available to him to construct a grammar of a particular language. Jain (1974) claims that the realization that the second language learner’s errors are potentially important for:

1. The understanding of the process of second language acquisition, and consequently.

2. The planning of courses incorporating the psychology of second language learning.

Raimes (1991) argues that the study of the errors gives students the opportunity to recognize and fix their own errors. According to Ellis (1997),
there are three reasons for focusing on errors. First, they are conspicuous feature of learner language as they raise the important question of “why do learners make errors?” Second, it is useful for teachers to know what errors learners make. Third, it is possible that making errors may help learners to learn when they self-correct the errors they make. If the mistakes and errors of language learners in contrasting the new language system are analyzed carefully then teaching procedure can be assessed in the light of what is expected to be accomplished in the class room (Lightbawand and Spada, 1999, cited, Erdoğan, n.d.).

From the above discussed insight, it can be seen that the errors have the function of showing that the actual learning is taking place instead of mere imitation, and the function of indicating the learner’s progress and strategies in language learning, etc. The attitudes toward error have changed “over the past three decades . . . from preventing errors to learning from (them)” (Hendrickson, 1980:156); learning from errors has become a significant purpose of error analysis (Huang, 1987:4).

2.10. Previous EA Studies Conducted on Arab EFL Learners

Arabic-speaking learners of English as a foreign language encounter serious difficulties at various levels of English language i.e. phonological, morphological, semantic and syntactic. These difficulties or problems are indicated by the EFL Arab learners’ numerous errors which seem to be persistent regardless of the education level or period of time spent in learning.
English. This may be due to the huge differences between English and Arabic structures. To shed light on the nature of these difficulties facing Arab EFL learners, a number of studies have been conducted on Arab learners of English speaking various dialects of Arabic language. In this section we will review some of these studies and briefly comment on their contributions to our understanding of the nature of the grammatical difficulties facing these particular learners.

To begin with, Willcot (1972) analyzed the errors of sixteen native speakers of Arabic based on a final examination in a history course at the University of Texas at Austin. The ultimate goal of this study was to develop appropriate teaching materials, based on the unique problems which native speakers of Arabic have with English syntax.

Scott and Tucker (1974) conducted a study to examine the proficiency of 22 native speakers of Arabic enrolled in the intensive English course at the American University in Beirut. The objective of this study was to provide explanation of the written as well as the oral errors and establish a hierarchy of the areas of difficulty on the basis of the frequency of errors of these learners. The data was collected by taking written and oral samples at the beginning and end of the term. To elicit the written production, the subjects were shown three pictures and were asked to write three or four sentences describing these pictures. The authors’ attention was focused on the syntactic errors produced by the learners. The results showed that verbs, prepositions, articles, and relative clauses were the areas where the students most often deviated from
Standard English. Errors in the use of the auxiliary and the copula were the most frequent errors which included redundant use, omission, and substitution and also errors of tense and number. Through comparing oral and written errors, Scott and Tucker found that verbal errors were more than written ones. They found the Arabic interference quite visible in the students' frequent omission of auxiliary and the copula, in prepositions and articles errors and in their repetition of subjects and objects.

Al-Sindy (1994) conducted a study with purpose to trace patterns of first language (Arabic) and target language (English) interference in the syntactic errors of English compositions written by Saudi freshman students in English. The author collected the written compositions of forty subjects. To elicit the data the subjects were asked to write on one of two topics:

1. The Big Surprise
2. The Best Advice

The subjects were examined to identify the syntactic inter/intralingual interference errors in writing English as foreign language (EFL). The analysis of the data showed that the interlingual were higher than intralingual ones. The researcher observed that the misuse of preposition is the most frequent error to occur in the English of the Saudi learners; the misuse of tense comes second, the misuse of copula and auxiliaries comes third, and the misuse of the indefinite and definite articles comes fourth.

Obeidat (1986) conducted a study aimed at finding out whether or not errors made by Jordanian learners of English bear any resemblance to those
made by other Arab EFL learners. The data for this study have been collected from written compositions of Jordanian students attending Yarmouk University. The population was 120 English major students. According to him, inherent problems of writing in Arabic are transferred into English. This problem persists even at the university level. He concluded that Jordanian EFL learners as other Arab EFL learners resort to Arabic which is not in a better position than English.

Tushyeh and Hamdallah (1993) point out that English prepositions constitute the most problematic area for Arab EFL learners because Arabic prepositions are fewer in number than English and their usage differs. The classification of errors made include prepositions omission, preposition substitution, and the redundant use of English prepositions.

Al-mekhlafi (1999) conducted a study on the first and fourth students of English at Sana’a University. His study aimed at examining the ability of EFL learners enrolled at these levels to correctly form English questions. The analysis of the written and the oral data indicated that questions formation was a problematic for these learners. He concluded that though the level four (final) learners performed better than level one learners it seems that this problem still persists in some learners’ performance.

Naser (1983) predicts the problems which Arab EFL learners were likely to face when learning English. He points out that prepositions, the past tense and past participle of irregular verbs and the articles pose problems for
these learners. According to him the EFL Arab learners’ problems with English prepositions’ problems are attributed to three reasons:

The first reason is that an Arabic preposition is equivalent to several English prepositions in meaning. Second, Arabic equivalents of some English have entirely different meanings and usages in the Arabic language. Third, some English prepositions overlap in meaning. This overlapping in meaning and usages may confuse native speaker of English also and create obstructions to learners of English as second language.

Habash (1982) found that errors in English prepositions made by Arab EFL learners were caused by two main factors interference from Arabic and other learning problems. Significantly more errors were made due to interference from Arabic than due to other learning problems. According to her this is because students find more difficulty in learning English patterns that are similar to, but in some way different from, their own language than they do with learning patterns that are completely different, adding that the key to this problem is the fact that students always resort to literal translation before they from English patterns. In other words, they translate the English into Arabic and then the Arabic back into English. Therefore, errors made by them due to Arabic interference occur more frequently than those made by them due to other learning problems.

Al-Muarik (1982) examined the written errors and learning strategies of preparatory and secondary school students of English in Saudi Arabia. The study was based on the translation of 36 Arabic sentences into English by the
students. The types of structures examined were: Wh-questions, passive and negatives. Students were also asked to write composition to check their command of tense usage. Errors were categorized and the frequency and sources of errors were explained. Al-Muarik found that a low percentage of errors was due to L1 interference, and strategies such as overgeneralization, simplification, and avoidance were employed by the students (cited in Obeidat, 1986:38).

2.11. Second Language Acquisition

The growth of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) field has continued since the 1960s. Hatch (1978) compiled the list of SLA studies which shows that before (1965) there were seven studies on SLA. It shows also that there are scores of studies after that. Since 1978 there have been hundreds more studies counted (Larsen-freeman & long, 1991). Moreover, 24 articles on SLA published in the TESOL Quarterly in the two years 1979-1980 (Raimes. 1983).

This brief report shows how the field of SLA has grown and how much literature is there (Al-sindy, 1994). Richards, Platt, & Weber, (1985) define second language acquisition as follows:

The process by which people develop proficiency in second or foreign language. The term 'second language acquisition' has been used particularly in the USA by researchers interested in: (a) longitudinal studies and case studies of the of syntax and phonology in second and foreign language learners, (b) analysis of the spoken word and written discourse of second and foreign language barriers, and (c) the study of other aspects of language development (cited by Al-sindy, 1994:24)
Krishnaswamy, S.K Verma and M. Nagarajan (1992) point out that the focus of research in second language acquisition has shifted from the view that language learning involves a set of habits to the view that it involves the creative construction of a grammar, from examining the influence of the mother tongue to finding parallels between first and second language acquisition. They further classify the studies on second language acquisition into the following types:

(a) Those pertaining to the influence of the first on the second language:
This type involves studies that have been conducted from the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis point of view which emphasizes the gravitational pull of the mother tongue on the processes involved in learning a second language: phonological, syntactic and semantic. The understanding that the learning of a language is just learning a set of linguistic habits affects this type or group of L2 learning and led to the comparison of the linguistic systems of the first and second languages. Hence, the errors of L2 learners attributed to the difference between the two systems.

(b) Those pertaining to mental representations:
The generativists consider language acquisition as a creative process guided by innate, universal mechanisms. This view is a reaction against the view that L1 is the primary influence on L2. Therefore, the focus shifted to errors that could not be on the basis of first language. Their view is that L2 learners make errors just as the children do when acquiring their mother tongue.
In his recent works Chomsky (1980, 1981) developed an alternative to the markedness hypothesis. According to Chomsky's works, the child task is presumed to be that of constructing a grammar of the native language based on the incomplete and somewhat misleading data to which (s) he is exposed. By the innate principles of Universal Grammar (U.G) this task is made possible which define the class of possible human language and, therefore, constrain the range of hypotheses that a child can entertain about the structure of its language. U.G. makes available to the child a set of parameters along with knowledge of possible setting of those parameters; the child presumably starts out with the unmarked value for each parameter and resets the parameter only when confronted by data in compatible with unmarked setting. Thus, the description of grammars in terms of parameter setting makes an explicit or organic connection between developmental factors in language acquisition and distributional typological properties of language.

Ellis (1994) identifies a number of different areas of SLA that have been investigated. In the first area the description of the characteristics of learner language is concerned; this description provides the researcher with significant information about how language acquisition takes place. The attention here is concerted on four aspects of the learner such as (1) errors (2) acquisition orders and developmental sequences (3) variability (4) pragmatic features relating to the way languages is used in context for communication purposes. The second area concerns learner external factors relating to the social context of
acquisition and to the input and interaction which the learner experiences. The third area which Ellis identifies concerns how acquisition takes place and how learners use their resources in communication i.e. the learner-internal mechanisms which are mental and largely hidden from view, although not necessarily completely unconscious. They relate to (1) the transfer of knowledge from the learner's L1, (2) the universal processes involved in converting input into intake and restricting existing L2 knowledge systems (3) the utilization of innate knowledge of *linguistic universal*, and (4) the process for using L2 knowledge in performance, in particular those involved in dealing with problems of communication. Thus, the study of learner external factors and learner-internal factors mechanisms constitutes an attempt to explain how L2 acquisition takes place. Also this area is concerned with the individual learner differences and what causes them. The learners differ with regard to factors such as motivation and aptitude, and also in the use of various learning strategies such as inferencing and self-monitoring for obtaining input and for learning from it. Therefore, the study of these general factors and learner strategies helps to explain why some learners learn more rapidly than those and why they reach higher level of proficiency.

Jha (2006) identifies and understands the aim of second language acquisition theories and the role of second language research as follows:

a. Second language research may be described as a search for an appropriate level for description of the learners systems of the rules. The main goal is
description, i.e. characterizations of the linguistic categories which constitute the learners interlanguage at any point of development.

b. A reference is made to two types of second language acquisition - assembly mechanism and power mechanism. The difference is important because some theories focus on how while others on why. It is only comprehensive theory that would explain both assembly mechanism and power mechanism.

c. Two approaches to the theory of building are mentioned:

   (i) Theory then Research

   (ii) Research then Theory

d. One has to look at discourse in order to be able to study how language learning evolves out of the strategies used to carry on conversation. The types of conversation depend on who the learner is child or adult.

e. It is both pertinent and useful to consider the kinds of classroom interaction.

Three basic kinds of pedagogic goals are:

   (i) Core goal: it points to the explicit pedagogic purpose of the classroom.

   (ii) Framework: it focuses on the organization requirement of the lesson

   (iii) Social goal: it involves the use of language for more than personal purpose (in Tyagi, 2006:159 – 161).

Corder (1981) makes a distinction between the process of acquiring the mother tongue and the learning of a second language. According to him the mother
tongue is inevitable whereas there is no such inevitability about the learning of a second; that the learning of the mother tongue is part of the whole maturational process of the child, while learning a second language normally begins only after the maturational process is largely complete; that the infants start with no overt language behavior, while in the case of second language learner such behavior, of course exists that the motivation for language learning a first language is quite different from that for learning a second language. In spite it has been proposed that the strategies of learning a first and second language may be the same, Corder also posit a distinction between the two. He supposes that the first language learner has an infinite number of hypotheses about the nature of the language he is learning which must be tested, but he believes that the task of the second language learner is a simpler one because the only one hypotheses he has to test are: ‘Are the systems of the new language the same or different from those of the language he knows? In the case if they are different, what is their nature? According to him evidence for this is that a large number of his errors are related to the system of his mother tongue which are attributed to interference from the habits of the mother tongue.

Salim (1993) points out that the learning a second language differs in many respects from the acquisition of the mother tongue. Firstly, the conditions under which the acquisition and learning take place are different. Language acquisition takes place in childhood when the child grows physically and mentally while language learning occurs at a later stage after the first language
or mother tongue has been mastered. Secondly, the motivation for the processes of acquisition and learning also differs. Language acquisition comes quite “naturally”, whereas language learning takes place “as result of the discovery of its practical utility”. Thirdly, the learning also differs from language acquisition on the basis of data. A child acquiring his mother tongue is exposed to a different kind of data which are unorganized, ungraded and unsystematic. The data is not carefully planned or logically ordered and cannot be treated as “teaching syllabus”. Fourthly, the second learning in most cases takes place formally i.e. through formal instruction materials etc, while first language acquisition takes place in informal settings.
Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1. Introduction
3.2. Restatement of the Research Questions
3.3. Faculty of Education, Shabwah
3.4. Faculty of sciences, Arts and Education, Aden
3.5. Participants
3.6. Instrument of Data Collection
3.7. Procedure
3.1. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher describes in detail the methodology chosen for this comparative study. Therefore, the context of the study which is Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, the participants, instrument of the data collection and the procedure was discussed elaborately.

3.2. Restatement of the research questions

Since the discussion of the methodology from the above different aspects, helps in providing some answers of the research questions it is necessary, therefore, to restate these questions:

1. Is there any statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2?

2. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled in the second semester at the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Aden university have difficulty in using of the selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case?

3. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled in the sixth semester at the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, Aden university have difficulty in using of the
selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case?

4. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled at the above mentioned English departments receive certain interference when using the selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case from their mother tongue (Arabic) or from the target language (English)? If yes which type is more frequent “interlingual errors” or “intralingual errors”?

3.3. Faculty of Education, Shabwah

Faculty of Education, Shabwah is one of many faculties which Aden university has which are spread in different cities and rural areas of the provinces nearby Aden in addition to those faculties that are located in Aden city. It was founded in 1993 with five departments awarding first diploma, then in 2002 it moved to the bachelor course. It is located in Ataq town about 350 KMs from Aden city. The aim of this faculty is to graduate qualified teachers at various needed scientific specializations as well as providing training programs for teachers who are involved in the field of teaching but have not yet got their B.A degrees.
3.4. Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden

This faculty was established in 1970 with the help of UNESCO. It is considered the central faculty of Aden University which concerns with sciences, arts and education. The purpose of its establishment was to prepare teachers for the two phases of education: preparatory and secondary schools. In the beginning it had only forty students, but the number of students who were enrolled at different departments has reached to 3707 in 2008.

This faculty awards B.A, MSc, MEd, and higher diplomas in more than 5 disciplines. The mission of this faculty is also to provide qualified teachers, encourage academic and scientific research and studies to improve the quality of education, and to fulfill the role of the faculty in the process of progress and enlightenment of the local community. The above two mentioned faculties belonged to Aden University. As stated in the Aden University Undergraduate Program Catalog, the English curriculum for B.ED degree course (English major) has the following objectives:

1. To give students a good knowledge of English

2. To train them in the art of the pedagogy of English, especially at school level.

3. To improve and extend their range of grammatical competence.

4. To help them to communicate efficiently in English.

5. To develop their abilities to write effectively for an intended purpose; as well as to raise their awareness of the factions of writing.
According to the new teaching plan followed since the session 2006/2007 in the departments of English at Aden University, a copy of it was given to the researcher by the head of the English department, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Dr. Mohammed Salem Masroor (in August 2008). This new plan requires from each student for obtaining a bachelor degree to attend 130 credit hours of coursework, including 10 credit hours as university requirement, 30 credit hours as faculty requirement, and 90 credit hours as English major requirement. Among English major requirement three grammar courses are included: Essentials of Grammar I (El 21), Essentials of English Grammar II (E 122), and Communicative Grammar (E 211). These courses should be taken by the students of each English department at Aden University in accordance with the order mentioned in the University Catalogue. Therefore, Essentials of English Grammar I (E121) is given to all students before Essentials of English Grammar II (E 122) and the latter is taken by the students before Communicative Grammar (E 211). This means, that Essentials of Grammar I (E121) and), Essentials of English Grammar II (E 122) and Communicative Grammar (E 211) are respectively given to the students of first semester, second semester and third semester.

3.5. Participants

The participants of this comparative study belong to the same institution, Aden University. They were 80 male students who were native speakers of Arabic and share the same language learning background which
consists of formal instruction for six years in one English subject i.e. they study
English as a foreign language subject for six years prior to their joining into the
college. In these six years they were given four classes per week.

However, it is believed that the standard of English of students coming
from rural areas is lower than that of those who come from urban areas. It is
also believed that the reason for this difference in competence is due to the fact
that in the capital and the cities one often finds more qualified and better
teachers, better buildings and more exposure to English by its native speakers.
These native speakers usually are employees, teachers, tourists etc. However, at
Aden University no student is admitted into any of its English departments as
an undergraduate student unless he/she passes an entrance exam prepared and
administered by the teachers of each department annually.

It is usually every year the case that a number of students ranged from
100 to 150 are selected to be enrolled in the undergraduate program at each
department. The selection of these students is based on their highest scores in
the given entrance exam. The male subjects in this study were selected due to
their very high ratio in comparison with their female counterparts in the
department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah. This selection helped
to eliminate the gender as a possible intervening variable.

The participants were divided into two groups: students of group one
(SG1) and students of group two (SG2). The students of SG1 consisted of forty
male freshmen enrolled in the second semester at the department of English,
Faculty of Education, Shabwah (rural). The students of this group come from
different rural districts of Shabwah province. The Students of SG2 consisted also of forty male students who were enrolled in the sixth semester in the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden (urban).

The test was given to the whole class of each group then all the subjects of the two groups were selected randomly (using simple random sampling method). The subjects’ ages ranged from 19 to 30. It should also be pointed out that fortunately, the subjects in both groups answered the questions of the test actively and carefully regardless of whether they answered correctly or not. They were truly cooperative participants.

However, it is believed that such EFL Arab learners who are enrolled in the undergraduate program mostly have very little competence in English. This is probably because they are high – schools leavers and their performance in the four language skills is generally poor reflecting the kind of English teaching they had received in their study before joining an undergraduate program.

3.6. Instrument of Data Collection

To collect data from the students of the two groups majoring in English enrolled in the second semester, Faculty of Education, Shabwah and in the sixth semester, at the faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, Aden University, a test was designed as an instrument to obtain these data.

The test consists of eight sections. This test was prepared by the researcher mainly from the books of grammar prescribed to undergraduate students in their curriculum at Aden University. The first section of the test is
meant to examine the subjects’ ability in the usage of the selected English prepositions. It consisted of seventy five statements with blank spaces to be filled with the correct English preposition and the subjects were asked to choose the correct answer to each statement among a number of optional responses which include all the possible correct and incorrect responses. Section two designed to examine the subjects’ ability to use the English articles. It consists of forty six blanks and the students were asked to fill the blanks with the appropriate English articles. Section three aims at examining the subjects’ ability to form the English plural. In this section the subjects were given forty four English singular nouns and were asked to change each one of them into the plural. Section four aims at examining the students’ ability in dealing with the past and past participle forms of eighty irregular verbs. The simple forms of these verbs were given to the students and were asked to write the past and past participle form of each verb. Section five deals English subject verb agreement. It consists of thirty two statements including thirty two blanks. The subjects were asked to use the appropriate copula or the auxiliary verb “to have”. Section six aims at examining the students’ ability in using English conjunctions. It consists of thirty statements and the students were asked to choose the appropriate conjunction. Section seven aims at examining the subjects’ ability in using the English relative pronouns. This section consists twenty statements and the subjects were asked to fill the blanks using the appropriate relative pronoun. Section eight which is the last section of the test, deals with the English genitive case. Twenty nine statements were
prepared aiming at examining the subjects’ ability to use the English genitive case. The subjects were asked to rewrite the separated phrases using the appropriate genitive marker.

Each one of the aforementioned sections of the test was subdivided into two parts “A” and “B”. Part “A” was devoted to collecting some personal information about the learners such as age, gender, region (rural or urban), name of the city/town/province, level and name of the faculty, while part “B” included the questions for each component of grammar investigated by this study.

In the months November, December and January 2008 the test was given to a homogeneous group which consisted of ten EFL Arab learners who were doing their B.A at the department of English, Aligarh Muslim University. These students were linguistically competent in Arabic and English. They all recommended the appropriateness of the test to examine the EFL Arab learners’ ability in using the aforementioned components of grammar.

However, after checking the students’ answers the researcher and his supervisor found some problems which were emerged from the fact that some statements have more than one answer. For example six statements specifically in the section of the relative pronouns were found that each one of them has more than one answer. These statements are:

1. The man (who/ that) lives next door is very friendly.
2. An architect is someone (who/ that) designs buildings.
3. Where are the eggs (that/ which) were in the fridge.
4. The man (whom/ who) I wanted to see was away on holiday.

5. You have an income (that/ which) should keep you in luxury for the remainder of your days.

6. There are a few points (which/ that) will require clearing up.

(The expected answers are mentioned in parenthesis). Therefore the above statements were replaced by other valid statements. After this modification on the test and before giving it to the subjects the researcher along with three teachers from the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, gave the test to ten undergraduate students for checking its validity. They all recommended that test was valid and reliable data collection instrument for the purpose of examining students' ability in usage the previously stated components.

3.7. Procedure

The procedure of this study can be depicted in a number of phases. In the first phase, the eight sections of the test were given in February and March 2009 to the whole class of EFL undergraduate Arab learners enrolled in the second semester, department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah. In the second phase, that was in the months of April and May of the same year where the test was given also to the whole class of EFL undergraduate Arab learners enrolled in the sixth semester, department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden. All this was done in the presence of the researcher so as to clarify things that were unclear to the participants.
Moreover, the subjects of this study were instructed in English and Arabic to read the statements carefully and then answer appropriately. Therefore, the researcher made sure that they were clearly aware of what they were asked to do or of what was required from them to answer the test.

The time allotted to each section of the test was two complete hours so they were given enough time. Further, they were given gaps of 4 to 6 days between a section of the test and another. In the third phase, forty male students were selected randomly (using simple random sampling method) from the second semester students of the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah as the students of group one (SG1) and in the same way forty male students were selected from the sixth semester students of the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden as the students of group two (SG2). In the fourth phase, the errors made by subjects of SG1 and SG2 in the use of the aforementioned grammar aspects were identified and counted separately.

In the fifth phase, a t-Test analysis of errors was tabulated at 0.05 level of significance for the difficulties studied in the use of the selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary "to have" (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case to test the major difference. Then, a comparative analysis of errors between SG1 and SG2 was made.
The study passed through the above phases in order to do a comparison to test the nine null hypotheses which denied the existence of any statistical significant difference in the error rate between students of SG1 and students of SG2 in the usage of previously mentioned components of grammar. These five phases also helped in answering the first three questions of the study.

Finally, the researcher classified the errors made by both groups into two types, this was done in order to test the tenth hypothesis of the study which denied any statistical significant difference between the errors which were made by the subjects due to interlingual sources and those were made by them due to intralingual sources of errors as well as answer the last question of the study. In this classification the errors were classified into two subcategories i.e. interlingual errors and intralingual errors. The researcher used two markers of different colors, for example, the red color marker used for highlighting the interlingual errors, while yellow color used for highlighting the intralingual errors. This classification enabled the researcher to trace the source of an error as whether it was an interlingual interference error resulting from the mother tongue of the learners or an intralingual interference error resulting from intralingual (developmental) sources. Accordingly, explanations of the examples of the erroneous uses of the aforementioned components of language were also provided. To determine if there was statistical significance difference between these two types of errors the t-Test analysis at 0.05 level of significance was also used.
Chapter 4

Analysis of the data

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4.10. Analysis of Interlingual and Intralingual Errors
4.10.1. Null hypothesis Ten
4.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide the analysis of the data and bring out the findings of the study. The performance of SG1 and SG2 is analyzed in details. The findings of this study are based on results of a test given to SG1 and SG2. The test aimed at examining the participants’ ability in the use of the English prepositions, articles, plural formation rules, the past and past participle forms of irregular verbs, copula, the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns and the English genitive case.

The t-Test analysis of errors at 0.05 level of significance was tabulated for each component in this study and for interlingual and intralingual errors as well. This chapter also discusses sample of the errors with a view to providing the possible explanations of their causes.

4.2. Analysis of the Prepositions

The English prepositions system constitutes one of the most areas of difficulty for EFL Arab learners, where the learners’ mother tongue interference is the main cause of their errors. The errors identified in the use of the selected English prepositions are classified into the following categories:

Wrong use of prepositions denoting time
Wrong use of prepositions denoting space
Wrong use of miscellaneous prepositions
4.2.1. Null Hypothesis One

The first null hypothesis of this study stated that, when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the selected prepositions, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2. The results of the test revealed that no student of SG1 and SG2 made zero errors. The minimum number of errors among students of SG1 was thirty nine errors made by only one student, while it was twenty five errors among students of SG2 made by two students. Thirty nine students of SG1 made forty one errors or more, while thirty eight students of SG2 made thirty two errors or more.

The total number of question given to each group was three thousands. Students of SG1 made two thousands two hundred sixty six errors that is 75.53 percent, and students of students SG2 made one thousand nine hundred eighty one errors that is 66.03 percent. This high frequency of errors made by both groups indicates the tremendous difficulty that these learners have in dealing with the English prepositions.

In spite of the t-Test results which indicated that there was a significant difference in the performance of the two groups in the usage of prepositions in favor of the students of group two, this performance was unsatisfactory. The results of the t-Test between the two groups showed that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 3.677 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use of the selected English prepositions. Therefore, the first research hypothesis which stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the selected prepositions,
there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SGI and SG2” was rejected since it was concluded that there existed a significant difference between the two groups (see table 1, p. 125). Thus, keeping in mind the high rate of errors, 75.53 for SGI and 66.03 for SG2, it was evident that the performance of the two groups was poor and that SGI and SG2 have a great difficulty in dealing with English prepositions.

For getting of a better understanding of the causes of errors and difficulties that Arab EFL learners encounter in learning the use of English prepositions, it is important to provide a brief explanation of the differences between the Arabic and the English prepositions in general. Quirk (1985:673) states “a preposition expresses a relation between two entities, one being that represented by the prepositional complement”. A preposition in English forms a link between one element and its object to show the relation between the two. It is a particle or word equivalent. In other words, an English preposition may connect a noun and another grammatically or noun to noun phrase, a verb to a noun, a noun to adjective i.e. one part of speech with another in different cases as in the following:

1. Preposition is used to connect a noun and pronoun, for example (the pen is with her).
2. A verb and a noun, for example (he writes with a pen).
3. A verb and pronoun, for example (look at him).
4. An adjective and noun, for example (the girls were good at swimming).
5. Adverb and noun, for example (his father asked him to sit under the tree)

6. Prepositional phrases which have adverbial function, for example (leave at seven o’clock)

7. Adjectival function, for example (the leaving at six o’clock)

8. Nominal function, for example (wait for Hussam)

English prepositions also suggest position, direction and source. Arabic prepositions, on the other hand, have a limited number; therefore, they are widely used to perform a number of semantic or syntactic functions. In terms of relating one element of a sentence to its object, these functions are similar to those of English prepositions.

Similarly, Arabic prepositions suggest position, direction and time. Arabic prepositions are called “huruf al-jarr”, which are characterized as inseparable and/or separable prepositions that stand alone. An inseparable preposition consists of a letter attached to the beginning of the word. As we said earlier in Arabic, prepositions are few in number, while in English are more. Moreover, there are no complex prepositions in Arabic which may be subdivided into two or three word sequences such as “next to”, “by means of”, “on behave of” “in front of” etc. All prepositions in Arabic are simple prepositions. Naser (1983) introduces the most important Arabic prepositions and their meanings:

- Bi “in” “at” “on” “with” “by” “by means of”
- bayna “between” “among” “amidst”
- ba'fda “then” “thereupon” “afterwards” “later”
According to Ryding (2005) Arabic true prepositions are few in number but they are of great frequency and they each have a wide range of meanings. Therefore, these Arabic prepositions mentioned above indicate that each Arabic preposition has
several equivalents in English. It has also only one meaning and supposed to
cover several English prepositions and their various usages.

The following samples of incorrect selection of English prepositions that
were made by the two groups and their explanations are presented below:

4.2.3. Errors with prepositions denoting time

a. using "in" instead of "on" or "at"

1. *I got there in (at) about 8 o’clock.

2. *The submarine caught fire in (on) Friday morning.

3. *The typist is away in (on) holiday this week.

4. *Every Christian went to church in (on) Christmas day.

5. *Who would see smoke in (at) night time?

6. *In the Arab world girls in (at) the age of fifteen get married.

In the above sentences, the incorrect use of “in” instead of “at” or “on” is
caused by the interference of the Arabic preposition /fi:/, where students
substituted the preposition “at” and “on” by “in” translating directly from their
native language (Arabic). In Arabic, the preposition /fi:/ corresponds to “in”
“at”, “on” and “during” to denote time. In other words, the Arabic preposition
/fi:/ is realized by more than one preposition in English to denote time.
Consequently, the Arabic preposition /fi:/ and its several English equivalents
caused the error of substitution in all the above examples.

Therefore, these errors are interlingual errors due to the learners’ (MTI).
b. Using “at” instead of “on”, “in”, or “during”

7. *The submarine caught fire at (on) Friday morning.

8. *We expected a great deal at (in) the sixties.

9. *We met a lot of interesting people at (during) our holiday.

10. *The typist is away at (on) holiday this week.


12. *It’s terribly good of you to turn out at (on) a night like this.

13. *There was another important opening at (on) the same evening.

Here the students are expected to use “in” because it is the first equivalent of /fi:/ they learnt. But abnormally the students used “at” because it is also an equivalent to the Arabic /fi:/ and thus, students used “in” and “at” interchangeably in (a) and (b). Therefore, again the errors in the above sentences are definitely MT interference.

c. Using “to”, “about”, instead of “for”

14. *I have lived in this house to (for) six years.

15. *I have live in this house about (for) six years.

The incorrect use of prepositions in these two examples is also attributed to MT interference. Direct translation of sentence 14 has led to incorrect choice because the Arabic preposition /li:/ is equivalent to the English prepositions “to” and “for”.

The same is true of sentence (15) where the Arabic “nahwa” corresponds with the English preposition “about” and can be used in Arabic in such structure. As a result of translation from Arabic “about” is substituted for “for”. Therefore,
the errors in the above examples are definitely interlingual ones resulted from MTI.

d. Using “under”, “over” and “for” instead of “to”

16. *It is now ten minutes under (to) twelve.

17. *It is now ten minutes over (to) twelve.

18. *It is now ten minutes for (to) twelve.

The misuse of “under”, “over” and “for” in sentences 16, 17 and 18 instead of “to” is attributed to the students’ ignorance of L2 patterns that is the students have applied English patterns to contexts where they cannot be applied. It is our opinion considered that the students do not know the prepositions to be used with time. Therefore, the errors in these examples are definitely are due to intralingual sources.

4.2.4. Errors with Prepositions denoting space

a. Using “to” instead of “into”

19. *I opened the door and I went to (into) the room.

In sentence (19) the preposition (to) is not required in Arabic. In other words, in Arabic no preposition is needed in such context. Translation from Arabic is not necessary. Therefore, the misuse of the preposition “to” instead of “into” is attributed to a similarity with the English pattern “I went to the faculty or school”. However, this compound preposition conveys the completion of an action and used to indicate movement in the direction and arrival in an enclosed space as in “the paper went into the garbage can”. This is a case of
overgeneralization. Therefore the error in this sentence is definitely intralingual one resulted from intralingual source. This is supported by Habash (1982).

**f. Using “at” instead of “in”**

20. *Tom’s father is at (in) hospital.

According to Quirk (1985) with buildings both “at” and “in” can be used but, the difference between them is that “at” refers to a building in its institutional or function aspect, whereas “in” refers to it as a three dimensional structure. However, In this sentence, students substituted the preposition “in” by “at” because in Arabic, the preposition /fi:/ is used in such context, and since the Arabic preposition /fi:/ has two equivalents in English “at” and “in”, it seems that students used them interchangeably with the preposition /fi:/ which also means “at” and “in”. “In” is the correct preposition to be used here, because the patient supposed to be in a room of the hospital which is taken as an enclosed space. Thus, the error in the sentence (20) is definitely interlingual one which is due to MTI.

**g. Using “at”, “in” instead of “on”**

21. *Have you ever worked in (on) a farm?

22. *Have you ever worked at (on) a farm?

23. *I didn’t watch the match in (on) television.

24. *I didn’t watch the match at (on) television.

25. *There was a report in (on) the front page of the newspaper.

26. *There was a report at (on) the front page of the newspaper.
"On" expresses a relationship in place. "X on y" indicates that x covers some or the entire actual surfaces of y or is supported by it or attached to it. It is used with reference to a line "on the way" or two-dimensional areas as "on the farm" or "on the bus" (horizontal) and "on the TV" (vertical) (Close, 1977, p.156 cited in Habash, 1982:100). According to Habash (1982) in English "on" is used with the noun phrases "the farm" "the way" and "the TV", but a literal translation of the sentence indicates that ubiquitous Arabic preposition /fi:/ would be used in all the above examples. The interference here is from colloquial Arabic because in standard Arabic the preposition /ala/ which means "on", is to be used in the above examples. However, with space the Arabic single preposition /fi:/ is realized in English by three prepositions which are "in", "at" and "on". Therefore, the errors in the above sentences are interlingual ones resulted from direct translation from colloquial Arabic.

h. Using "over" instead of "on"

27.*Put the luggage over (on) the top of the care.

The use of the English preposition "over" instead of "on" is wrong in this context. According to quirk (1985) "over" indicates a direct vertical relationship or spatial proximity. It is the students' resorting to translation into Arabic that has led to the misuse of the preposition "over" because one the meanings of the Arabic preposition /ala/ is "over", which is usually used to express a relationship between two objects where one is above another but doesn't touch it'' (Habash,1982). Therefore, the error in the sentence (27) is an
interlingual one, which is due to the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI).

i. Using “on” instead of “over”

28. *She put a rug on (over) the sleeping child.

The misuse of the preposition “on” instead of “over” is due to MTI because the learners directly translated the above sentence into Arabic. Moreover, the Arabic preposition “ala” is realized in English by two prepositions that express place. These prepositions are “on” and “over”. Thus, the error in the above sentence is interlingual one.

j. Using “in” instead of “at”

29. *Tomorrow I’ll be in (at) work.

“At” is used to express the idea of a stationary relationship with an unspecified dimension as in “at the table” or “at work” (Habash, 1982, p.99). But literal translation into Arabic caused the error in this sentence because the English prepositions “in” and “at” are equivalents to the Arabic preposition /fi:/ Thus, this error is definitely interlingual one.

k. Using “beneath”, “below” instead of “under”

30. *The water flows beneath (under) the bridge.

31. *The water flows below (under) the bridge.

“Under” expresses a relationship between two objects where one is immediately lower than another object. It expresses a vertical spatial relationship. According to Quirk (1985) the difference between “under” and “below” is that “under” tends to indicate a direct vertical relationship, while
"below" may indicate lower level than. The misuse of the prepositions "beneath" and "below" instead of "under in sentences (30) and (31) is attributed to the learners' mother tongue interference (MTI) because the Arabic preposition "Tahta" is equivalent to the English prepositions "under", "below" and "beneath". Therefore, Arab EFL students are expected to use "under" as substitute for "below" and /or "beneath". Therefore, the errors in the above two sentences are interlingual ones.

4.2.5. Errors with miscellaneous prepositions

a. Using "with" instead of "of", "in", "to", "into".

32. *He has strong feeling with (of) jealousy.
33. She takes care with (of) her children.
34. He is married with (to) my cousin.
35. *She has always been nice with (to) me.
36. *Please speak with (in) English language.
37. *George Orwell's books have been translated with (into) many languages.

The misuse of the preposition "with" instead of "of" in sentences (32) and (33) and instead of "to" in sentences (34) and (35) and instead of "in" and "into" in sentences (36) and (37) occurred because the English preposition "with" corresponds the Arabic preposition "bi" which indicates the meaning of "of", "to", "in" and "into" in such occurrences. Therefore, the errors in all the above sentences are attributed to literal translation from Arabic, thus causing interlingual errors on account of MTI.
b. Using “from” instead of “of”

38. *It was kind from (of) you to help.

39. *The advantage from (of) living alone is that you can do what you like.

Literal translation has led to the misuse preposition “from” instead of “of” in sentences 38 and 39 because the English preposition “from” corresponds to the Arabic preposition “من”. This again indicates MTI.

c. Using “to” instead of “for”

40. *They left the house to go to (for) a walk after tea.

41. *I will never forgive them to (for) what they did.

The learner’s recoursing to translation into Arabic has led to the misuse of preposition “الى” instead of “بـ” in sentence (40) and (41) because the Arabic preposition “لي” corresponds to the English prepositions “for” and “to”. Another possible explanation is that the misuse of “الى” instead of “بـ” in sentence (40) is due to a similarity with the English patterns “they go to school” or “they go to the sea”, and “a walk after tea” was taken to be a place. This is a case of overgeneralization. However, the latter explanation is unreasonable because the subjects are at advanced level and supposed to understand the meaning of the phrase “a walk after tea”. Therefore, the errors in the sentence (40) and (41) are interlingual ones and attributed to the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI).

d. Using “with”, “in” instead of “before”.

42. *With (before) God I swear it.
43. *In (before) God I swear it.

The misuse of the prepositions “with “and “in” instead of “before” in the sentences (42) and (43) is attributed to MTI because the Arabic preposition “bi” corresponds the English prepositions “in”, “at” and “with” which is used in such occurrences in Arabic that is “with God I swear it” and “in God I swear it”. It should be mentioned here also that due to difference in meaning and usage, the students cannot use the English preposition “before” in the above examples because the Arabic equivalent for “before” is “qabla”, meaning prior to. This is supported also by Naser (1983).
TABLE-1: Shows t-Test analysis for inappropriate use of Propositions by SG₁ and SG₂

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate Value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Prepositions</td>
<td>SG₁</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>56.650</td>
<td>6.056</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SG₂</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>49.525</td>
<td>10.476</td>
<td>0.643</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>3.677</td>
<td>SIG.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3. Analysis of the use of Articles

One of the most difficult areas for ESL learners is the English article system, which includes the indefinite article “a (n),” the definite article “the” and the “zero” article. It is a very difficult structural element even for the most advanced non-native speakers of English (NNS) which causes errors even when other elements of the language seem to have been mastered (Ekiert, n.d).

4.3.1. Null Hypothesis two

With reference to the research null hypothesis two which states that “when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the English articles, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2”. The results of the test showed that no student of SG1 and SG2 made zero errors. The minimum number of errors was five errors among students of SG1 and two errors among students of SG2 which were made by one student of SG1 and two of SG2. Thirty nine students of SG1 made six errors or more, while thirty eight students of SG2 made six errors or more.

The total number of questions given to each group given was one thousand eight hundred forty. Students of SG1 made nine hundred sixteen errors and students of SG2 made five hundred thirty nine. The overall percentage of errors concerning the articles was 49.78 percent among SG1 and 29.29 percent among SG2. It indicated that the performance of SG2 was to some extent better than the performance of SG1. It also indicated that the students of both groups have difficulty in the use of the English articles.
The t-Test statistical analysis of the data indicated that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 5.885 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use of the English articles in favor of group two. Therefore, due to the positive and significant difference between the two groups, the second null hypothesis was rejected. (See Table 2, p. 136). However, due to the difficulty that the students of both groups have which was indicated clearly by the test results they did not know how to use the English articles correctly. First, for example, one thousand six hundred eighty correct uses of the definite article “the” were required in answering the test that is each student of SG1 and SG2 was supposed to use “the” twenty one times. But students of SG1 made three hundred seventy six errors and students of SG2 made two hundred thirty one errors. Second, one thousand six hundred correct uses of the indefinite article “a” were required in answering the test. Each student of SG1 and SG2 was supposed to use “a” twenty times. But students of SG1 made four hundred thirty five errors and students of SG2 made two hundred sixty two errors. Third, four hundred correct uses of the indefinite article “an” were required in answering the given test. Each student of SG1 and SG2 was supposed to use “an” five times. But students of SG1 made one hundred five errors and students of SG2 made forty six errors.

Fourth, no usage of the dash (−) was required in answering any of the given questions. In spite of this, students of SG1 used the dash (−) two hundred ten times, while it was used eighty two times by students of SG2.
In order to clarify the causes of errors and the difficulties that Arab EFL learners encounter in learning how to use the English articles, a brief explanation of differences between the Arabic and the English articles is necessary. In English there are basically two types of articles namely, the indefinite articles and definite articles. “A” or “an” are less definite, therefore, they are called the indefinite articles and used with non-specific nouns which are unknown to the speaker or hearer. For example:

I need a car. (any car)

Give me an apple. (any apple)

“The” on the other hand, clearly defines what follows it. Therefore, it is called the definite article. For example:

Give me the glass. (one particular glass)

I bought the book. (one particular book)

The indefinite articles “a” / “an” and the definite article “the” are in a mutually exclusive relation to each other. With singulars nouns, the indefinite articles “a/an” are basically used, while, the definite article “the” is used with both singular and plural.

In English “an” appears before a word beginning with a vowel sound (i.e. a, e, i, o, u). It is also used with words beginning with the mute sound (h). For example: an honest, an hour.

“A” appears before a word beginning with a consonant sound or a vowel sounded as a consonant. For example: a book, a university.

In English there are specific uses of the indefinite article as in the following:
a. It is used before a singular countable noun to indicate that there is more than one and to represent no specific noun, for example:

A tiger is an animal.

I saw a man.

b. It is used before a singular countable noun to represent a group or a class, for example,

A snake has no legs.

A palm tree is tall.

c. It is used when the noun is complement, for example:

Hussam is a great leader.

Siham is a beautiful woman.

Abdul rahman is a brave man.

d. It is used with professions, for example:

Hussam is an engineer.

Siham is a doctor.

Abdul rahman is an officer.

e. It is used when the noun is a class noun defined by an adjective, for example,

Hussam is becoming a tall boy.

f. It is used with numeral expressions, for example:

a million, a hundred, a dozen, a lot, etc.

g. It appears with expressions of speed, price, ratio, etc. as substitution for per, for example:
The speed limit is 40 miles an hour.

h. It is used with words, such as few and little, for example:

A few people visited Aligarh.

He had a little time to waste.

i. The indefinite article used also in exclamation with singular countable nouns, for example:

What a hot summer!

What a kind man!

What a nice girl!

On the other hand, the definite article “the” is used as follows:

a. It appears before singular and plural regardless of genders. For example,

The man    the men

The cat    the cats.

b. It appears before nouns of which there is only one i.e. unique nouns which refer to universe. For example:

The sun.

The moon.

c. It appears before a noun mentioned twice. For example,

He gave her a watch; you can see the watch on her hand.

d. It appears before a noun became definite after a clause or a phrase was added, such as,

The man we saw last night.
e. It appears before an adjective which represent a class of objects. For example:

The married men

The wild animals

f. It appears before abstract nouns that are used in a specific sense. For example,

The death of the king.

g. It is used with less universal names but also there being only one. For example:

The Qur'an.

The Bible.

h. It is also used with nouns of items of common knowledge among the people of a certain country. For example,

The flag.

The constitution.

In contrast with English, there is no indefinite article in Arabic. But the presence of what is known as “nuation” or “tanwin” at the end of a noun indicates indefiniteness. This means in Arabic the nouns must be pronounced with a final “un”, “an” or “in”. for example,

Qalamun (a pen)

Qalamin (a pen)
There is a definite article in Arabic, which is represented by the two letters “al”. It is a prefix attached to its noun. When it is prefixed to a noun, the noun becomes defined and loses its nunation. For example,

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{Alxubz} & \text{(the bread)} \\
\text{Alahram} & \text{(the pyramids)}
\end{array}
\]

Therefore, there are some uses of the Arabic articles which are different from the uses of the English articles. These uses are as follows:

a. Because there is no indefinite article in Arabic, instead nunation is used. For example,

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{Arabic} & \text{English} \\
\text{haḍa kitaːb-un} & \text{this is a book} \\
\text{haḍhi burtuqalat-un} & \text{this is an orange}
\end{array}
\]

b. The definite article is used before nouns and names of things and places because there is no capitalization in Arabic. For example,

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{al jumʕah} & \text{Friday} \\
\text{al- suʕudiyyah} & \text{Saudi}
\end{array}
\]

c. The Arabic definite article “al-” is used with plural nouns. For example

I like the apples (I like apples)

d. The Arabic definite article “al-” is used with abstract nouns. For example,

The love is blind (love is blind)

e. “al-” is used with plural generic nouns. For example,

The lions are wild animals (lions are wild animals)
The errors made by the two groups in the use of the English articles can be exemplified in the following:

**4.3.2. Omission of “a/an”**

44. *There was man talking to woman ....
45. *There is wind coming off the river.
46. *He bought the children puppy.
47. *I met the vicar, he was worried man.
48. *The FBI is conducting investigation.
49. *Jack got big nose.
50. *Socattrra is island.
51. *Tom is very nice person.
52. *He is university student.
53. *Old lady was calling to him.
54. *He returned after hour.
55. *I would like to be English teacher.
56. *We had to write story about our parents’” childhood.
57. ... *the story was about soldier and beautiful girl ....
58. *We drove under gloomy sky.

In all the above sentences students did not use the indefinite article “a/an” which should be there according to English structure. The absence of the indefinite article “a/an” is due to the fact that Arabic lacks the indefinite article and moreover Arabic does not require the use of articles in these contexts. Therefore, these errors are interlingual ones, attributed to the learners’ MTI.
4.3.3. Omission of “the”

59. *Only television programme he watches is the news.

60. *In April and May wind blows steady.

61. *Australia is the home of kangaroo.

62. *Mukalla is capital of Hadramout.

63. *The train leaves Cardiff at four in afternoon.

64. . . * but I think woman was foreign.

65. *Everybody left at end of the meeting.

66. . . *astonished waiter was now watching from the other end of the room.

67. *He was one of few who knew where to find me.

The absence of the definite article “the” in sentences (62), (63), (65) and (67) is due to MTI because Arabic does not require the use of the definite article “al” (the) in such contexts. Thus, these errors are interlingual ones. But the omission of the definite article “the” in sentences (59), (60), (61) and (66) cannot be attributed to the learners’ (MTI) because Arabic requires the definite article “al” (the) in these contexts. Therefore, these errors can be attributed to poor learning. It is the learners’ failure to learn the correct uses of the English articles or the learners deleted the definite article “the” due to their limited experience in dealing with the English articles as they have already learned that in some cases English does not require the article “the” causing them to make such intralingual errors. However, it is believed that the acquisition of the article system comes late in the process of learning a foreign language.
4.3.4. Substitution of “the” for “a / an”

68. . . . *and sometimes in the restaurant.

69. *The computer can only do what you program it to do.

70. *The dog likes to eat far more meat than a human being.

71. *We drove under the gloomy sky.

72. *The FBI is conducting the investigation.

The usage of the definite article “the” in sentences (68), (69) and (70) is attributed to the learners’ MTI because the usage of the definite article “al” is required in these contexts in Arabic. The usage of the definite article in sentences (71) and (72) could be explained in terms of poor learning as they failed to learn when to use the definite article “the” and when to use the indefinite articles “a/an”. However, poor teaching also cannot be excluded because if the teachers had explained to the students when to use the English definite article and when to use the indefinite articles, the students would not have made such errors. Therefore, the errors in the sentences (70) and (71) are intralingual errors resulting from intralingual sources of the target language itself.
TABLE-2: Shows t-Test analysis for inappropriate use of the English articles by $SG_1$ and $SG_2$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English articles</td>
<td>$G_1$</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22.900</td>
<td>8.148</td>
<td>0.591</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>5.885</td>
<td>SIG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$G_2$</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13.475</td>
<td>5.801</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.4. Analysis of Plural formation

The strategy of the overgeneralization is the basic cause of the errors that Arab EFL learners make in the formation of the English plural. This is because EFL Arab learners have tendency to overgeneralize the suffix “-s” to the other nouns that are made plural by making some kind of modification before adding “-es” or internal change or zero modification.

4.4.1. Null Hypothesis Three

With reference to the research null hypothesis three which states that, “when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of English plural formation rules there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2. It was borne by the results of the test that no student of both groups made zero errors. The minimum number of errors of SG1 was six errors made by only one student, while the minimum number of errors of SG2 was nine errors made by two students. Thirty nine students of SG1 made seven errors or more, while thirty eight students of SG2 made ten errors or more.

The total number of questions given to each group was one thousand seven hundred sixty. Students of SG1 made eight hundred twenty five errors and students of SG2 made seven hundred three errors. The overall percentage of errors concerning the English plural formation was 46.87 percent among SG1 and 39.94 percent among SG2. It indicated that the performance of the two groups was relatively tight. It also indicated that both group have the same degree of difficulty in handling the formation of English plural. The t-Test
analysis indicated that there is no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in pluralizing the given English nouns because the amount which the t-Test results indicated was 2.035 at 0.05 level. Therefore, the third research hypothesis which stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the plural formation rules, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2” was not rejected. (See table 3, p. 141).

The causes of errors and difficulties that Arab EFL learners encounter in learning how to form the English plural can be better understood through a brief explanation of the differences between the Arabic and the English plural formation. In English plurals are formed by adding suffixes: (-s), (-es), or (-en) to the nouns such as: tree/trees, box/boxes, ox/oxen, etc. but some English nouns which are changed into plural by making some kind of modification before adding “-es” such as baby/babies, thief/thieves. There is a number of English nouns which are made plurals by internal modification and replacements, such as: man/men, foot/feet also some English nouns which have the same shape in both singular and plural, such as sheep/sheep. In addition, words which are borrowed from other languages, especially Latin, and which still form their plural according to the rules of those languages, for example, stratum/strata, focus/foci, analysis/analyses. Arabic nouns are marked for three different kinds of numbers: singular, dual and plural. Because Arabic has a special morphological category for the dual, plural in Arabic refers to three or more.
According to Ryding (2005, p.129) the singular is considered the base form of the noun and the dual and plural are extensions of that form in various ways. The dual in Arabic is formed by using the two suffixes “ani” which is used in a nominative case and “ayni” which is used in genitive or accusative case, such as:

WaSala-a saffiir-ani. (normative)
Two ambassadors arrived.
Bayna-a saffiir-anyi. (genitive)
Between two ambassadors.
Zaar-uu 1-safiir-anyi: (accusative)
They visited the two ambassadors.

Plural in Arabic is formed by internal change, sometimes with addition of prefixes and suffixes, such as:

Sharika / Sharikaat Company/ companies
XaDraa/ xaDraa-w-att green/ green
Hulm/ aHlaam dream/ dreams

The errors made by the two groups in the formation of English plural may be exemplified in the following (the correct answer is written in parenthesis):

73. *Churchs (churches)
74. *Echos (echoes)
75. *Furnitures (furniture)
76. *Informations (information)
77. *Foots (feet)
In examples (73) through (80) students have used “-s” instead of “-es”, zero modification, internal modification and “-en” to form the English plural. These are cases of overgeneralization which have led the students to make such intralingual errors.

In examples (81) through (88) some students here have already hypothesized that some English noun can be made plural without adding the suffix “-s”. Therefore, these errors are intralingual ones resulting again from the overgeneralization strategy.
TABLE- 3: Shows t-Test analysis for inappropriate use of the plural formation rules by SG₁ and SG₂

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English plural formation</td>
<td>G₁</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.625</td>
<td>7.674</td>
<td>0.571</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>2.035</td>
<td>NSI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G₂</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>17.575</td>
<td>5.357</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5. Analysis of the Past and Past Participle forms of Irregular Verbs

Arab EFL learners have tremendous difficulty in the formation of the past tense and past participle tense form of English irregular verb. It is believed that this difficulty attributed to the fact that Arabic lacks the irregular verbs and also there is no set of rules that control the formation of such verbs. Therefore, these verbs are one of the problematic areas that these learners encounter when learning English.

4.5.1. Null Hypothesis Four

With reference to the research null hypothesis four which states that, ‘when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use the past form of irregular verb, there will be no significant difference in the error rate between SG1 between SG2’. Eleven errors was the minimum number of errors of SG1 made by only one student, while only one student of SG2 made sixteen errors as the minimum number of errors of this group. Thirty nine students of SG1 made twenty two errors or more, while thirty nine students of SG2 made seventeen errors or more.

The total number of questions given to each group was three thousand two hundred. Students of SG1 made two thousand one hundred nine errors and students of SG2 made one thousand five hundred twenty seven errors. The overall percentage of errors concerning the formation of the past tense of irregular verbs was 65.90 percent among SG1 and 47.71 percent among SG2. The high frequency of errors indicated that the performance of the both groups was extremely poor.
It also indicated that both groups have tremendous difficulty in the formation of the past tense of English irregular verbs. The results of the t-Test showed that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 4.185 between SG1 and SG2 in the formation of the past tense of English irregular verbs in favor of SG2. Therefore, based on the significance of the difference observed between the two groups in the formation of the past tense of irregular verbs, the fourth null hypothesis which stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past form of irregular verbs, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 was rejected. (See Table 4, p. 148).

4.5.2. Null Hypothesis Five

With reference to the research null hypothesis five which states that, ‘when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past participle tense form of irregular verbs, there will be no significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2’. No student of both groups made zero errors. Ten students of SG1 made forty five or fewer errors, while twenty four students of SG2 made forty five or fewer errors.

The total number of question given to each group was three thousand two hundred questions. Students of SG1 made two thousand one hundred seventy three errors and students of SG2 made one thousand seven hundred sixteen errors. The overall percentage concerning the use of the past participle tense form of irregular verbs was 67.90 percent among SG1 and 53.62 percent among SG2. The test results indicated that both groups have great difficulty in
dealing with the English irregular verbs as result they performed poorly and this poor performance is due to lack of mastery of the inflection of the irregular verbs. The results of the t-Test indicated that there was statistically significant difference at the level 0.05 of significance in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the formation of the past participle of the English irregular verbs with an amount of 3.233 in favor of SG2. Therefore, the fifth research null hypothesis which stated that “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past participle tense form of irregular verbs, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2” was rejected. In other words, the null hypothesis which denied the existence of the statistical significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 was refuted by the obtained results. (See Table 5, p. 149).

To clarify the causes of errors and the difficulty that Arab EFL learners encounter in learning how to use the past and past participle forms of irregular verbs, a brief clarification of the difference between such forms in Arabic and in English languages is imperative. According to Naser (1983) English verbs have six tenses: the simple past, present, future, past perfect, present and future perfect. The simple past, present, and future tenses refer to the time that an action is completed. The actual completion of actions is referred to by perfect tenses in the past, present, or future. English verbs have four basic parts. These are the infinitive, present participle, past, and past participle. In the case of the verb “write”, for example, the parts are write, writing, wrote, written. Moreover, English verbs are characterized as regular and irregular.
Regular verbs are those that have past and past participle forms ending in “-d” or “-ed”, as with “talk, talking, talked”. Irregular verbs are those that have forms other than the regular forms as with “bring, bringing, brought, brought”, “drive, driving, drove, driven”, “cut, cutting, cut, cut”. According to him Arabic is a highly inflected language. Hence, Arabic verbs have numerous inflectional markings. But, unlike English, Arabic is deficient in tenses. There are only two tenses, the perfect tense and the imperfect tense. These tenses do not have accurately specified time significances as in modern English. The perfect tense indicates that the action has been completed, such as:

\[ ?a-kal-a \ -l-walad-u \]

ate/ the boy
has eaten/ the boy
the boy ate
the boy has eaten.

The imperfect tense indicates the incompleteness of the action, such as:

\[ ya?-kul-u \ l- \ waldu \]

eats/ the boy
eating/ the boy
the boy eats.

The boy is eating.

The perfect is inflected by means of suffixes and the imperfect is inflected by means of suffixes and prefixes, such as:

\[ ?a-kal-a \ (he \ ate) \]
ya?kul-u (he eats).

Moreover, Arabic has no irregular verbs. All Arabic verbs are regular and are inflected according to the rules governing the inflection of such verbs.

A large number of errors made in the use of English past and past participle forms of irregular verbs by the two groups can be exemplified in the following (the correct answer is mentioned in parenthesis):

89. Seek *soke (sought) *soke (sought)
90. Sit *set (sat) *sit (sat)
91. Spread *sprod (spread) *sprod (spread )
92. Lose *los (lost) *los (lost)
93. Stride *strade (strode) *stroden (stridden)
94. Sink *sinked (snak) *sinked (sunk)
95. Thrive *thrived (throve) *thrived (thriven)
96. Sweep *sweeped (swept) *sweeped (swept)
97. Slay *sleyed (slew) *sleyed (slain)

In examples (89) through (93), students haphazardly tried to form the past and past participle of English irregular verbs because they seem forget these forms completely. Therefore, they did not know how to form the past or past participle of English irregular verbs and thus, produced deviant forms.

The examples (94) through (97) show the students’ resorting to the overgeneralization strategy in order to form the past and past participle tenses of English irregular verbs. Thus, they generalized the rule that “ed” should be
added to regular verbs, the students apply the rule to all other verbs. This is a case of overgeneralization. It is again the EFL Arab learners’ failure to learn and memorize the forms of the above irregular verbs. However, this failure is attributed to the fact that there are no rules which control the formation of the English irregular verbs. Therefore, the errors in the above are intralingual errors which are caused by intralingual sources i.e. the interference of the target language. It is believed that the EFL Arab learners’ poor performance in the use of irregular verbs is resulted first, from the fact of unavailability of such verbs in Arabic which poses the difficulty. Second, in the case regular verbs a “-d” or an “-ed” is attached to the end of the verb as a means for changing the form. But in the case of irregular verbs there is no set rules governing the learning process of such verbs. Third, the 205 or so English irregular verbs have a varying number of distinct forms. Therefore, this diversity in the forms makes learning of such verbs extremely difficult, as, for example:

Put, put, put
Eat, ate, eaten
Bring, brought, brought
Become, became, become

Thus, these verbs are to be learned only by memorizing their forms separately. This is supported by Naser (1983). However, some studies found that the regular past tense form is learned before the irregular (Dabaghi and Mansoor Tavakoli, 2009).
TABLE 4: Show t-Test analysis for inappropriate use of the past form of irregular verbs by SC1 and SC2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical Item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate Value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>SIG.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past form of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irregular verbs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32.725</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>4.185</td>
<td>SIG.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>38.175</td>
<td>1.5487</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE-5: Shows t-Test analysis for inappropriate use of the past participle form of irregular verbs by SG₁ and SG₂

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past participles form of irregular verbs</td>
<td>SG₁</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>54.325</td>
<td>15.428</td>
<td>0.883</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>3.233</td>
<td>SIG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SG₂</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42.900</td>
<td>15.781</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6. Analysis of Subject Verb Agreement

Due to the fact that Arabic has neither copula nor auxiliaries, the use of English copula and auxiliaries creates serious difficulty for EFL Arab learners. The errors made by the subjects in this category are classified into the following subcategories:

a. Omission of copula
b. Wrong form of 'be' with plural nouns
c. Wrong form of 'be' with singular nouns
d. Wrong form of 'be' with existential 'there'
e. Wrong form of the auxiliary 'to have'

4.6.1. Null Hypothesis Six

With reference to the null hypothesis which states that, "when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the copula and the auxiliary 'to have' (subject verb agreement) there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2." The test results revealed that no student of both groups made zero errors. One student of SG1 and two students of SG2 made twelve errors as the minimum numbers of errors. Thirty eight students of SG1 made seventeen errors or more, while twenty three students of SG2 made seventeen errors or more. The total number of questions given to each group was one thousand two hundred eighty. Students of SG1 made eight hundred ninety seven errors and students of SG2 made seven hundred errors.
The overall percentage of errors concerning the use of English copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement was) 70.07 percent among SG1 and 54.68 percent among SG2.

The high frequency of errors is very disturbing and strongly ascertains the serious difficulty that both groups have in the English subject verb agreement. The results of the t-Test showed that there was statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level with an amount 6.499 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use of the English copula and the auxiliary “to have” in favor of group two.” Therefore, the sixth null hypothesis which denied the existence of the statistical significant difference in the error rate between the two groups was rejected. (See Table 6, p. 160).

In order to delve into the root cause of errors and difficulty that Arab EFL learners encounter in learning English subject verb agreement, it is imperative to make a comparative analysis between English and Arabic subject verb agreement rules. According to Yale Graduate School Writing Center (n.d.) in English, the verb agrees with the subject in number and person as follows:

a. The subject of a sentence or clause must agree in number with main or auxiliary verb of that sentence or clause. For example,

The books were on the table yesterday.

One of the books was missing.

b. A singular verb is used with fractions, percentage, amounts and distances when they are not followed by an -of phrase. For example,

Five miles is an average distance for me.
c. The verb agrees with the noun closest to the verb when an -of phrase follows a percentage, distance, fraction, or amount. For example,

21% of the population is poor.

d. With indefinite quantifiers (all, few, many, much, some) the verb agrees with preceding noun or clause. For example:

All the information is current.

All the studies are current.

e. A singular or plural verb is used with a collective noun, depending on whether the speaker wants to emphasize the simple group or its individual members. For example,

Half of my family is here.

All of the class are here.

f. When adjectives are the head words and proceeded by “the” and used as plural nouns take a plural verb. For example,

The rich have benefited much more the poor.

g. The phrase “number of” takes a singular verb when referring to a single quantity and a plural verb when referring to indefinite quantities. For example,

The number of students registered in the class is 20.

A number of students were late.

h. The first noun determines if the verb is singular or plural when followed by “as well as, in addition to, together”. For example,

Saudi Arabia, as well as other gulf countries, has oil.
i. In the subjects with “neither, nor, not only but also”, the noun closest to
the verb determines if that verb is singular or plural. For example,

Neither the guests nor their host was happy.

j. With “either or”, the second noun determines if the verb singular or
plural. For example,

Either Ali or his brother is going to make dinner.

k. A singular verb is used; when the compound subject describes two parts
of a single process. For example,

The correction and evaluation of educational tests is an important
part of her job.

In contrast to English, Arabic has no copula or auxiliaries. In Arabic,
verbs show person, number and gender by simply adding prefixes, infixes and
suffixes to triconsonantal root of a word, so, we can have many derived verb
forms. Thus, the root k-t-b contains the idea of writing. By using these
consonants as a base and by adding vowels, prefixes, suffixes according to
certain patterns, the actual verb forms are produced. In Arabic there is a
distinction between masculine and feminine when it comes to the use of third
person singular in the present. A change in the prefix indicates the distinction
between the present simple used with the third person singular masculine and
the third person singular feminine (El- Sayed 1982: 64). As in English a
singular subject requires a singular predicate, a plural subject requires a plural
predicate. In Arabic, too, the verb agrees with the subject and shows person,
number and gender.
The following examples presented by El-Sayed serve to explain further this point.

Examples:

/Yaktubu/ (he writes- masculine)
/Aktubu/ (I write)
/Taktubu/ (you write- masculine)
/Taktubi/ (you write – feminine)
/Taktubu/ (she writes-feminine)
/Taktubaan/ (you write-dual)
/Yaktunuun/ (they write- masculine)
/Yaktubna/ (they write feminine).

In Arabic nominal sentence, the subject appears first and the predicate second. The subject may be a noun or a pronoun followed immediately by a nominal predicate or adjectival predicate. If the subject is masculine, or feminine, dual or plural, the predicate should agree. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ali – teacher</td>
<td>(Ali is a teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He – teacher</td>
<td>(he is a teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The - girl beautiful</td>
<td>(the girl is beautiful)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They – good friends</td>
<td>(they are good friends)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friend – kind</td>
<td>(my friend is kind)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6.2. Omission of copula.

No usage of dash (-) was required in answering any of the given questions on the test. In spite of this, some students put a (-) instead of copula. The errors made by the two groups in this subcategory can be exemplified in the following:

98. *The atmosphere right now very relaxed.
99. *There a sprit and a will to win in the team.
100. *There a lot of people camped there.
101. *Some of my best friends policemen.
102. *I sure both of you agree with me.
103. *More than half of these photographs of her.
104. *Cigarette smoking dangerous to your health.

The deletion of copula in the above examples is attributed to the learner mother tongue interference (MTI) because as mentioned earlier Arabic lacks the copula. In Arabic, the above examples are grammatical structures. According to Obeidat (1986) another possible explanation for the omission of the verb “be” was provided by Burt and Kiparsky (1974).

They regarded the omission of “be” as developmental errors rather than L1 interference and their explanation was that “be” is only needed as a tense carrier; otherwise it is void of meaning and students tend to omit it. However, the absence of the copula in the above examples is definitely due to the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI). This explanation is supported by the work of Scott and Tucker 1974, Mukattash 1978, El-sayed 1982, Obeidat
1986, Al-Sindy 1994. Therefore, the above errors are interlingual ones resulted from the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI)

4.6.3. Be with plurals

In the following the subjects used the singular copula “be” for the plural “be”:

105. *Some of my best friends is (are) policemen.
106. *More than half of these photographs is (are) of her.
107. *Two thirds of Chad’s exports was (were) cotton.
108. *A quarter of the students was (were) seen individually.

4.6.4. “Be” with singular

The plural form of “be” is used for the singular “be” incorrectly in the following examples:

109. *Two thirds of the plant’s surface are (is) covered with water.
110. *Two fifths of the forest were (was) removed.
111. *It became necessary to involve every man, woman and child who are (was) willing to help.
112. *Ninety percent of most food are (is) water.
113. *Half of our work are (is) to design programmes.

The insertion of the wrong form of “be” in English structure is common among Arab EFL learners. Students used either the singular form of “be” with plural subjects as in the examples in (4.6.3) or the plural form of “be” with singular subjects as in the examples in (4.6.4). These errors in the above examples (4.6.3) and (4.6.4) cannot be attributed to the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI) because Arabic has no equivalent of the English copula. In
other words, Arabic lacks the copula. However, all ESL learners and native speakers have common tendency to commit this type of error (Dulay, and Burt, 1972, Richards, 1974). Therefore, these errors are attributed to intralingual sources that are due to ignorance of rule restrictions because the English copula has many forms which cause confusion to the students. This explanation is supported by Obeidat (1986).

Another possible explanation could be that these errors occur out of sheer. These are performance errors, because when a student is tired or hurried, it is possible that he makes errors of this type. This explanation is supported by El-Sayed (1982). However, it is clear that the subjects have not yet mastered the use of copula. We believe that if the teacher had explained to the students how to use the English copula, with adequate practice in the use of verb “to be” such errors would not have occurred. Therefore, all the above errors are attributed to intralingual sources. Hence, they are intralingual ones.

4.6.5. Wrong form of “be” with existential sentences

Existential sentences are “those sentences beginning with the unstressed word there and are so called because when unstressed there is followed by a form of verb be the clause expresses the notion of existence (El-Sayed, 1982, p. 68).

The errors made by the both groups in this subcategory may be exemplified in the following:

114. *When we arrived there was (were) huge cracks in the ground.

115. *There were (was) a sofa and two chairs on display yesterday.

116. *There are (is) a spirit and a will to win in the team.
117. *There never are (is) any great change.

118. *There was (were) a dozen reasons why a man might hurry from a bar.

The errors in the above sentences are attributed to the confusion that the English copula and its many forms and changes according to number pose to Arab EFL learners. Also the ignorance of English restrictions i.e. the application of rules to contexts where they do not apply and poor teaching/learning cannot be excluded as well. In general, it is the learners’ lack of mastery of the English subject verb agreement system. Therefore, these errors are intralingual errors.

4.6.6. Wrong form of the auxiliary “to have”

The errors made by the two groups in this subcategory can be exemplified in the following:

119. *Somebody else will has (have) to go out there.

120. *All this effort and sacrifice have (has) not helped to alleviate poverty.

121. *He did not has (have) a very grand salary.

122. *The rich has (have) benefited much more the poor.

Since Arabic has no auxiliaries the learners’ MTI is excluded in all the above examples. It is clear from the above examples that the students did not know how to use the English auxiliary verb “to have” correctly and that may be due to poor teaching. This poor teaching resulted in these deviant structures. Another possible explanation is that the learners have not yet mastered the
English verbal system. One can argue that understanding the rules would enable the students to avoid errors of such type. Therefore, these errors are intralingual ones resulting from intralingual sources. We also observed errors which include substitution of copula for “to have” and vice versa. These errors are also attributed to the above intralingual sources.
TABLE-6: Shows t-Test analysis for inappropriate use of the copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement) by SG\textsubscript{1} and SG\textsubscript{2}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English subject verb agreement</td>
<td>G\textsubscript{1}</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22.425</td>
<td>3.398</td>
<td>0.409</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>6.499</td>
<td>SIG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G\textsubscript{2}</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>17.500</td>
<td>3.294</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.7. Analysis of the Conjunctions

The English conjunctions system is considered the most difficult area for EFL Arab learners because it includes the highest percentage of errors according to this study, for example, the overall percentage of errors in this area was 85.83 percent among SG1, and 67.66 percent among SG2.

4.7.1. Null Hypothesis Seven

With reference to the null hypothesis which states that, “when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of English conjunctions, there will be no statistical significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2”. It was shown by the test results that no student of SG1 or SG2 made zero error. The minimum number of errors was thirteen errors among students of SG1 made by only one student, while it was ten errors among students of SG2 made also by only one student. Thirty nine students of SG1 made nineteen errors or more, while thirty nine students of SG2 made fourteen errors or more.

The total number of questions given to each group given to each group was one thousand two hundred. Students of SG1 made one thousand thirty errors and students of SG2 made eight hundred twelve errors. The overall percentage of errors concerning the use of the English conjunctions was 85.83 percent among SG1 and 67.66 among SG2. The high frequency of errors is very disturbing and strongly ascertains the great difficulty that the both groups have in the use of English conjunctions. In accordance with this poor performance, it is obvious that the students of both groups have tremendous difficulty in dealing with English conjunctions because a remarkably large
The results of the test clearly indicated that the English conjunctions is the major area of difficulty for Arab EFL learners. The t-Test results showed that there was statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level of significance with an amount 6.556 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the usage of English conjunctions in favor of SG2. Therefore, the seventh null hypothesis which denied the existence of the statistical significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 was refuted by the obtained results accordingly was rejected. (See Table 7, p. 167). In order to find out the causes of errors and clarify the difficulties that Arab ELF learners encounter in learning how to use English conjunctions, it is imperative to first make a brief explanation of the differences between the Arabic and the English conjunctions. Conjunctions are function words which connect other words or ideas or group of words in the sentences i.e. clauses. According to Quirk (1985) the term “conjunction” is used for both syndetic (or linked) coordination and asyndetic (or unlinked) coordination. According to him the difference between the two construction is that syndetic coordination is marked by overt signals of coordination (and, or, but), whereas asyndetic coordination is not overtly marked. In English there are two types of conjunctions:

1. Coordinating and

2. Subordinating
The conjunctions such as and, but, or, nor, yet, and so are termed as coordinating conjunctions. These conjunctions connect sentences, elements of the same grammatical class such as two clauses, two noun phrases, or two adjectives, while subordinating conjunctions join units which do not have the same grammatical status in the sentences. The word though, although, because, since, while, and nevertheless etc are subordinating conjunctions.

Unlike English, Arabic does not make a distinction between coordination and subordination conjunctions. Arabic conjunctions can commence a sentence which is considered a bad style in English. Moreover, Arabic sentences are continuously linked by “wa”, “fa” and less frequently by “thumma”. Therefore, the EFL Arab learners when writing in English they use the coordination excessively and avoid using subordination because they misunderstand the relationships between ideas. Arabic conjunctions may be either inseparable or separable:

1. the separable conjunctions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>(waaw al aTf)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wa</td>
<td>“and”</td>
<td>(waaw al aTf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ئیدان</td>
<td>“therefore”, “then”, “so”, “thus”, “in that case”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatta</td>
<td>“until”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haythu</td>
<td>“where”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayn-maa</td>
<td>“while”, “whereas”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baذد-ا-مأا</td>
<td>“after”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baذد-ا-ئيذن</td>
<td>“after that”, “then”, “subsequently”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>چیند-ا- مأا</td>
<td>“when”, “at that time when”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mourtaga (2004) pointed out that Arab EFL learners always face the following three main problems: first, they may choose a wrong conjunction because they may not understand the relationship between two or more ideas in the sentence. Second, they may choose the correct conjunctions, but they may not know how to use it or where it fits in the sentence. Third, they may use wrong tense sequence in the two clauses joined by the conjunction because Arabic uses a variety of tense choices regardless of tense in the main clause. However, Arabic has only two tenses (the perfect and the imperfect). Although Mourtaga claims that the problem lies in English, we believe that the learners’ MTI should not be excluded as well.

A large number of errors made by the two groups in the use of English conjunctions can be exemplified in the following:

123. *It is a small and (but) comfortable hotel.

124. *She doesn’t drink so (or) smoke.
125. *I was tired because (so) I could not go.

126. *I used to read a lot so that (although) I don’t get much time for books now.

127. *There was no news or (nevertheless) we went on hoping.

128. *She spoke slowly and (but) firmly.

As it has been mentioned earlier that Arab the EFL learners’ problem, is that they choose a wrong conjunction because of not understanding the relationship between two or more ideas in the sentence. For example, in sentence (123) the conjunction “and” is wrongly used here. The conjunction “and” joins two similar ideas. The proper conjunction is “but should be used in this sentence to show contrast. In sentence (124) the cause – effect conjunction “so” is used here wrongly to link “she doesn’t drink” and “smoke” such arrangement implies that cause –and –effect conjunction between the two clauses. However, there is no cause- and –effect connection between the two clauses. The appropriate conjunction to be used here is “or” to indicate that the ideas expressed in the two clauses represent two alternative choices of action. In sentence (125) students used the conjunction “because” wrongly. The conjunction “because” is used to introduce the cause in a cause effect relationship between two ideas. The proper conjunction is to be used here is “so” to express the cause- and – effect relation. It seem to us that the meaning of “because” misunderstood and misused in this sentence. In sentence (126), the conjunction “so that” is unexpected to be used in a sentence includes a clear contrast. Therefore, the proper conjunction should be used here is “although” to
express contrast between the two ideas. It is clear that misunderstanding of the meaning of the sentence has led the students to make this error. In sentence (127) the misuse of “or” instead of “nevertheless” is due to the students’ lack of understanding the meaning of the sentence. However “or” is used to join to alternative ideas, but it has been used here inappropriately. Therefore “nevertheless” is to be used in this sentence to express contrast.

In the above discussed examples, the students appeared to have a tremendous difficulty with both coordinate and subordinate conjunctions. The reason is ignorance of the function and use of each conjunction because these errors apparently cannot be attributed to a negative transfer from Arabic, since the English conjunctions have their equivalents in Arabic. Therefore, these errors are intralingual ones resulted from intralingual sources. In the sentence (128) the conjunction “and” has been used wrongly. The correct conjunction which should be used is “but”. But as we said earlier that Arabic sentences are linked continually by “wa” which is accepted in Arabic in such context. Therefore, this error is an interlingual one.
4.8. Analysis of the Relative Pronouns

"Relative clauses in the L1s of many students differ from English relative clauses in a number of ways. These differences may influence students' attempts at producing English relative clauses" (Cowan, 2008: 440). According to Obeidat (1986) English relative clause formation does not poses serious problems for EFL Arab learners, because Arabic relativizes in all positions on the accessibility hierarchy introduced by Keenan and Comrie (1977). However, it seems that these learners receive some interference from the colloquial Arabic.

4.8.1. Null Hypothesis Eight

With reference to the research null hypothesis eight which states that "when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of English relative pronouns, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2". The test results revealed that no student of both groups made zero errors. The minimum number of errors was six errors among students of SG1, while it was five errors among students of SG2. Thirty nine students of SG1 made eleven errors or more, while eighteen students of SG2 made eleven errors or more.

The total number of questions given to each group was eight hundred. Students of SG1 made six hundred seven errors and students of SG2 made three hundred ninety six errors.

The overall percentage of errors in the use of the English relative pronouns was 75.87 percent among SG1 and 49.5 among SG2.
This high frequency of errors displayed the great difficulty that both groups have in the use of English relative pronouns. It is also borne by the results that a large number of the subjects did not know how to use the English relative pronouns and consequently performed poorly. It is strongly believed that SG1 and SG2 encountered to some extent the same degree of difficulty in dealing with the examined grammatical item as the results showed. The results of the t-Test analysis indicated that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 9.021 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use of English relative pronouns in favor of SG2. Therefore, the research eighth null hypothesis which claimed the nonexistence of the statistical significant difference in the error rate between the two groups was rejected and refuted by the results obtained (See Table 8, p. 173).

In order to clarify the causes of errors and difficulties that Arab EFL learners encounter in learning how to use English relative pronouns, it is imperative to make a brief explanation of the differences between the Arabic and English relative clause formation. Superficially, relative clause formation in Arabic is very similar to that of English, for this reason, Arab learners see similarities between their L1 and English; therefore, they transfer their L1 strategy to English, thereby producing errors. However, there are three major differences between English and Arabic clause formation. First, instead of relative pronouns Arabic has relative particles. The Arabic relative particle links both clauses and appears only when there is a definite antecedent, for example: “I saw the girl who she has blue eyes” but if the antecedent is
indefinite, the relative particle does not occur, as in “I saw a girl she has blue eyes”. Thus, interference from Arabic may cause the relative pronoun to be omitted if it is the subject of the clause in the English sentence. The second significant difference between Arabic and English relative clause formation is that the Arabic antecedent clause and relative clause are both complete sentences neither is subordinate, at least not in the surface structure. In fact, they are two independent sentences. In Arabic the relative clause construction is coordinate, while it is subordinate in English. Finally, the third difference between Arabic and English relative clause formation which is the main source of EFL Arab learners’ errors in learning English relative clause, is the presence of the “relator” in the relative clause. The “relator” is a second word or affix that serves as either the subject or object of the clause and refers to the antecedent. Therefore, the interference from Arabic here causes the repetition of referents, for example: “the girl who she was sweet came” (Thompson, and Maria Thomas, 1983).

Quirk et al. (1972) points out that the relative pronouns in English comprise two sets: wh - pronouns (who, whom, whose, which) and that or zero. Though wh - pronouns in English have no number distinction, they have person distinction (human/ non - human = who/ which and case distinction (who, whom, whose). The same set of wh - pronouns in English is used in question formation. In contrast, the case distinction of Arabic relative pronouns (specially marked for the dual) is neutralized for the singular where there is only a gender distinction (alladi = masculine) (allati = feminine). The Arabic
relative pronoun (alladi/ti) also lacks the person distinction human/non-human and an equivalent of the English genitive “whose” (Obeidat 1986).

A large number of errors made by the two groups in the use of English relative pronouns can be exemplified in the following:

129. *We know a lot of people which (who) live in India.
130. *sun who (which) one of millions of stars in the universe provides us with heat and light.
131. *We saw some people which (whose) car had broken.
132. *Do you still remember the day which (that) we first met?
   Regarding.
133. *We know a lot of people whose (who) live in India

The misuse of the relative pronoun “which” instead of “who” in sentence (129) is attributed to the students’ confusion as regards the distinction between human (who) and non-human, that Arabic lacks. The same is true in sentence (130). In sentence (131) the substitution of “which” for “whose” is attributed to the fact that there is no Arabic relative pronoun that corresponds to “whose” this is supported by mukattash (1986). In sentence (132) “which” is substituted for “that”, this is a case of overgeneralization. Because “that” and “which” are used for non-human but with time the proper relative pronoun should be used is “that”. Students seem to use these relative pronouns interchangeably. In sentence (133) it seems that the learners’ ignorance of English restrictions i.e. the application of rules to contexts where they do not apply, poor teaching and
lacking of mastery of English relative clause system are possible explanations that cannot be excluded.

The discussed examples above indicate that the students have not yet mastered the English relative pronouns rules. Another possible explanation for these errors which we preponderate is that they are due to interference from colloquial Arabic because the colloquial Arabic relative pronoun “allī” can be used in all the above structures except sentence (133). Therefore, the errors in sentence (129), (130), (131) and (132) are interlingual ones.
TABLE 8: Shows t-Test analysis for inappropriate use of relative pronouns by SG₁ and SG₂

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English relative pronouns</td>
<td>G₁</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15.175</td>
<td>2.728</td>
<td>0.359</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>9.021</td>
<td>SIG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G₂</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9.900</td>
<td>2.427</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.9. **Analysis of the Genitive Case**

The English genitive case seems to be a problematic area for EFL freshman Arab learners because the overall percentage of errors among students of SG1 was 81.20 i.e. it just ranked below the conjunctions.

4.9.1. **Null Hypothesis Nine**

With reference to the research null hypothesis nine which states that “when the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of English genitive case, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2”. No student of students of SG1 or of students of SG2 made zero errors. One student of SG1 made the minimum number of errors among this group which was seven errors, while the minimum number of errors among students of SG2 was four errors made also by one student. Thirty nine students of SG1 made fourteen errors or more, while nineteen students of SG2 made fourteen errors or more.

The total number of questions given to each group was one thousand one hundred sixty. Student of SG1 made nine hundred forty two errors, while students of SG1 made five hundred thirty one. The overall percentage of errors concerning the use of the English genitive case was 81.20 percent among SG1 and 45.77 percent among SG2. This high frequency of errors indicated the tremendous difficulty that the students of both groups have particularly SG1 in the use of the English genitive case.

The test results obviously demonstrated that students of the two groups did not know how to use the English genitive case as a result of the difficulty
that they have. First, for example, each student of SG1 and SG2 was supposed to use the apostrophe (') five times that is four hundred correct uses were needed in answering the test. But in answering the given questions, students of SG1 made one hundred seventy one errors and students of SG2 made one hundred fifty errors. Second, seven hundred twenty correct uses of “of” were required. Each student was obligated to use “of” nine times to answer the questions correctly. But, SG1 made two hundred seventy five errors and SG2 ninety nine. Third, with reference to the test which was given to SG1 and SG2, one thousand two hundred correct uses of “‘s” were required. Each student was obligated to use “‘s” fifteen times to answer the questions correctly. But the error rate was high, SG1 made four hundred ninety six, while SG2 made two hundred eighty two errors.

The results of the t-Test analysis indicated that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 10.152 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use the English genitive case in favor of SG2. Hence, in accordance with this result the ninth null hypothesis which denied the significant difference in the errors rate between the two groups was rejected. (See table 9, p. 180).

For the purpose of clarifying the causes and the difficulty that Arab EFL learner encounter in learning how to use the English genitive case, a brief explanation of the differences between the Arabic and the English genitive case is imperative.
In English there are two categories of case, namely, direct case and oblique case. Besides, there also exists the genitive case in English. It is also called possessive case which indicates ownership or possession. It also shows the relationship between two nouns. In English the genitive case is formed by adding ‘s to the noun, for example, Hussam’s pen. The element ‘s added after the word Hussam is called the genitive marker which consists of an apostrophe (‘) and “s”. When a noun is used in genitive case, it grammatically inflects with “’s”. In English there are certain rules for the use of genitive marker “’s” in the genitive case. In certain cases, instead of using the genitive marker “’s” the word “of” is also used denoting the same meaning. This may be called the “of” genitive. To express the genitive idea, the speakers of English may often choose between the genitive marker “’s” and “of”. The genitive marker “’s” is used basically with animate objects. It conveys the idea of physical ownership and the notion of belonging.

Generally, the genitive marker “’s” is not used with inanimate objects, except after expression which denote time, weight and distance, for example, tomorrow’s meeting, a foot’s length. It is also used with personified things and for dignity, for example fortunate’s wheel, court’s order. However, when the noun already has an “-s” ending to denote the plural, then the genitive marker appears only as an apostrophe (‘) after the plural form as in the following examples:

The boys’ pen

The girls’ steps
According to Ryding (2005), in Arabic, the genitive case is called “iDaafa” whereby two nouns may be linked together in a relationship where the second noun determines the first by identifying, limiting or defining it. The two nouns are linked by “iDaafa” in Arabic and function as one phrase or syntactic unit. In Arabic the genitive case (iDaafa) is formed according to certain rules as follows:

a. In the case of nominative the genitive is marked by Damma (- u) for example:

   beit-u alwalad-u kabiir-un.

   The boy’s house is large.

b. In the case when the first term of construct is accusative the genitive is marked by a fataHa (-a). For example:

   HaDar-a Haflat-a waD-i l-Hajr-i l-?asaasi.

   He attended the party for the laying the cornerstone.

c. If the first term of the construct is majrur “the genitive” is marked by a “Kasra”(-i). For example:

   taHta nur-I shamsi.

   Under the sunlight.

d. The nuuns (nunation) on the first term of the construct which mark indefiniteness and the final of the dual and the sound masculine plural are deleted on the first term of a construct phrase. For example,

   Waziir-aa l-adl-I wal-laami.

   The two ministers of justice and information.
Muharrib-uu 1-mukaddiraat-i.

Smugglers of drugs.

e. When the first word of a construct phrase, ending in “taa marbuatá” the taa is pronounced. For example:

Silsilat jibal.

A chain of mountains.

f. The final or the second term of the construction which may be either definite or indefinite, may be a noun or demonstrative pronoun. It may have a possessive pronoun suffix. For example:

Muluuk-u l-hindi.

The kings of India.

The errors made by the two groups in the English genitive case can be exemplified in the following:

134. *Camera of Tom.


137. *Jill has got three Weeks's holiday.

138. *I heard the steps of the girls on the stairs,

In sentences (134), (135), (136), (137) and (138) “of,” “s,” “of,” “s” and “of” are substituted for “s,” “of,” “s,” apostrophe (’) and also apostrophe (’), respectively.
The errors in the above examples cannot be attributed to the learners’ MTI because the formation of the genitive case is different in Arabic from that of English. Therefore, all these errors are due to TL interference. They are all cases of overgeneralization. Richards (1974: 174) argues that overgeneralization covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his limited experience of other structures in target language.

However, one can also argue that the use of genitive marker with animate objects and some exceptions to this rule creates difficulty in learning the use of genitive marker. When the learners use the genitive marker with inanimate objects these uses are considered errors. Therefore, all the errors in the above examples are intralingual errors attributed to interference from English (the target language).
TABLE-9: Shows t-Test analysis for inappropriate use of genitive case errors by $G_1$ and $G_2$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>no</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Genitive</td>
<td>$G_1$</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23.550</td>
<td>4.775</td>
<td>0.472</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>10.152</td>
<td>SIG.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case</td>
<td>$G_2$</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13.275</td>
<td>4.141</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.10. Analysis of Interlingual and Intralingual Errors

Most of the researchers in the field of second language learning attributed the second language learners’ errors to two sources which are called as “interlingual sources” and “intralingual sources”. The errors which were made by the second language learner due his first language interference are termed as “interlingual errors”, while the errors were made by him due to the target language itself are termed as “intralingual errors”.

According to MacDonald (2003) the establishing of what is interlingual and what is due to other causes is problematic, so much so, the research carried out on interlingual errors, for example, has concluded that the interference of the learner’s mother tongue is the cause of between as little as 3 % (Dulay & Burt, 1973) and as much as 80 % (Nickel, 1981) of the total errors committed.

4.10.1. Null Hypothesis Ten

With the reference to the last research null hypothesis which stated that “when the test results are analyzed in terms of interlingual and intralingual sources of errors, there will be no statistically significant difference between the errors that were made by the subjects due to interlingual sources i.e. the learners’ mother tongue interference and the errors that were made by them due to intralingual sources”.

The total number of errors made by the subjects of the study in the use of previously mentioned components of grammar was twenty thousand six hundred seventy errors. Four thousand nine hundred seventy one errors were attributed to interlingual source of errors i.e. the learners’ mother tongue
interference (MTI), while fifteen thousand six hundred ninety nine errors were due to intralingual sources i.e. interference from the target language. That is of the total errors identified 24.04 % was caused by the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI), while 75.95 was caused by intralingual sources.

The results of the t-Test analysis showed that there was significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 2.170 between the errors which were attributed to interlingual interference i.e. the mother tongue interference of the learners (MTI) and the errors which were attributed to intralingual sources in favor intralingual errors. Hence, the tenth research null hypothesis which denied the existence of the significant difference between the errors that were made by the subjects due to interlingual interference and the errors that were made by them due to intralingual sources was rejected (see table 10, p.183).
TABLE-10: Shows t-Test analysis for interlingual and intralingual errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>D.F</th>
<th>Calculate value (T)</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interlingual errors</td>
<td>552.333</td>
<td>1055.186</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intralingual errors</td>
<td>1743.889</td>
<td>1139.884</td>
<td>15.617</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.170</td>
<td>SIG.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1. Introduction
5.2. Summary
5.3. Findings of the study
   5.3.1. Hypothesis One
   5.3.2. Hypothesis Two
   5.3.3. Hypothesis Three
   5.3.4. Hypothesis Four
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5.4. Conclusions of the Study
5.5. Implications
5.6. General Recommendations
5.7. Suggestions for Further Research
5.1. Introduction

This chapter gives a brief summary of the study, findings, conclusions and implications. It also suggests some recommendations to EFL Arab teachers for dealing with the investigated difficulties that Arab EFL learners encounter when learning English as second/foreign language. In addition, it provides some suggestions for further research.

5.2. Summary of the Study

The present study aimed at examining the ability of two groups consist of 80 native speakers of Arabic majoring in English at the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah (rural) and at the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden (urban), Aden University in the use of English prepositions, articles, plural rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case. Another purpose of this study was to find out if there was a statistically significant difference in the error rate between the two groups regarding their ability to use the aforementioned language components as well as to find out the causes and sources of the errors made by the subjects.

Therefore, two groups of EFL Arab learners enrolled at Aden University were invited to participate in this comparative study. Each group consisted of 40 students. The students of the first group (SG1) were enrolled at the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Aden University, while the students of the second group (SG2) were enrolled at the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, Aden University.
The students of group one were rural students whereas the students of group two were urban. The subjects of this study were linguistically homogeneous since they speak Arabic as a mother tongue, they studied English for six years prior to their joining the undergraduate program at Aden university. To achieve the objectives of this study which stated above, a test consisted eight sections was given to the members of the two groups as an instrument and the answers of the test sections were the data of this study.

The researcher used t-Test analysis for determining if there were statistically significant differences in the error rate between the two groups in the usage of the aforementioned components of language. This analysis was also used for finding out if there was statistically significant difference between the errors that were made due to interlingual interference and those that were made due to intralingual sources.

The research also aimed at answering the following questions:

1. Is there any statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2?

2. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled in the second semester at the department of English, Faculty of Education, Shabwah, Aden University have difficulty in using of the selected English prepositions, articles, plural rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case?
3. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled in the sixth semester at the department of English, Faculty of Sciences, Arts and Education, Aden, Aden university have difficulty in using of the selected English prepositions, articles, plural rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case?

4. Do undergraduate Arab EFL learners who are enrolled at the above mentioned English departments receive certain interference when using of the selected English prepositions, articles, plurals rules, past tense and past participle of irregular verbs, copula and the auxiliary “to have” (subject verb agreement), conjunctions, relative pronouns, and the genitive case from their mother tongue (Arabic) or from the target language (English)? If yes which type is more frequent “interlingual errors” or “intralingual errors”?

Based on these above questions, ten hypotheses were formalized and examined in this comparative study, the hypotheses were:

1. When the test results are analyzed are in terms of the use of the selected prepositions, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

2. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the articles, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.
3. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the plural formation rules, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

4. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past form of irregular verbs, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

5. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past participle tense form of irregular verbs, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

6. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of copula or the auxiliary "to have", there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

7. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of conjunctions, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

8. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of relative pronouns, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

9. When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the genitive case markers, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.

10. When the test results are analyzed in terms of interlingual and intralingual sources of errors, there will be no statistically significant
difference between the errors that were by the subjects due to interlingual sources i.e. the learners’ mother tongue interference and the errors that were made by them due to intralingual sources.

5.3. Findings of the Study

This section presents a summary of the findings of the study. Each of the proposed hypotheses has been discussed one by one in order to be informative.

5.3.1. Hypothesis one

The first research null hypothesis stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the selected prepositions, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SGI and SG2.” The results of the t-Test between the two groups showed that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 3.677 in the error rate between SGI and SG2 in the use of the selected English prepositions. Therefore, the first hypothesis was rejected since it was concluded that there existed a significant difference between the two groups.

5.3.2. Hypothesis two

The second research null hypothesis stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the articles, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SGI and SG2.” The statistical analysis of the data indicated that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 5.885 in the error rate between SGI and SG2 in the use of the English articles. Therefore, due to the positive
and significant difference between the two groups, the second null hypothesis was rejected.

5.3.3. Hypothesis Three

The third research null hypothesis stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the plural formation rules, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.” The t-test analysis indicated that there is no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in pluralizing the given English nouns because the amount which the t-Test results indicated was 2.035 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the third null hypothesis was not rejected.

5.3.4. Hypothesis Four

The fourth research null hypothesis stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past form of irregular verbs, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.” The results of the t-Test showed that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 of significance with an amount of 4.185 between SG1 and SG2 in the formation of the past tense of English irregular verbs. Therefore, based on the significance of the difference observed between the two groups in the formation of the past tense of irregular verbs, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected.

5.3.5. Hypothesis Five

The fifth research null hypothesis stated that “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the past participle tense form of irregular verbs,
there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.” The results of the t-Test indicated that there was statistically significant difference at the level 0.05 of significance in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the formation of the past participle of the English irregular verbs with an amount of 3.233. Therefore, the fifth null hypothesis was rejected. In other words, the null hypothesis which denied the existence of the statistical significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 was refuted by the obtained results.

5.3.6. Hypothesis Six

The sixth research null hypothesis stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of copula or the auxiliary “to have”, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.” The results of the t-Test showed that there was statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level of significance with an amount 6.499 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use of the English copula and the auxiliary “to have.” Therefore, the sixth null hypothesis which denied the existence of the statistical significant difference in the error rate between the two groups was rejected.

5.3.7. Hypothesis Seven

The seventh research null hypothesis stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of conjunctions, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.” The t-Test results showed that there was statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level
of significance with an amount 6.556 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use of English conjunctions. Therefore, the seventh null hypothesis which denied the existence of the statistical significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 was refuted by the obtained results accordingly was rejected.

5.3.8. Hypothesis Eight

The eighth research null hypothesis stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of relative pronouns, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.” The results of the t-Test analysis indicated that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 9.021 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use of English relative pronouns. Therefore, the eighth null hypothesis which claimed the nonexistence of the statistical significant difference in the error rate between the two groups was rejected and refuted by the results obtained.

5.3.9. Hypothesis Nine

The ninth research null hypothesis stated that: “When the test results are analyzed in terms of the use of the genitive case markers, there will be no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2.” The results of the t-Test analysis indicated that there was statistically significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 10.152 in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in the use the English genitive case. Hence, in
accordance with this result the ninth null hypothesis which denied the significant difference in the errors rate between the two groups was rejected.

5.3.10. Hypothesis Ten

The tenth research hypothesis stated that: “when the test results are analyzed in terms of interlingual and intralingual errors there will be no statistically significant difference between errors that were made by the students due to interlingual interference and errors that were made by them due to intralingual sources”. The results of the t-Test analysis showed that there was significant difference at 0.05 level of significance with an amount of 2.170 between the errors which were attributed to interlingual interference i.e. the mother tongue interference of the learners (MTI) and the errors which were attributed to intralingual sources. Therefore, the tenth hypothesis which denied the existence of the significant difference between the errors that were made by the subjects due to interlingual interference and the errors that were made by them due to intralingual sources was rejected.
Table 11 shows the distribution of errors made by SG1 and SG2 in the use of investigated components of grammar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>SG1 Errors</th>
<th></th>
<th>SG2 Errors</th>
<th></th>
<th>SG1 and SG2 total numbers of errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of errors</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Total number of errors</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>2266</td>
<td>75.53</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>66.03</td>
<td>4247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>49.78</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>29.29</td>
<td>1455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>46.87</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>39.94</td>
<td>1528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Tense of irregular verbs</td>
<td>2109</td>
<td>65.90</td>
<td>1527</td>
<td>47.71</td>
<td>3636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past participle of irregular verbs</td>
<td>2173</td>
<td>67.90</td>
<td>1716</td>
<td>53.62</td>
<td>3889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun verb agreement</td>
<td>897</td>
<td>70.07</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>54.68</td>
<td>1597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctions</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>85.83</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>67.66</td>
<td>1842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative pronouns</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>75.87</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>1003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive case</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>81.20</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>45.77</td>
<td>1473</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 12 shows the classification of errors that were made by SG1 and SG2 in terms of interlingual and intralingual sources of errors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical item</th>
<th>Interlingual Errors</th>
<th>Intralingual Errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositions</td>
<td>3483</td>
<td>82.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>30.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Tense of irregular verbs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past participle of irregular verbs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun verb agreement</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>15.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctions</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>12.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative pronouns</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>56.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genitive case</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the above tables the following points can be observed:

1. The total number of errors committed by the subjects of the two groups was twenty thousand six hundred seventy. Students of SG1 made eleven thousand seven hundred sixty-five errors, while students of SG2 made eight thousand nine hundred five errors. Of the total errors identified, 67.45% was made by SG1, while 51.06% made by SG2. This result indicates that the performance of both groups was disappointing due to the tremendous difficulty that they have in the use of previously mentioned grammatical categories investigated by this study.

2. Of the total errors identified in the use of the selected preposition, 75.53% made by SG1 while 66.03% made by SG2. This result indicates that both groups have the same degree of difficulty in the use of English prepositions because the difference in the percentage of the two groups was to some extent minor.

3. Of the total errors identified in the use of the articles, 49.78% made by SG1, while 29.29% made by SG2. This result indicates that SG2 are to some extent performed better than SG1 but it cannot be said that they are perfectly proficient in the usage of the English articles but it seems that these articles do not pose serious difficulty to them.

4. Of the total errors identified in the formation of the plural of the given nouns, 46.87% made by SG1, while 39.94% made by SG2. This insignificant difference of the percentages between the two groups indicates that both groups have the same degree of difficulty. It indicates
also that the subjects of both groups are not able to handle the English plural formation rules properly.

5. Of the total errors identified in the formation of the past tense of irregular verbs, 65.90% made by SG1, while 47.71% made by SG2.

6. Of the total errors identified in the formation of the past participle of irregular verbs, 67.90% made by SG1, while 53.62% made by SG2. These percentages indicate that the formation of past and past participle tenses of irregular verbs forms poses the same tremendous difficulty for both groups. Therefore, their performance was convergent.

7. Of the total errors identified in the use of the copula and the auxiliary “to have”, 70.07% made by SG1, while 54.68% made by SG2. It indicates that both groups have the same degree of difficulty in dealing these grammatical items.

8. Of the total errors identified in the use of conjunctions, 85.83% made by SG1, while 67.66% made by SG2. The high percentage of errors of each group indicates the tremendous difficulty that the students of both groups have in the usage of English conjunctions.

9. Of the total errors identified in the use of relative pronouns, 75.87% made by SG1, while 49.50% made by SG2. This high percentage difference between the two groups shows that SG1 have more difficulty in dealing with English relative pronouns.

10. Of the total errors identified in the use of the genitive case, 81.20% made by SG1, while 45.77% made by SG2. This high difference in
percentage between the two groups indicates that students of SG1 have more difficulty than students of SG2. It seems that majority of SG1 were not familiar with English genitive marker at all.

11. Four thousand nine hundred seventy one errors were attributed to interlingual sources, while fifteen thousand six hundred ninety nine were attributed to intralingual sources of errors. Therefore, of the total errors identified, 24.04 % were caused by interlingual interference i.e. the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI), while 75.95 % were caused by intralingual sources.

12. Of the total errors identified in the use of the selected prepositions, 82.01 % were due to the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI), while 17.98 % were due to intralingual sources.

13. Of the total errors identified in the use of the articles, 30.79 % was caused by the mother tongue interference (MTI), while 69.20 % was caused by intralingual sources.

14. The total errors identified in the formation of the plural of selected English nouns i.e. 100 % was due to intralingual sources, while the learners, mother tongue had no influence.

15. 100 % i.e. the total errors identified in the formation of the past tense of irregular verbs was attributed to intralingual sources, while the interference of the learners’ mother tongue was excluded.
16. Also 100 % of the identified errors in the formation of the past participle forms of irregular verbs was attributed to intralingual sources, while the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI) was also excluded.

17. Of the total errors identified in the use of the copula and the auxiliary “to have” 15.65 % was due to the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI), while 84.34 % was due to intralingual sources.

18. Of the total errors identified in the use of conjunctions, 12.05 % was caused by the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI), while 87.94 % was due to intralingual sources.

19. Of the total errors identified in the use of the relative pronouns, 56.63 % was due to the learner’s mother tongue interference (MTI), while 43.36 % was caused by intralingual sources.

20. The total errors identified in the use of the genitive case i.e. 100 % was caused by intralingual sources, while the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI) was excluded.

5.4. Conclusions of the Study

Arabic is Semitic synthetic highly inflected language, while English is Indo-European analytic language lost most of the inflectional characteristics of old English. In contrast with English, the Arabic syntactical relationships of nouns is marked by case endings i.e. nouns are inflected by prefixes, infixes, and suffixes to denote persons, things, numbers, and gender. These two languages
have not only two different grammatical systems but also totally different phonological, semantic, and writing systems.

As a result, Arab EFL learners seem to have serious difficulties in dealing with English both spoken and written. They are not able to write or speak in English competently and fluently. Therefore, they continuously make grammatical errors which are due to the huge differences between Arabic and English, to their unfamiliarity with the English rhetoric system and to their ignorance of the conventions and rule restriction of English. The conclusions of the study are summarized in the following:

1. The findings of the study are consistent with literature i.e. it agrees with previous studies conducted on EFL Arab learners which came to the conclusion that these learners have tremendous difficulty in the areas that this study investigated.

2. In terms of interlingual and intralingual causes of errors this study in general does not agree with the most of the studies which previously conducted on Arab EFL learners. For example, studies such as (Scott & Tucker, 1974; Mukattash, 1978 Sharma, 1981; El-sayed, 1982; Mehdi, 1982; Kayed, 1985; Obeidat, 1986; Al-sindy, 1994) claimed that the Arab EFL learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI) is the main source of the learners’ errors.

3. The study, however, supports the most previous studies which conducted on the EFL Arab learners which claim that the mother tongue interference is the main cause of errors in the use of prepositions, relative pronouns,
and also agrees with the claim that the errors in the verb phrase (VP) are mainly due to intralingual sources.

4. This study supports Al-Muarik’s (1982) study which concluded that a low percentage of errors was due to the mother tongue interference (MTI), while a high percentage of errors was due to intralingual sources.

5. The study also supports the previous studies which concluded that the investigated difficulties are persistent and seem to be continuous regardless of the length of time Arab EFL learners spent in their career of learning English as a second/foreign language.

6. All the hypotheses proposed by the study were rejected except the hypothesis number three because it was found that there was no statistically significant difference in the error rate between SG1 and SG2 in pluralizing the given English nouns.

7. Since the frequency of the errors made by the subjects of the two groups was very high, the study, therefore, revealed that the subjects are not able to use the investigated components of language correctly.

8. It was found that the students of SG2 (urban) did not utilize the facilities of education available to them in Aden city. In other words, these facilities did not help them to improve their ability of using the aforementioned components of grammar since there was relatively not much difference between the two groups.
9. It was indicated by the results of the study that the intralingual errors occurred more frequently than interlingual ones.

10. Finally, the findings of the study revealed that the English language teaching situation at Aden University is not only unsatisfactory but frustrated as well. Therefore, this study is hoped to be useful to the curriculum designers for producing the appropriate materials and simulative to the EFL teachers at Aden university to use the effective technique and methods to overcome the difficulties investigated by the study. Moreover, this study is hoped to be useful to all EFL Arab teachers and learners. Finally, it can be said that the objectives of the study were achieved and its questions were answered.

5.5. Implications

On the basis of the researcher’s understanding and the conclusions of the study, the first implication is that committing errors in the process of learning a foreign language (FL) or a second language (SL) is inevitable because it is an essential part of it. These errors reveal the strategies of learning used by the second/foreign language learner in dealing with language. Transfer of rules from the mother tongue, overgeneralization and simplification are instances of second language learning strategies by which the learner makes use of the previous knowledge of his mother tongue or his limited knowledge of the target language.
According to the results of the study a high frequency of errors was due to intralingual sources, whereas a low frequency of errors was caused by the learners' mother tongue interference (MTI). Therefore, the intralingual sources of errors play an important role in the process of second language learning. According to Ellis (1994) intralingual errors reflect the general characteristics of rule learning such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules, ignorance of rule restriction, false concepts hypothesized and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply.

Second both interlingual and intralingual errors made by the two groups of this study were systematic as in the most of the previous studies. These systematic errors are persistent and continued problems for EFL Arab learners. Third, the results of the study indicated that the learners of the concerned English departments were not given sufficient opportunities, drills and practices to use the grammatical rules concerning the investigated areas of difficulty.

5.6. General Recommendations

To improve the learners' ability in the use of the investigated components of grammar in particular and their English in general the following recommendations should be taken into account:

1. Teachers should provide the learners with explanations of the sources of the intralingual errors as well as explanations of the differences between Arabic and English structures.
2. Since the teachers play the most important role in the process of learning, Aden University should send its EFL teachers to pursue their higher education in the U.K., USA and other countries where English is spoken as native language. Those teachers who have already finished their higher education and are in-service should also be sent to these countries as a part of training programs to improve their competence and performance in English.

3. Each English department at Aden University should have at least one experienced English teacher who is native speaker of English. Therefore, the learners will have exposure to English as it is spoken by its native speakers.

4. A short one month courses, training sessions, workshop on EFL Arab learners’ grammar difficulties and problems should be organized periodically by Aden University.

5. Since the learners’ mother tongue interference (MTI) is the main cause of the errors in the use of the prepositions, teachers should explain the differences in the meaning and usage between Arabic and English prepositions in order to avoid the literal translation into Arabic which is the main cause of the errors. EFL teachers are also recommended to group together the spatial prepositions logically and teach their meanings and uses by presenting objects in the classroom and then conducting intensive drilling to stress the use of each preposition. Temporal prepositions must be identified and explained.
systematically. They should be taught in situations. As for miscellaneous prepositions the teachers are recommended to teach verbs, nouns or adjectives that govern prepositions with an example of a prepositional phrase attached to them (Habash, 1982). Zughoul (1991:53) proposes that the only way to minimize the use of the literal translation strategy is by “correction and explanation” learners must therefore be corrected when they make such errors (cited in Rababah, 2003:24).

6. Two lists contain count nouns and uncounted nouns should be given to the students. Then teacher explains that only count nouns can have the indefinite article, “a” or “an” in front of them and when something is mentioned for the first time “a” or “an” can be used if it is mentioned again “the” is used. A list of proper nouns is recommended to be given to the learners and should be instructed that these nouns do not take articles (Cowan, 2008). However, this should be presented with intensive drills in the classroom. Since Arabic has no indefinite article it is recommended to explain the difference in the use of English and Arabic definite articles.

7. Systematic explanations are recommended to be given to the learners about the problem of generalization when they pluralize the English nouns because it is main cause of the error in this area. Intensive exercises which include nouns that are made plural by internal
change and adding “-es” or by internal vowel change or by zero modifications are recommended.

8. Since English irregular verbs are not many a list is recommended to be prepared by the teacher and learners should be instructed to memorize each form of irregular verb individually.

9. Intensive drills are recommended to be conducted in the classroom to deal with errors in the subject verb agreement. To avoid the omission of the copula which is due to the Arabic interference, teacher should regularly stress that Arabic has neither copula nor auxiliaries while English has. Hence, the learners will avoid their omission when writing or speaking in English.

10. To avoid the wrong selection of conjunctions which is the main cause of the errors a systematic correction of the learners’ errors and constant explanation of the meanings of the most used conjunction are recommended. Also intensive drills and practices are recommended. However, Cowan (2008) suggests some controlled writing activities that include the use of the coordination patterns which can help the learners to use coordination patterns that present the information more succinctly, for example conjoined NPs instead of conjoined clauses, as well as VP ellipsis and other ways of shortening coordinate sentences.

11. Explanations of the meanings and usage of each relative pronoun are recommended in order to avoid the interference of the colloquial
Arabic relative pronoun “illi” the learners should be given intensive drills. Afolabi (n.d:21) recommended the following:

(i) The teaching of relative clauses should be thoroughly taught and introduced to students early in their English course.

(ii) Relative clauses should be taught alongside noun phrases, noun clauses and sentences rather than teaching them in isolation in order to enhance their comprehension.

12. Intensive drills are also recommended for stressing that the genitive marker “-s” is used only with animate objects with few exceptions. These exceptions should be illustrated by examples in which the marker “-’s” is given to inanimate. In this way the problem of overgeneralization will be overcome.

5.7. Suggestions for further research

1. The high frequency of the errors made by the subjects in the investigated difficulties by this study revealed that these areas were problematic for EFL Arab learners. Therefore, more studies should be conducted in these areas for getting a better understanding of the nature of these difficulties for the purpose of finding solutions for them.

2. This study was conducted on undergraduate EFL Arab learners (advanced level), therefore, there is need to investigate the EFL Arab learners’ difficulties at the secondary and basic schools.
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Appendixes
Appendix -1:

The subjects' Background Questions

Name: ...........................................................................................................

Sex: ..............................................................................................................

Age: ............................................................................................................

Urban: ( )

Rural: ( )

Name of the city/ the town or village you live in: .........................

Name of the college: ..................................................................................

Level: ........................................................................................................

Province: .................................................................................................
Appendix -2

Prepositions Test

Fill in the blanks by choosing the correct preposition.

1. I got there ............... about 8 o’clock
   A. in
   B. at
   C. on
   D. none of the above (write it)

2. The submarine caught fire ............... Friday morning.
   A. in
   B. at
   C. on
   D. to

3. I had first met Kruger ...............a party at the British Embassy.
   A. at
   B. on
   C. in
   D. none of the above (write it)

4. In the Arab world girls ...............the age of sixteen are married.
   A. in
   B. of
   C. at
   D. none of the above (write it)

5. We expected a great deal ...............the sixties.
   A. from
   B. at
   C. in
   D. none of the above (write it)

6. I’ll be ...............work.
   A. at
   B. in
   C. on
   D. over
7. Tom's father is ..........hospital.
   A. at
   B. on
   C. for
   D. in

8. Have you ever worked ..........a farm?
   A. at
   B. in
   C. on
   D. for

9. He is married ..........my cousin.
   A. on
   B. from
   C. with
   D. none of the above (write it)

10. I am obliged to you ..........your kindness.
    A. to
    B. from
    C. of
    D. none of the above (write it)

11. He is indifferent ..........his own interest.
    A. from
    B. with
    C. to
    D. for

12. A square may be equivalent ..........a triangle.
    A. for
    B. to
    C. with
    D. by

    A. on
    B. for
    C. about
    D. none of the above (write it)

232.
14. They danced ..........the disco music.
   A. to
   B. with
   C. on
   D. none of the above (write it)

15. I paid ..............the ticket.
   A. on
   B. about
   C. to
   D. none of the above (write it)

16. He was searching .............the pen.
   A. on
   B. about
   C. to
   D. for

17. The gatekeeper gave me a gun to shoot..............
   A. by
   B. from
   C. through
   D. none of the above (write it)

18. He has strong feeling ...............jealousy.
   A. from
   B. with
   C. by
   D. none of the above (write it)

19. If I leave my job I’ll have no money to live..............
   A. with
   B. by
   C. on
   D. at

20. People called to inquire..............your health.
   A. on
   B. about
   C. after
   D. at
21. They left the house to go ............. a walk after tea.
   A. to  
   B. for
   C. in
   D. at

22. The houses ............. our street are all identical.
   A. at
   B. on
   C. with
   D. in

23. Burning tanks threw great spirals ............. smoke into the air.
   A. of
   B. from
   C. with
   D. by

24. I have lived in this house ............. six years.
   A. to
   B. for
   C. in
   D. none of the above

25. We met a lot of interesting people ............. our holiday.
   A. in
   B. at
   C. within
   D. during

26. Put the luggage ............. top of the car.
   A. above
   B. on
   C. over
   D. none of the above

27. Tom will be back ............. Monday.
   A. by
   B. at
   C. in
   D. none of the above (write it)
28. There was a report ............... the front page of the newspaper.
   A. at
   B. in
   C. over
   D. none of the above (write it)

29. What time did you get ............... London?
   A. in
   B. at
   C. for
   D. none of the above (write it)

30. I opened the door and I went ............... the room.
   A. for
   B. to
   C. at
   D. none of the above (write it)

31. Tom usually goes to work ............... bus.
   A. on
   B. with
   C. in
   D. none of the above (write it)

32. Police want to question a man in connection ............... robbery.
   A. with
   B. by
   C. to
   D. for

33. There has been an increase ............... road accidents recently.
   A. in
   B. at
   C. for
   D. to

34. The advantage ............... living alone is that you can do what you like.
   A. from
   B. at
   C. in
   D. none of the above (write it)
35. There are many advantages.............living alone.
   A. from
   B. at
   C. in
   D. none of the above (write it)

36. Did you get an invitation .............the party?
   A. for
   B. by
   C. from
   D. none of the above (write it)

37. I didn’t watch the match .............television.
   A. in
   B. at
   C. with
   D. none of the above (write it)

38. I took your umbrella .............mistake.
   A. with
   B. on
   C. about
   D. none of the above (write it)

39. It was very kind .............you to help.
   A. from
   B. for
   C. of
   D. before

40. She has always been very nice .............me.
   A. with
   B. on
   C. for
   D. to

41. What are you so angry .............?
   A. from
   B. on
   C. of
   D. none of the above (write it)
42. I am not very good ..........repairing things.
   A. in
   B. to
   C. on
   D. none of the above (write it)

43. I often dream .............. being rich.
   A. to
   B. for
   C. of
   D. with

44. I prefer tea .............coffee.
   A. from
   B. on
   C. of
   D. none of the above (write it)

45. I congratulated him .............passing his driving test.
   A. for
   B. to
   C. with
   D. on

46. I borrowed it .............the library.
   A. from
   B. of
   C. by
   D. none of the above (write it)

47. The school provides all its students ...............books.
   A. with
   B. by
   C. from
   D. none of the above (write it)

48. She takes care .............. her children.
   A. with
   B. by
   C. on
   D. none of the above (write it)
49. He is .................. suspicion.
   A. over
   B. above
   C. at
   D. by

50. Please speak ............... English language.
    A. by
    B. with
    C. at
    D. none of the above (write it)

51. He was looking ................ at the computer monitor screen.
    A. in
    B. on
    C. at
    D. none of the above (write it)

52. I came ............... my own free will.
    A. by
    B. with
    C. on
    D. none of the above (write it)

53. The temperature remained ............... freezing all day.
    A. under
    B. below
    C. beneath
    D. none of the above (write it)

54. The water flows ............... the bridge.
    A. under
    B. below
    C. beneath
    D. for

55. It is now ten minutes ............... twelve.
    A. for
    B. to
    C. over
    D. under
56. We talked ..........a lot of things at the meeting.
   A. on
   B. about
   C. at
   D. in

57. I will never forgive them............what they did.
   A. for
   B. to
   C. in
   D. on

58. The typist is away ..........holiday this week.
   A. in
   B. at
   C. to
   D. none of the above (write it)

59. I keep a dictionary ............ me when I’m doing crosswords.
   A. about
   B. to
   C. beside
   D. none of the above (write it)

60. They found the body buried ............ a pile of leaves
   A. under
   B. below
   C. beneath
   D. none of the above (write it)

61. The golf course is ............ our house.
   A. before
   B. past
   C. behind
   D. beyond

62. I lost my keys somewhere ............ the car and the house.
   A. between
   B. through
   C. among
   D. none of the above (write it)
63. She put a rug ............. the sleeping child.
   A. on
   B. over
   C. upon
   D. none of the above (write it)

64. .............God I swear it.
   A. with
   B. at
   C. in
   D. before

65. He fired shot .............. shot.
   A. with
   B. after
   C. behind
   D. none of the above (write it)

66. The road continues .............. the village up into hills.
   A. beyond
   B. behind
   C. past
   D. none of the above (write it)

67. Tears ran ...............her face.
   A. on
   B. upon
   C. over
   D. down

68. He turned and walked off .............. the night.
   A. into
   B. for
   C. to
   D. none of the above (write it)

69. The parents were joyful ...............seeing their child takes his first steps.
   A. on
   B. upon
   C. over
   D. above
70. George Orwell’s books have been translated ...............many languages.
   A. to
   B. for
   C. with
   D. none of the above (writ it)

71. Every Christian should go to church..............Easter and Christmas.
   A. in
   B. on
   C. at
   D. to

72. Every Christian went to church.............. Christmas Day.
   A. in
   B. on
   C. at
   D. to

73. Let fire burn out now. Who would see smoke..............night-time anyway?
   A. in
   B. on
   C. at
   D. to

74. it’s terribly good of you to turn out............a night like this.
   A. in
   B. on
   C. to
   D. none of the above (writ it)

75. There was another important opening............the same evening.
   A. to
   B. on
   C. at
   D. none of the above (writ it)
Appendix-3

**The Articles Test**

Fill in the blanks with (a) or (an) or (the) as may be suitable.

1. There was ............... man talking to ................. woman outside my house. ............... man looked English but I think ............... woman was foreign.

2. When we were on holiday, we stayed at ................. hotel. In the evenings, sometimes we had dinner at ................. hotel and sometimes in ............. restaurant.

3. I saw ................. film last night. ................. film was about ............... soldier and ............. beautiful girl. ............... soldier was in love with ............... girl but ............... girl was in love with ............... teacher. So ............... soldier shot ............... teacher and married ............... girl.

4. In April and May ........... wind blows steadily.

5. There is ................. wind coming off the river.

6. We rang for ................. ambulance.

7. Australia is the home of ........... kangaroo.

8. The train leaves Cardiff at four in ........... afternoon.
astonished waiter was now watching from the other end of the room.

He was one of few who knew where to find me.

He has bought the children puppy.

old lady was calling to him.

After weeks of looking we eventually bought house.

We had to write story about our parents’ childhood.

The FBI is conducting investigation.

He is university student.

I met the vicar he was worried man.

computer can only do what you program it to do.

dog likes to eat far more meat than a human being.

We drove under gloomy sky.

weak sun shines on the promenade.

He returned after hour.

Socattra is island.

My favorite flower is rose.

January is first month of the year.

Mukalla is capital of Hadramout.
27. Only television programme he watches is the news.

28. Everybody left at the end of the meeting.

29. Tom is a very nice person.

30. I would like to be an English teacher.

Appendix-4:

**Plural Formation Test**

Change the following nouns into plural.

1. Belief
2. Bottle
3. Box
4. Boy
5. Bus
6. Bush
7. Calf
8. Child
9. Church
10. Country
11. Degree
12. Echo
13. Embargo
14. Englishwoman

15. Foot

16. Furniture

17. Glass

18. Half

19. Hero

20. Information

21. Knife

22. Lady

23. Leaf

24. Leg

25. Life

26. Louse

27. Man

28. Month

29. Mouse

30. Ox
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<th></th>
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<tbody>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>Pet</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Photo</td>
</tr>
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<td>33.</td>
<td>Potato</td>
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<td>34.</td>
<td>Prize</td>
</tr>
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<td>35.</td>
<td>Radio</td>
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<td>36.</td>
<td>Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Sheaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Shelf</td>
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<td>39.</td>
<td>Tab</td>
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<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Tomato</td>
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<tr>
<td>41.</td>
<td>Tooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>Tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>Wife</td>
</tr>
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### The Past and Past Participle Formation Test

Write the past tense and the past participle of the following verbs:

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<th>Past tense</th>
<th>Past Participle</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>2 See</td>
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<td>3 Give</td>
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<td>4 Burst</td>
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<td>5 Drive</td>
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<td>6 Come</td>
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<td>8 Cost</td>
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69 Smell
70 Behold
71 Wring
72 Sting
73 Spit
74 Spoil
75 Swing
76 Shrink
77 Stink
78 Stride
79 Bear
80 Shoe

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Appendix-6:

**The Use of Copula and the Auxiliary “To Have” Test**

Fill the blanks using (is, am, are, was, were, has, have).

1. Yesterday the sun .......... shining.
2. The atmosphere right now .......... very relaxed.
3. When we arrived there ............ huge cracks in the ground.
4. Today my mother and father ............ ill.
5. Time, money and effort .............. needed to do this job.
6. All this effort and sacrifice ............ not helped to alleviate poverty.
7. It became necessary to involve everyman, woman and child who .......... willing to help.
8. One generation’s problems or successes .......... passed to the next.
9. There ............ two men in the room last night.
10. There .............. a sofa and two chairs on display yesterday.
11. There ............ a spirit and a will to win in the team.
12. There .............. a lot of people camped there.
13. There ............ a dozen reasons why a man might hurry from a bar.
14. They believed that poverty ............ a threat to world peace.
15. Electricity .............. potentially dangerous.
16. The rich .............. benefited much more the poor.
17. Some of the information .............. already been analyzed.
18. Some of my best friends ............. policemen.
19. I .............. sure both of you agree with me.
20. Half of our work .......... to design programmes.

21. Two thirds of the planet’s surface .......... covered with water.

22. Two fifths of the forest .......... removed.

23. Two thirds of Chad’s exports .......... cotton last year.

24. A quarter of the students .......... seen individually

25. More than half of these photographs .......... of her.


27. The organization does not .......... a good track record.

28. He didn’t .......... a very grand salary.

29. There never .......... any great change.

30. They .......... unhappy with the way things were going.

31. Somebody else will .......... to go out there.

32. Ninety percent of most food .......... water.
Appendix-7:

Test of the use conjunctions

Fill the blanks with appropriate conjunctions in the box

Nevertheless- as if –though - yet – nor – since- till – so- whether- while –but – if –because- and – or- although – so that – until etc.

1. I like films ...............I don’t go to the cinema very often.
2. ............... she is ambitious, don’t try to hold her back.
3. They were going by car ...............it was more comfortable.
4. Did you buy those curtains ...............do you make your own?
5. I used to read a lot ...............I don’t get much time for books now.
6. I ran fast ...............I missed the train.
7. Stay here ...............I go.
8. I was tired ...............I could not go.
9. I doubt ...............he will win the race.
10. We will wait here ...............it rains.
11. I work hard ...............I may secure good marks.
12. He always looks ...............he is very busy.
13. ............... he was lived for years in London, he writes in German.
14. She spoke slowly ...............firmly.
15. She doesn’t drink ...............smoke.
16. We will not damage ...............destroy the samples.
17. I told her to go home, ............... she refused to move.
18. Mostly, they just sat ...............chatted.
Appendix-8:

**Test of the Use of Relative Pronouns**

Fill in the blanks using the appropriate relative pronoun (who – that – which – whom – where – whose – etc.)

1. The girl ................ was injured in the accident is now in hospital.
2. Everything ................. happened was my fault.
3. We saw some people ................. car had broken down.
4. The hotel ................. we stayed wasn’t very clean.
5. She told me her address ................. I wrote down on a piece of paper.
6. The strike at the car factory ................. lasted ten days, is now over.
7. Fortunately we had a map, without ................. we would have got lost.
8. He tried on three jackets, none of ................. fitted him.
9. This school is only for children ................. first language is not English.
10. Colin told me about his new job, ................. he is enjoying very much.
11. Jim passed his driving test ................. surprised everybody.
12. I would like to live in a country ................. there is plenty of sunshine.
13. Do you still remember the day ................. we first met?
14. We know a lot of people ................. live in India.
15. The last time ..............I saw her, she looked very well.

16. A widow is a woman .............husband is dead.

17. John............... speaks French and Italian, works as a tourist guide.

18. Mr. Yates............... has worked for the same company all his life, is retiring next month.

19. Two men, neither of .............I had seen before, came into my office.

20. The sun ................. is one of millions of stars in the universe, provides us with heat and light.
Appendix-9:

Test of the Genitive Case Use

Join the following nouns using an apostrophe (‘), with or without ‘S’ or using of ...of...

1. The camera/Tom
2. The roof/the garage
3. The name/the book
4. The chair/the arm is broken
5. The eyes/the cat
6. The top/the page
7. The daughter/Charles
8. The tree/the branch fell down
9. The school/the walls were full of slogans
10. The newspaper/today
11. The toys/the children
12. My sister/the room
13. Jill has three weeks/the holiday
14. The name/your wife
15. The name/this street
16. The result/the football match
17. The car/Mike’s parents
18. The birthday/my father
19. The garden/our neighbors
20. The ground floor/the building
21. The children/Don and Mary
22. The house/my aunt and uncle
23. Tomorrow/meeting has been cancelled
24. Have you still got Saturday/newspaper?
25. I need eight hours/sleep a night
26. I wore a pair of my sister/boots
27. Billy patted the dog/head
28. Davis/House
29. I heard the girls/steps on the stairs