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**A Study of EFL Learners' Transfer from Arabic to English in the Use of
the English Simple Past**

**The Case of Second Year EFL Learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia,
University of Jijel**

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for
Master Degree in Didactics of English**

Submitted by:

Hayet BENBEKHMA

Nardjis ALLALOUCHE

Supervised by:

Fateh BOUNAR

Board of Examiners

Chairperson: Azzedine FANIT

Jijel University

Supervisor: Fateh BOUNAR

Jijel University

Examiner: Samia AZIEB

Jijel University

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Declaration

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "A Study of EFL Learners Transfer from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past," is our own work and all the sources we have been acknowledged by means of references. We also certify that we have not copied or plagiarized the work of other students or researchers partially or fully. In case any material is not documented, we shall be responsible for the consequences.

Signature



Date

05/09/2021

Dedication

After praising God the Almighty to Greatest, I dedicate this modest work to myself

first,

*To my parents, especially my beloved **Mother**, who loves and supports guided me*

all the way to success

To my dear sisters and brothers who always encouraged me in all possible ways

To my amazing friends; with whom I shared the university experience,

To anyone who had a positive impact in my life

*May **Allah** protect you all!*

Hayet

Dedication

I dedicate this humble work to myself

And to everyone who helped me finishing it

Thank you all!

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Abstract

The present study aims at determining whether Algerian second year EFL learners at Mohammed Sedik Ben Yahia University rely on their mother tongue when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English or not. Therefore, this study revolves about the basic assumptions that second year EFL learners mostly commit misformation errors, and that native language interference is the main cause of those errors. To get convincing answers to the research questions, a writing task was given to 30 second year EFL learners about a specific topic in order to uncover the main types of errors and sources that they made. The analysis of the data at the researchers' disposal disclosed that the most frequent type of errors that second year EFL learners commit is misformation errors, and that intralingual transfer is the primary source of those errors. So that, the first research assumption was confirmed; however, the second one was rejected.

Keywords: Error Analysis, Simple Past Tense, Transfer.

List of Abbreviations

CA: Contrastive Analysis

CAH: Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

EA: Error Analysis

EFL: English Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

LAD: Language Acquisition Device

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

MT: Mother Tongue

NL: Native Language

SL: Source Language

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TL: Target Language

UG: Universal Grammar

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General Introduction

Language is the basic tool of communication. It is the way through which people can understand each other, and share their ideas and thoughts. In fact, learning another language can facilitate the human's social life. However, learning a foreign language is not an easy task, because one does not have to learn only the equivalent words in a foreign language. So that, mastering a foreign language requires having a grammatical and contextual knowledge of a particular language, in order to have a successful communication.

Furthermore, the mother tongue has its own role in learning any foreign language. By definition, the mother tongue is the native language of the speaker, by which he thinks and speaks. Though, it is known that by a way or another mother tongue influence either negatively or positively the process of learning foreign languages.

Simple past tense as an important part of English grammar is found difficult by L2/FL learners, including tense and tense usage. For instance, learners may face problems in using simple past tense due to lack of knowledge about grammatical structures. The use of simple past tense is still confusing for the Algerian second year EFL learners for the complexity of its forms and uses.

a) Background of the Study

The topic of transfer from Arabic to English has been studied by many researchers throughout history of learning foreign languages. Though, "A study of EFL learners' transfer from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past" had little focus comparing to the whole theme. The researchers that worked on "A study of EFL learners' transfer from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past" include; "The Efficacy of Error Analysis on Second Language Learners' Written Accuracy", "Error

Analysis of the Language Transfer in Grammar Construction of the Brain”, and “Language Transfer and Grammatical Speaking Errors among Saudi Students.”

In the study of “The Efficacy of Error Analysis on Second Language Learners’ Written Accuracy”, Mourssi (2013) claimed that Arab learners of English tend to think in their MT first when doing English Activities, and the same thing occurs with most of the Arab learners of English even of higher levels. This study tries to investigate the efficacy of error analysis on the acquiring L2 grammar. A quantitative and qualitative analysis was followed for all the simple past tense forms produced by one class were selected from a total of 12 enrolled in grade 12. The group consisted of 37 Arab learners of English; they were all Arabic speakers and had been learning English as a foreign language. The findings obtained from this work showed that Arab learners, generally, made such kinds of errors because they were transferring the grammar rules of their MT to the English language.

AndiUmmulKhair (2016) conducted a study on “Error Analysis of the Language Transfer in Grammar Construction of the Brain”, since this study tries to analyse the reasons of learners in making fossilized errors on the sentence uttered in their effort of language transfer and related it to the grammar construction in the brain. A descriptive analysis research was followed and a sample of 5 students of first semester in STKIP Mega Rezky Makassar. 5 videos have been chosen and transcribed one by one. The data was collected through the analysis of 5 videos transcription of conversation. According to the findings obtained, errors that are made by the students due to their active trial in making sense of the limited knowledge of the language they are explored to the brain in order to express some phrases systematically.

Alahmadi&Kesseri (2013) have undertaken a study of “Language Transfer Speaking Errors among Saudi Students.” This study tries to discuss grammatical errors

resulting from transfer amongst Saudi students. An analytical study whereby interviews have been conducted on 30 Saudi students in Saudi Arabia in order to identify the most common grammatical errors made by Saudi students and find out the level of language, the kinds of errors produced, and the procedures that students learn to overcome the transferred errors. Finally, the study concluded with some suggestions to tackle the issue of speaking errors among Saudi students.

Despite the fact that these studies tackled the issue of transfer and the use of errors to measure this transfer, a gap can be seen in “A study of EFL learners’ transfer from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past”. Since the literature around this field was not detailed in term of the use of the past tense in this transfer. The current study aims at investigating the errors that second year EFL learners commit when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English. This quantitative study employed a writing task to collect the required data. The conclusions drawn from the above studies are considered somehow useful for this research.

b) Statement of the Problem

During the foreign language process, EFL learners resort to their native language as a source when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past tense. Accordingly, this study goes through the analysis of students’ short paragraphs. The emphasis is on identifying and analysing the errors that are committed by second year Algerian EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University.

c) **Research Questions**

The current research seeks to answer the following questions:

- What are the most common errors made by 2nd year EFL learners when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English?
- What is the primary source of errors those learners commit?

d) **Research Assumptions**

In the light of the above mentioned research questions, the current research seeks at examine the following research assumption:

- ❖ Once second year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, they make mistakes when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English.
- ❖ The learners frequently make errors when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English in the use of the simple past tense because they are influenced by their mother tongue.

e) **Aims of the research**

The main objectives of this research is to shed some light on language transfer as a real and an inevitable phenomenon that should be considered in any study of the secondforeign language learning process and determine whether EFL learners rely on their mother tongue (Arabic) in the use of English past simple tense.

f) **Methodology of the Research**

The methodological procedure followed in conducting this research is testing. In this test, students were asked to write short paragraphs about the best holiday they had ever spent. The test upon which our study is based is directed to 30 students chosen randomly from a population of second year Algerian EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik

Ben Yahia University. The respondents are all native speakers of Algerian Arabic. They are chosen in this research because they are supposed to have reached a certain level of proficiency in English. Consequently; they can manipulate the English grammatical structure.

g) Organization of the Dissertation

This piece of research is divided into two main parts: a theoretical part which includes one chapter about the related literature, and a practical part which consists also of one chapter.

Chapter one in two sections, the first section deals with the theory of language transfer, as an essential issue in applied linguistics and foreign language learning and teaching, as one of the most controversial issues representing considerably changing views. It deals also with contrastive analysis (CA) and error analysis (EA) as two approaches aiming at making language learning and teaching. The second section however, focuses on the past simple tense. The second chapter, on the other hand, is divided into two sections that are devoted mainly to the methodology of research and data analysis and discussion respectively.

Chapter One: Language Transfer Theory and the Use of Past Tense

Introduction

Language transfer seems to be a substantial concept in both Applied Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA). It has been a controversy among scholars, whose main interests were in language classification and language change. Some scholars like Corder and Ringborn claim the importance of transfer in learning because of its facilitative effect resulting from similarities existing in two languages. Others like Cortes and Bransford rejected this idea, arguing that learning a language can be acquired without drawing on any previously learned language.

Since this study is concerned with EFL learners' transfer from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past, a part of this chapter will be devoted to the theory of language transfer, types and views of language transfer, and the theories behind it. The second part is devoted to the past simple tense; it discusses first the definitions provided by different scholars and linguists. It highlights everything that is related to the simple past tense including its definitions, its form, and uses.

1.1. Section One: Language Transfer Theory

1.1.1. Language Transfer

1.1.1.1. Definition of Language Transfer

Language transfer, also known as L1 interference, has been a fundamental element in applied linguistics, second language acquisition, and language teaching for a long time. The notion of language transfer plays a big role in the learning of another language. According to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (1988) language transfer is "the effect of one language on the learning of another" (P.322). Language transfer appears when EFL learners rely on their mother tongue for the

acquisition of second and foreign language (FL). This has to do with comparing and contrasting the mother tongue and the target language. Simply put, the issue of language transfer takes place whenever a learner draws on his/her mother tongue in order to understand or use the foreign language. Ellis (1997) stated that language transfer is "The influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of a L2; the learner's L1 is one of the sources of error in learner language. This influence is referred to as negative transfer. However, in some cases, the learner's L1 can facilitate L2 acquisition" (P.51).

The behaviourist view considers transfer as a "Habit Formation". It means that habits of the native language (NL) would be carried over into the FL. In 1957, Lado (as cited in Gass&Selinker 1994, P.1) made it clear when he said "Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture both productively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practiced by natives."

Odlin (1989) mentioned that "transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language(TL) and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired" (P.27). In short, transfer occurs when a learner carries knowledge and skills from a previous experience and employs them in a later context.

1.1.2. Types of Language Transfer

Language transfer is an important issue to deal with in learning foreign languages. In fact, the role of the mother tongue in learning a second language cannot be denied since it is involved in the act of learning. Moreover, foreign language learners consciously or unconsciously are influenced by their mother tongues in their learning of a foreign

language. This influence can appear in two different types of language transfer. These types are positive transfer and negative transfer.

1.1.2.1. Positive Transfer

Positive transfer is also known as ‘facilitation’, and takes place when the mother tongue of an individual influences his/her learning process of a foreign language in a positive way. In other words, when both languages’ relevant structures are similar, the previous knowledge contributes to understanding the second language. In addition, positive transfer occurs, when learning a task is the same between the two languages.

According to Ringborn(2007), positive transfer could be described as “the application of at least partially correct perceptions or assumptions of cross linguistic similarity. That perceptions only partially correct still have a mainly effect is particularly relevant for comprehension” (P.31). In other words, the similarities between L1 and L2/FL have an important effect on learning L1/FL through facilitating the L1/FL acquisition. Moreover, Cortes (2005) believes that positive transfer “occurs when those similarities in the mother tongue and the target language can facilitate the learning” (P.4). It means that the mother tongue transfer enhances the acquisition of the target language when the same linguistic elements are presented in both the native language and the target language. For instance, an Anglophone learner of German may correctly guess an item of German vocabulary from its English counterpart, but word order, phonetics, connotation collocation, and other language features are more likely to differ. Troike (2006) claims that “the transfer is called positive (or facilitating) when the same structure is appropriate in both languages, as in the transfer of Spanish plural morpheme ‘S’ on nouns to English (e.g.lenguajes to languages)” (P.35). Hence, prior language knowledge can be very helpful in learning a new language.

Actually, this kind of transfer takes place when the mother tongue of a foreign language learner has similar features with the target language. In other words, when the first language shares the same rules and patterns with the target language, this will help the learner in learning that language easily.

1.1.2.2. Negative Transfer

As we have seen previously, positive transfer facilitates the learning process due to the similarities between L1 and L2. Another type blocks the learning procedure because of the differences existed in the FL and NL. This kind is known as “negative transfer” or “interference”. Cortes (2005) defines negative transfer as “the negative influence that the knowledge of the first language has on the learning of the target languages due to differences existing between both languages” (P.4). Negative language transfer results in incorrect TL structures under the influence of the source language (SL), a process makes the learning process difficult for learners.

Likewise, Leberman, Doyle, McDoland (2006) claim that “negative transfer occurs when previous learning or experience inhabits or interferes with learning performance in a new context” (P.4). On the other hand, Bransford, et al (2000) suggest that “previous experiences or learning can hinder the learning of new concepts.” (As cited in McDoland, 2006, p.4). In other words, negative transfer is the obstruction of a new learning or performance, because of the previous learning that an individual has gone through.

So, negative transfer takes place when there are no similarities between L1 and FL. That is to say, the differences between the rules of an individual’s native language and the language he/she is learning pose some difficulties in learning that FL, leading to errors in that language.

1.1.3. Views of Language Transfer

1.1.3.1. Behaviourist View of Transfer

Behaviourist view of language transfer was minimized to habit formation, which was actually a process of stimuli-responses. In 1940s and 1950s when behaviourism and structuralism believed of the idea that the difficulties in language learning depended on how much the target language was similar or different from the native language. In this view, learners try to connect the habits of their L1 to those of L2. This connection actually results in language transfer, which has two types: Positive and Negative. In the former, a linguistic structure is transferred from L1 into L2 but the result is a grammatical structure. This happens when the transferred structured is similar to a structure in L2. In the latter, however, the learner transfers a linguistic structure or rule from L1 into L2, but this does not exist in L2. The result of the former is a grammatical utterance while that of the latter is ungrammatical one.

Under this belief, Lado(1957, P.23) put forward the theory of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH). He believed that language errors and learning difficulties were mainly or completely a result of interference of the native language. By comparing and contrasting the mother tongue and the foreign language, as well as setting up the hierarchy of difficulty, it was possible to predict and explain learners' errors and learning difficulties.

Although behaviourists affirm that the native language plays an important role in FL learning, they exaggerated L1 influences and ignored other factors that hinder FL learning, such as learners' individual differences. Therefore, it was not surprising that the behaviourist view was challenged by the mentalist view.

1.1.3.2. Mentalist View of Transfer

In the early 1950s, Chomsky put forward the theory of Mentalism. It is also called Conceptualism or Psychologism (Lu, 2010, p. 6). The theory revolves around the idea that humans are born with a Language Acquisition Device (LAD) in which they have Universal Grammar (UG). The latter consists of principles and parameters. Principles are universal while parameters are language specific (Lu, 2010, p. 6).

Dulay and Burt's study (1974) try to determine whether the syntactic errors made by children while learning a second language are due to native language interference or to the developmental cognitive strategies as has been found in first language acquisition. They believed that "Children did not rely on their ability to construct their L2 as an independent system. This conclusion severally attacked CAH" (P.130).

Besides, Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1992) completely denied native language transfer and believed that language learning ability only depended on UG. Ellis (2000) criticized this view claiming that their conclusion was without experimental support. Hence, the Mentalists realized their limitation and started to explore the relationship between the native language and UG in the 1980s.

Although the mentalists are no longer in a position totally rejecting native language transfer, they are still under criticism for their theory not having much empirical support.

1.1.3.3. Cognitive View of Transfer

In the late 1970s, stimulation of defects in mental outlook led to the development of the cognitive view that believes that language learning includes the same cognitive systems as learning other types of knowledge ; perception, memory, problem-solving, information processing...etc. (Kellerman, 1977, P.58).

In the cognitive view, "it is generally acknowledged that typological similarity or difference cannot on its own serve as a predictor for transfer, but interacts with other (Linguistic) factors" (Faerch & Kasper, 1987, P.121). Linguists at the time were concerned with how and when language learners would use their native tongue. After that, SLA research focused on the factors that induced language transfer. Particularly, Ellis (1997, P.33) listed six kinds of factors that would cause language transfer:

- Transfer happens at different linguistic levels namely, phonology, syntax, discourse, pragmatics, etc...
- Social factors have an impact on language transfer, for example, the influence of learning environment
- Markedness of a certain language.
- Prototypically: the core meaning and the periphery meaning of a certain word.
- Language distance and psych topology, namely, learners' perceptions of language.
- Some developmental factors that limit inter language development.

1.1.4. Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) was introduced by Lado (1957) in his book "Linguistics across Cultures" under the assumption that second language errors are predictable and should be eradicated. So, this behaviouristic theory says that the major source of second language errors is the first language interference. This transfer can be in term of grammatical structure, items and so on. Adult second language learners produce sentences that sound more like a child's. Also, many of their sentences would be ungrammatical if they are translated. Therefore, this theory attempts to overcome habits of just language transfer in second language learning. Moreover, Hyltanstam and Pieneman (1985) argued that 'the predictions of contrastive analysis were not always born out,

difference between first language (L1) and second language (L2) did not always cause difficulties, and similarly, where the two languages were alike, the difficulties were not always absent'. (p.5).

Indeed, the contrastive analysis hypothesis is the systematic comparison and contrasting of the native and target language systems. In this regard, Tajerah (2015) maintained that 'Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis is an area of comparative linguistics which is concerned with the comparison of two or more languages to determine the difficulties or similarities between them'. (p. 1).

All in all, it can be considered that CA is an analysis of L1 and L2 classification of linguistic contrasts to determine the differences or similarities between them; it seeks to predict and explain L2 learner's difficulty problems.

Example:

ذهب عمر الى المدرسة

O S V

Went Faycel to school. (Wrong)

V S O

Faycel went to school. (True)

S V O

1.1.5. Versions of Contrastive Analysis

According to Wardhaugh (1974), CA has two versions namely, CA a priori which also called the predictive or strong version and CA a posteriori, which is called the explanatory or weak version.

1.1.5.1. The Strong (predictive) Version

The strong version based on the interference of the first language system with the second language system in the main barrier to the second language acquisition, resulting to difficulty in learning L2.

« The change that has to take place in the language behaviour of a foreign language student can be equated to the differences between the structure of the students' native language and culture and that of the target language and culture, the task of the linguist, the cultural anthropologist, and the sociologist is to identify these differences ».

(Banathy, Trager, Waddle, 1966).

However, Gron (1992, p.136) argued that the strong version claims the following:

- ❖ The main obstacle to L2 learning is from the interference of the learner's NL system.
- ❖ The greater the difference between NL and TL, the greater the difficulty will be.
- ❖ A systematic and scientific analysis of the two language systems can help predict the difficulties. The strong version can be summarized like this:

Difference between L1 and L2 item → interference of L1 into L2 → difficulty in learning L2

1.1.5.2. The Weak (explanatory) Version

As a reaction to the criticism of the strong version of the CAH, Wardhaugh offered the weak version.

The weak version of CAH contains that in the learning of L2, the native language of the learner does not really 'interfere' with his learning so much as it provides an 'escape hatch' 'when the learner gets into a tight spot. In other words, it holds that when the learner does not know how to say something in the target language, he 'pads' from his native language. This viewpoint suggests that what will be most difficult for the learner is what he does not already know.

Brown (2000) argued that 'the weak version' does not imply the a priori of certain degrees of difficulty. He added that, it recognizes the significance of interference across language (p.211).

In short, the weak version of CAH has rather explanatory power; it seeks to understand the sources of error by utilising and contrasting a general knowledge of L1 and L2. The weak version can be summarized like this:

Limited knowledge of L2 → Resource to L1 → Difficulty in learning L2

1.1.6. Criticism of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

CA reached an important prestige during the 1950s and the first half of 1960s. Yet, during the second half of 1960s, a critical attitude began to manifest itself which seriously challenged. At an empirical level, Pit Corder and Selinker criticized the dominant practice of the CAH, which focused on comparing the linguistic inventories of the language pairs in

learning. In this regard, Fisiak (1981, p.7) maintained that ‘the value and importance of CA lies in the ability to indicate potential areas of interference and errors’.

Other linguists did not really criticize the CAH but they reduced its role. Moreover, Tajareh (2015, p.112) argued that ‘a major flaw of CAH was the dubious assumption that one could depend solely upon an analysis of linguistics product to yield meaningful insight into a psycholinguistic process, i.e. second language learning. This claim was held erroneous after a lot of studies. Sometimes elements which are believed to be very difficult are learnt by easily and vice versa. However, that does not benefit from the studies of CAH.

1.2. Error Analysis

1.2.1. The origins of Error Analysis

EA is an approach to L2 acquisition research involving the description and classification of errors to gain insight into the learner’s current underlying language of the language system. It introduced in 1967 by the British applied linguist ‘Pit Corder’ in his seminal paper « The Significance of Learners’ Errors » as a reaction to the shortcomings of CA. This branch became more successful and used as a particular method in linguistics.

In this regard, James (1998) stated that « Error Analysis involves first independently or "objectively" describing the learners’ L1 (that is, their version of the TL) and the TL itself, followed by a comparison of the two, so as to locate mismatches » (p.5).

1.2.2. Error vs. Mistake

1.2.2.1. Definition of Errors

According to Yang & XU (2001), «The occurrence of errors is regarded as a sign either the inadequacy of the teaching techniques on the part of teacher or the inability to correctly apply rules on the part of students ». (p.15). Similarly, Ellis (1997) stated that «errors reflect gaps in learner's knowledge, they occur because the learner does not know what is correct » (p.17). In a similar vein, Cunningsworth (1987)remarks that errors are systematic deviations from the norms of the language being learned. Here the phrase 'systematic deviation' means « the deviation which happens repeatedly ».

In short, error is a faulty use of language that is due to some wrong configuration at the level of 'Competence'. Errors refer to an incorrect language production that is unknown to the learner and they are not self-corrected and they happen more than one time.

1.2.2.2. Definition of Mistake

According to Richard and Schimtt (2010, p.201), "a mistake is made by lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness or some other aspects of performance". Similarly, Corder (1974) maintained that mistakes generally refer to 'laps'. He said also that learners make mistakes in their native language but they can correct them easily.

In short, a mistake refers to a faulty use of language at the level of 'performance'. Mistakes are self-corrected, for they are largely due to slips of tongue, random guess,etc because of tiredness, carelessness, or lack of attention.

1.2.3. The difference between Errors and Mistakes

In the learning and teaching system, and in order to look and think about the different parts of learners' language, it is necessary to know the distinction between errors and mistakes. It has been taught that errors are not the same of mistakes. James (1998) defined an error as "being an instance of language that is unintentionally deviant and self-correctible; a mistake is either intentionally or unintentionally deviant and is not self-correctible" (p.83). In a similar vein, Touchie (1986) pointed out that "performance errors are those errors made by learners when they are tired or hurried [...] competence errors, on the other hand, are more serious than performance errors since competence errors reflect inadequate learning" (p.76). Like an error, a mistake is also a deviation of the norms of the language but is not systematic.

In short, errors repeat more than one time; they occur because of the absence of the rules and are related to competence. However, mistakes are related to performance and they do not occur repeatedly because they made by learners who do not apply the rule(s) that they actually know.

1.2.4. Classification of Errors

When learners try to master the new linguistic system, many errors of different types may occur. In this regard, Corder (1973) maintained that "errors could be classified into four main types namely: omission of some required elements, addition of some unnecessary elements, selection of incorrect elements, and misordering elements". (As cited in Lengo, 1995, p.22).

Dulay et al (1982, p. 152) proposed another classification of errors which based on "The Surface Strategy Taxonomy". According to *The Surface Strategy Taxonomy*, errors are classified into omission, addition, and misformation and misordering.

1.2.4.1. Omission Errors

Dulay et al (1982) defined omission errors as "a type of errors which is characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in well-formed utterance" (p. 154).

Omission errors refer to the act of omitting, leaving, excluding, or forgetting some linguistic forms. Statistics show that omission errors are the second most common type of medication error (wrong-time administrations are first). These type of errors has two types, completely and partially omission errors. Here is an example of omission error:

- She go to school instead of She goes to school.

So, the third person singular morpheme "s" is deleted in "she go".

Another example is the past simple tense 'ed' in 'I help her yesterday' instead of "I helped her yesterday". So, the 'ed' also is left out.

1.2.4.2. Addition Errors

Dulay et al (1982) maintained that addition errors refer to the presence of an inappropriate item or word that should not be appear in a well-formed utterance. Addition errors are the opposite of omission errors. For example: a learner or a student may say "I stays" instead of "I stay". In addition to, they may use the definite article "the" with names and places, for instance: "the America" instead of "America".

At the lexical level, students may use an unnecessary word. For example "I stayed there during five years ago", instead of "I stayed there for five years ago" (Lengo, 1995, p. 23).

These errors tend to feature in writing on the intermediate level, when the L2 learners have already acquired some rules they tend to use them overconfidently.

1.2.4.3. Selection (misformatio) Errors

Selection or misformation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure. In misformation errors, learner supplies something, although it is incorrect.

Learners make errors in different aspects of learning such as: pronunciation, morphology, vocabulary and grammar due to the wrong morpheme, phoneme, structure, or vocabulary item (Lengo, 1995). In phonology, learners often replace a recognized phoneme from the L1 for a target phoneme which is quite different and complicated. Some Algerian learners, for example, pronounce /t/ for /θ/ in (third) [tʰ :d] instead of [eθ :d]. At the morphological level, learners tend to choose the wrong morpheme, for instance, they may use {e s t} instead of {e r} in comparatives, as in "he is oldest than me", instead of "he is older than me". In syntax, learners may pick out a wrong structure, like saying, "if the sense of the word is not clear, ask the dictionary", instead of "if the sense of the word is not clear, consult the dictionary"(Lengo 1995, p. 23-24).

1.2.4.4. Misordering Errors

Misordering is "the incorrect placement of a morpheme or a group of morphemes in an utterance" (Dulay et al 1982, p. 162). A speaker may say "signisicant" instead of "significant". At the morphological level, misordering of bound morphemes in English is perhaps less constant, but in the example "he's get upping now", the learner attaches the inflection "ing" to the particle of the two word verb "get up". At the syntactic level, misordering is much more common as in the sentence "he's a dear to me friend". At the

lexical level, the learner may reverse elements of a compound word, for instance, "car key" may become "key car" (Lengo, 1995, p. 24).

1.3. Sources of Errors

Many studies in the domain of error analysis classify sources of learners' errors into categories. Brown (2000, P. 244) states that errors originate from multiple sources.

1.3.1. Interlingual (interference) Transfer

According to Touchie (1986), "errors due to the influence of the native language are called interlingual errors (p. 77). "As a result of the interference of the learners' native language, these errors may occur as a main source.

1.3.2. Intralingual Transfer

Intralingual errors are produced within the structure of the L2 itself (Brown, 2000). Interestingly, Richards (1970, pp. 7-8) defines intralingual errors as those errors "which reflect the general characteristics of rule learning, such as faulty overgeneralization, incomplete application of rules, and failure to learn the conditions under which rules apply". In a similar vein, Erdogan (2005) argued that: "intralingual errors result from faulty or partial learning of the target language rather than language transfer" (p. 266). Furthermore, Al-Khresheh (2016) pointed out that "errors made by FL learners are similar regardless of their MT. Such errors are due to intralingual interference or transfer (p. 50)". It is worth noting here that Richards (1970) subdivided this type of errors into four categories:

1.3.2.1. Overgeneralization Errors

These errors can be found in both the speech and writing aspects because learners are unheeded of their mother tongue. For example, the use of the suffix "-ed" for all verbs of

English. Brown (2007) further asserted that "once learners begun to acquire parts of the system, more and more intralingual transfer-generalization within the target language is manifested" (p. 264). In other words, overgeneralization deals with the overuse of the L2 rules and forms. Hence, learners apply the rules that they find easy rather than using ambiguous ones. To put it concisely, overgeneralization deals with the overuse of some L2 rules or forms where learners apply the rules that they are sure about rather than using rules that are not sure about or not mastered yet.

1.3.2.2. Incomplete Application of the Rules

This type of intra-lingual interference occurs when a foreign language learner produces some structures, whose deviancy can represent a definite degree of development of the grammatical rules that can be acquired in order to make acceptable utterances. In other words, incomplete application of rules can be also named as failure to achieve complete knowledge of the L1 and the TL. Hence, native learners tend to apply some of the rules and continue to contrast deviant forms in order to ease their learning (Richards, 1970). In summation, the learner is unable to deal with the complete and correct structure of the TL.

1.3.2.3. Ignorance of Rule Restriction

Keshavarz (2012) claimed that ignorance of rules restriction results from learners' ignorance of the restrictions and the exceptions of the target language rules. That is to say, the learners cannot deal with the restrictions of the TL, then they use the rules in contexts contrary to where expected, as in this sentence "she made me to smile" instead of "she made me smile". In other words, the learner cannot deal with restrictions of the TL.

1.3.2.4.False Concept Hypothesized

It results from the learner misunderstanding of a distinction of the TL. Touchie (1986) stated that "many learners" errors can be attributed to wrong hypotheses formed by these learners about the target language. For example, some learners think that "is" is the marker of the present tense, so they produce: he is talk to the teacher. Similarly, they think that "was" is the past tense marker. Hence, they say: it was happened last night (p. 79).

1.4. Procedures of Error Analysis

EA has some procedures for analysing learners' errors. In this regard, Corder (1974) argued that EA has five successive stages which are: the identification, description, explanation, evaluation, and correction of errors.

1.4.1. The Identification of Errors

The first procedure in EA theory is commonly known as the identification of learners' errors. According to Ellis (1997), the initial stage in the analysis of learners' errors is to acknowledge them because recognition of errors has a salient importance in determining the progress and the level of learners. He also (1997) asserted that error analysis must differentiate between the learner's mistake and the learner's errors as it was previously mentioned.

1.4.2. The Description of Errors

After identifying learner's errors, the second stage is to describe them. Description of errors is defined as the delineation of the procedure that causes the errors. It is achieved by the description of the intentional meaning through the reconstruction of the utterance according to the L2 norms (Beghail, 2007, as cited in Saadaoui, 2017, p. 12). In a similar vein, Ellis (1997) assumed that errors' description is similar to identifying them by

comparing the learners' sentences with reconstruction of those sentences in the native language.

1.4.3. The Explanation of Errors

The most important purpose of EA is the explanation of errors. Therefore, this stage is the most essential part in EA research. Troike (2006, p.39) claimed that:

Accounting for the way an error was made is the most important step in trying to understand the process of SLA. The most likely causes of learners' L2 errors are, interlingual (between languages) factors, resulting from native transfer or interference from L1 and intralingual (within language) factors not attributable to cross-linguistic influence.

Obviously, interlingual errors are caused by the impact of the native language. On the other hand, intralingual reasons include overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules and false concept hypothesized.

1.4.4. The Evaluation of Errors

According to Ellis (2008, p.56), since the main aim of EA is to help learners learn a foreign language, it is essential to evaluate errors. Some errors are regarded to be more serious than others because they may totally affect what someone says. Evaluating errors means that teachers should give more attention to errors that appear to be serious and effect communication and less attention to the others which have little effect on learners' learning a L2.

1.4.5. The Correction of Errors

The last step of EA is the correction of learners' errors. It is a form of feedback given to learners on their use of language. According to Erdogan (2005), the mechanism of

error correction takes into consideration the reasons behind learners' errors for the sake of providing learners with appropriate solutions. He also asserted that the teacher should give enough time to his learners for self-correction.

Conclusion

To conclude, this section includes various important points that are related to the theories of CA and EA in second language acquisition. It clarified and emphasized the different definitions of both of them and some of their interlinked issues that have been given by various linguists. It also clarified the distinction between errors and mistakes. This section ended up by highlighting types and sources of errors that have been discussed by several researchers.

1.2. Section Two: The Use of Past Tense

1.2.1. Definition of Grammar

Grammar is viewed by research community as a multidimensional phenomenon involving elements like meaning, language use and language learning. Batstone (1994, P.224) conceives it as: «...essentially a formal framework, a set of categories and forms which help us to see languages as structured and systematic... or a source which language users exploit as they navigate tenses through discourse».

Webster (1822) saw grammar as a science which builds a natural connection between ideas and words, it also develops a set of fix and permanent principles that are founded and established by nature.

According to Knapp and Watkins (2005), grammar is "the choices and limitations language-users have when putting word together in texts" (P.37). In addition, Gerot and Wignell (1995) also state that" grammar is a theory of language, of how language is put together and how it works. More particularly, it is the study of wordings" (P.2).

Based on the definition above, the researcher concludes that grammar has an important rule when we make sentences. It makes the sentences meaningful. Grammar gives rule to explain how sentences are combined to be a good sentence. Grammar learns many materials like tenses, models, verbs, preposition, adjective, and any other items. Tenses are part of grammar in learning English. So, to make a sentence well, the learners must also understand tenses well.

1.2.2. Definition of Tense

The word tense originally derived from a Latin word "tempus", which basically means time. Tense is a form of verb that is used to indicate the time. Hornby (1975)

believed that “ we have to distinguish between the two words ‘time’ and ‘tense’”. So, the word time stands for a main concept that we all know, divided into past, present and future. The word tense stands for a verb form or related series of verb forms. Tense usually refers to the exact time of the situation, which relates to the situation of the utterance or at the moment of speaking. Cowan (2008) stated that “tense in verbs expresses the time that an action occurs in relation to the moment of speaking” (P.350). Tense is, thus deictic, that is it points towards time or time then. In this sense, as Salaberry and shrai (2002) say “Tense is a deictic category that places a situation in time with respect to some other time, usually the moment of speech”. Richards and Schmidt (2002) stated that “tense is the relationship between the form of the verb and the time of the action or state it describe”.

Strang (1974.P.134) who shares this view argues: «Tense is anyone of the verb forms in the conjugation of the verb which serve to indicate the different time at which the action is viewed as happening or existing».

Based on the explanation above we may conclude that tense is grammatical category which correlates with distinctions of time or events take places. We know that a tense is important to learn. Because without mastering tenses, the learners will find the difficulties in spoken English or written English. Tenses help us easily to arrange the sentences and because tenses we can know when the situation happened.

1.2.3. Definition of Aspect

According to Salaberry and Shirai (2002, P.2), “Aspect can be expressed lexically by the inherent lexical semantics of the verb and its interaction with direct and indirect arguments and adjuncts or morph syntactically through verbal endings and periphrastic constructions (Dowtty, 1986; Smith, 1991; Tenny, 1994; Verkuyl, 1994)”.

Binnick (2012) declared that for Plato and Aristotle, aspect has to do with the internal structure of the action occurring at any time. Celce-Murcia asserted that there are four aspects namely, simple (sometimes called zero aspect), perfect, progressive (continuous), and their combination, perfect progressive (as cited in Almanna, 2016, p .90).

As Declerck et al (2006) suggested, generally, the term aspect in linguistics refers to the eventuality of using particular grammatical forms for the purpose to make a clear cut on how the speaker represents the internal temporal structure or situation. Those grammatical forms are in term of suffixes, auxiliaries or the combination of the two. Moreover, Saeed (2009) added that ‘’ aspect systems allow speakers to relate situations and time, but instead of fixing situations in time relative to the act of speaking, like tense does, aspect allows speakers to view an event in various ways : as complete or incomplete, as short...’’.

1.2.4. Types of Tense

English contains simple and compound tenses. Hornby (1975) stated that ‘’the compound tenses are the result of the combination of two or more verb forms, and it is concerned with time (the combination). We can say that we have many compound tenses.

Generally speaking, we have three tenses which are past, present, future. In English, each of these tenses can take four main aspects: simple, perfect, and continuous (also known as progressive), and perfect continuous. The perfect aspect is formed using the verb to have, while the continuous aspect is formed using the verb to be.

We can conclude that if simple and compound tense are mixed together, there are twelve kinds of tense which are, simple past, simple present, simple future, past progressive, present progressive, future progressive, past perfect, present perfect, future perfect, past perfect continuous, present perfect continuous, future perfect continuous.

1.2.5. Past Simple Definition

The simple past tense has to do with the past form of the verb that we can be either regular, by adding 'ed' to infinitive form or irregular, which must be learned and memorized in each case. Marcella (1972) believed that "simple past tense has to do with definite time" (P.73). It refers to actions that were finished before the statement is produced. It is usually identified using words like: yesterday, last year, three years ago, etc.

1.2.6. Simple Past Format

1.2.6.1. Positive (Affirmative) Form

Subject + verb 2

E.g: Andrew found his pen two days ago.

Subject + was/were + complement

E.g: They were in the class at 7 o'clock am.

1.2.6.2. Negative Form

Subject + auxiliary verb (did) + not + verb 1

E.g: Andrew did not find his pen two days ago.

Subject + was/were + not + complement.

E.g: They were not in the class at 7 o'clock am.

1.2.6.3. Interrogative form

Auxiliary verb (did) + subject + verb 1

E.g: Did Andrew find his pen two days ago?

Was/were + subject + complement

E.g: Were they in the class at 7 o'clock am.

1.2.7. Simple past usage

- ✓ The simple past tense is used to talk about activities or situations that began and ended in the past, e.g. the students did their homework yesterday.
- ✓ To express the duration of an event completed in the past, e.g. I was in Tunisia for three years (I'm in Algeria now).
- ✓ To express habitual action in the past, e.g. when I was a child, I cried loudly.

1.2.8. Tense and Aspect in Arabic

In Arabic, tense and aspect are rather of limited semantic expression when compared to other language. Grammarians argue that the verb in Arabic refers to the polarised aspects of completed and uncompleted action. It refers only to imperfect (incomplete) and perfect action largely ignoring those references in tense and mood which are so common in Indo-European languages.

Conclusion

As a conclusion to this chapter, the first section shed the light on language transfer as one of the widely discussed subjects in the field of second language acquisition. EFL

learners always reveal the phenomenon of transfer during any stage when their knowledge of the language is not enough. It has been shown that Contrastive analysis and error analysis can be mixed to ease and improve the procedure of teaching and learning a foreign or a second language. The concern of CA approach is to clarify the similarities and the differences between a native language and a foreign language, however; EA proposes a set of procedures to be followed either by teachers or researchers to analyse learners' errors. The second section of this chapter has taken as its main concern the simple past tense. It highlighted a variety of definitions that have been given to the concept of tense. It also introduced the main types of tenses namely past, present, and future. Different definitions have tackled the simple past tense.

Chapter Two: Fieldwork

Introduction

This chapter of this research tool deals with the field work. It divided into two main sections: research methodology, and data analysis and results. Initially, the first section highlights the description of research methodology. It, therefore, points out the research assumptions. Then, it moves to discuss the data gathering instrument used in the current research work. Additionally, it mentions the population and sampling that dealt with in the present work. Besides, it provides the description of the research tools used for the data collection. Moreover, the second section analyses the findings of the data gathered. Then, it interprets the summary as well as the overall analysis of the results obtained in the light of the research questions and assumptions.

2.1. Section One: Research Methodology

2.1.1. Research Assumptions

At this phase, it seems quite necessary to restate the research assumptions:

- Second year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University mostly commit “misformation errors” when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past.
- Native language interference is the main cause of EFL learners’ errors.

2.1.2. Data Gathering Instrument

Needless to say, any research work primarily seeks to achieve its aim. In order to test the research assumptions, the researchers adopted a quantitative approach. Thus, 30 Algerian second year EFL learners in the department of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben

Yahia University were requested to write short paragraphs which may reflect their L1 interference on their transferring.

2.1.3. Population and Sampling

It is practically impossible to put the entire population under scrutiny. Therefore, in order to obtain the necessary information regarding the problem of second year EFL learners' transfer from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past tense at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia at Jijel. A convenient random selection based on learners' availability, the sample of the current study targeted 30 students from the whole population of 297 second year EFL learners during the academic year 2020/2021.

2.1.4. Description of the Research Tool

2.1.4.1. Description of the Students' Short Paragraphs

Concerning data collection, second year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University were invited to answer the given question which is to write short paragraphs about the best holiday they ever spent in their lives.

Importantly, the test was distributed to second year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University after the exam directly from 14:00 to 15:00. This test was really helpful to get more data about students' errors, to identify and analyse types and sources that students commit in their paragraphs.

2.1.5. Administration of the Students' Short Paragraphs

As far as the aim of this work is known, namely; "A study of EFL learners' transfer from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past." This piece of research tend to analyse the data gathered from asking 30 second year EFL learners at Mohammed

Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel to write short paragraphs about the best holiday they had ever spent. The task was an intention to detect the learners' transfer types and sources of errors. Indeed, the participants were requested to write short paragraphs under specific conditions:

- The learners were asked to work individually.
- The learners were requested to mention their full name and group numbers to ensure they belong to the department of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia.

2.2 Section Two: Data Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

In this section which tackles the analysis of the results gathered, the researchers followed “*The Surface Strategy Taxonomy*” which was developed for analysing learners’ types of errors. The data gathered went through the five-stage process of EA, which was put forward by Corder (1974).

There are five successful procedures of EA: identification of errors, description of errors, evaluation of errors and correction of errors. As a very important reminder, 30 participants were requested to write down short paragraphs wherein the researchers are supposed to do an EA of their productions. The analysis of the data gathered is fairly discussed in this section. In addition to, the results are illustrated in details and carefully presented in tables.

2.2.1. Analysis of the Students’ Short Paragraphs

The analysis of the short paragraphs done by second year students show that, they make a noticeable number of errors while writing. This section affirms the results which aim at giving answers to the research questions.

Based on “*The Surface Strategy Taxonomy*”, researchers analysed the learners’ errors in order to find out their types. To begin with, the researchers identified the number of transferring simple past errors which occurs in those paragraphs. Next, they described the errors and provided discussion related to those errors. In addition to, the researchers pointed out an evaluation with a formal correction of those errors. The obtained results were clearly presented, summarized, classified and tabulated.

In the analysis of students' short paragraphs, a lot of errors are of different types. The total number of these errors is 180 errors counted in thirty (30) short paragraphs. These errors include different types which are errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of misordering and errors of misformation.

The results are counted as follow: misformation errors are the main errors that students commit with a percentage of 60%. In the second place come addition errors with a percentage of 16%. Then, it comes omission errors with a percentage of 13.33%. Finally, misordering errors with a percentage of 10.67%.

The discussion of the analysis of each type of errors is shown in this section. Moreover, examples of each type of errors are given with the correction to clarify types of these committed errors.

2.2.2. Types of Errors Committed by Second Year Students

Based on "*The Surface Strategy Taxonomy*", the errors committed by second-year EFL learners can be classified into errors of omission, errors of addition, errors of misordering, and errors of misformation. As a paramount reminder, the data showed that there are 150 errors found in 30 written productions of second year EFL participants.

The types of errors which were committed by second-year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University are explicitly categorized in table 2.1.

Table 2.1***The Frequencies and Percentages of Errors***

Category of Errors	Frequency	Percentage
Errors of Misformation	90	60%
Errors of Addition	24	16%
Errors of Omission	20	13.33%
Errors of Misordering	16	10.67%
Total	150	100%

The table above represents the difference between the errors made by second-year EFL learners. It is obvious that misformation errors are the most common errors between students. Meanwhile, misordering errors are rarely done by those students. So, a little more focus should be done on the aim of avoiding such errors when transferring.

2.2.2.1. Misformation Errors

Based on the data presentation and the data analysis, a large number of learners struggled to decide on the right tense to be used with the most appropriate verb form where the simple past should occur. As a result, the participants sometimes use the suffix “s” with past contexts or just use the infinitive. This kind of errors represents 60% from the total results.

Examples

1) Wrote : My last summer holiday is amazing, I go to Tunisia.

Correction : My last summer holiday was amazing, I went to Tunisia.

- 2) Wrote : In the last winter, I go to the mountain of Tikadjeda with my friends.
Correction : In the last winter, I went to the mountain of Tikadjeda with my friends.
- 3) Wrote : I makes a lot of pictures to some of places as a souvenir.
Correction : I made a lot of pictures to some places as a souvenir.
- 4) Wrote : ...Especially, he accept to take a photo with me
Correction : ...Especially, he accepted to take a photo with me.
- 5) Wrote : I meet many friends and I enjoy my time with them.
Correction : I met many friends and I enjoyed my time with them.
- 6) Wrote : Every day, we wake up early in the morning.
Correction : Every day, we waked up/woke up early in the morning.
- 7) Wrote : By night, we spend our time in the Great Museum of Art and Agriculture.
Correction : By night, we spentour time in the Great Museum of Art and Agriculture.
- 8) Wrote : My summer vacation is a big fun and I enjoy every moment of it.
Correction : My summer vacation was a big fun and I enjoyed every moment of it.
- 9) Wrote : Finally, I wish I could went there again and visit other cities.
Correction : Finally, I wish I could go there again and visit other cities.
- 10) Wrote : We really pass an enjoyable holiday.
Correction : We really passed an enjoyable holiday.

2.2.2.2. Addition Errors

It is obviously noticed that learners tend to add unnecessary items in the simple past forms. Thus, some second year EFL learners add “to” after the past tense or the verb in the past tense after models or after “did not” where they are not necessary. Consequently, this type of errors is repeated multiple times in the same paragraph by the same student. So, this means that some students are not aware of the basics of grammar rules while transferring. This category represents 16% of the total number of cooperated students.

Examples

- 1) Wrote : This year, I did not to make any holiday.
Correction : This year, I did not make any holiday.
- 2) Wrote : I went to Setif with my parents, we to stayed in a hotel where there are a very beautiful swimming pool.
Correction : I went to Setif with my parents; we stayed in a very beautiful swimming pool.
- 3) Wrote : Who didn't to like the beach?
Correction : Who didn't like the beach?
- 4) Wrote : At the beginning of June, I didn't remembered very well.
Correction : At the beginning of June, I didn't remember very well.
- 5) Wrote : During the day, we to walked in the mountain.
Correction : During the day, we walked in the mountain.
- 6) Wrote : The next day, we did not went outside.
Correction : The next day, we did not go outside.
- 7) Wrote : We to planned a lot of picnics together full of joy and delicious food.

- Correction : We planned for a lot of picnics together full of joy and delicious food.
- 8) Wrote : Then, I said I couldn't played with you.
Correction : Then, I said I couldn't play with you.
- 9) Wrote : It to was one of the best experiences that I ever had.
Correction : It was one of the best experiences that I ever had.
- 10) Wrote : All in all, almost everything to was perfect, and I hope visit it again.
Correction : All in all, almost everything was perfect, and I hope visit it again.

2.2.2.3. Omission Errors

Based on the analysis and the data gathered, second year EFL learners tend to omit certain essential items or morphemes from their sentences while transferring simple past tense. Thus, researchers noticed that a number of grammatically incorrect utterances related to the conjugation of simple past. This kind of errors represents 13.33% of the total results.

Examples

- 1) Wrote : Who not like to have good holiday full of the most enjoyable things?
Correction : Who did not like to have goof holiday full of the most enjoyable things?
- 2) Wrote : My last holiday very funny and just wonderful.
Correction : My last holiday was very funny and just wonderful.
- 3) Wrote : The best holiday I had ever spent in Bejaia in the summer of 2019.

- Correction : The best holiday I had ever spent was in Bejaia in the summer of 2019.
- 4) Wrote : My brother not accept to go with us.
Correction : My brother did not accept to go with us.
- 5) Wrote : My little sister very happy when she heard the news.
Correction : My little sister was very happy when she heard the news.
- 6) Wrote : I not visit all places because of time.
Correction : I did not visit all places because of time.
- 7) Wrote : We not stay there for a long time.
Correction : We did not stay there for a long time.
- 8) Wrote : It hot there.
Correction : It was hot there.
- 9) Wrote : The weather very beautiful and the snow covered the place.
Correction : The weather was very beautiful and the snow covered the place.
- 10) Wrote : Really this trip the best trip.
Correction : Really this trip was the best trip.

2.2.2.4. Misordering Errors

According to the data presented and its analysis, some EFL learners are not aware about the correct order when transferring simple past tense. Hence, they fail in setting a morpheme or a group of morphemes in an utterance.

Examples

- 1) Wrote : We really a time great spent.
Correction : We really spent a great time.

- 2) Wrote : Time wedding came finally.
Correction : Finally, wedding time came.
- 3) Wrote : She happy very.
Correction : She was very happy.
- 4) Wrote : I beside her was.
Correction : I was beside her.
- 5) Wrote : We went never there, it the first time was.
Correction : We never went there, it was the first time.

2.2.3 Sources of Errors

At this phase, the researchers focused on the frequency and percentage of each source, taking into account the prospective reason behind each error. Therefore, they seek to determine the main source of those errors. Based on the results of learners' short paragraph analysis, the researchers concluded that errors apparently result either from interlingual interference or intralingual interference. The results, therefore, have shown only one sub source known as overgeneralization.

Table 2.2

The Sources of Second-Year Learners' Errors

Source of Errors	Frequency	Percentage
Intralingual Interference	23	76.67%
Interlingual Interference	07	23.33%
Total	30	100%

According to the results shown in table 2.2, the highest number of errors 23 is the result of intralingual interference. However, the second important proportion consists of 7 errors committed by second year EFL learners due to the interlingual interference.

2.2.3.1 Intralingual Interference (Transfer)

As the abovementioned table indicates, it is obvious that the main source of errors is intralingual interference with a percentage of 76.67%. Therefore, intralingual errors are generally generated from the structure of L2 itself.

Examples

- 1) Wrote : In the last summer, I goed to Oran.
Correction : In the last summer, I went to Oran.
- 2) Wrote : I spended my holiday with my best friends.
Correction : I spent my holiday with my best friends.
- 3) Wrote : I takeda lot of pictures of almost all places that I have visited.
Correction : I took a lot of pictures of almost all places that I have visited.
- 4) Wrote : The event that maked me happy there was when I meeted a famous singer in Turkey.
Correction : The event that made me happy there was when I met a famous singer in Turkey.
- 5) Wrote : My little sister taked selfies and shared her moments in the forest with her friends in the forest with her friends through show lives.
Correction : My little sister took selfies and shared her moments in the forest with her friends in the forest with her friends through show lives.
- 6) Wrote : I findedit very exciting and interesting.

- Correction : I found it very exciting and interesting.
- 7) Wrote : We played and swimed together.
Correction : We played and swam together.
- 8) Wrote : We leaved the place after two weeks.
Correction : We left the place after two weeks.
- 9) Wrote : At night, we sleeped in tents.
Correction : At night, we slept in tents.
- 10) Wrote : All in all, we spended beautiful moments together.
Correction : All in all, we spent beautiful moments together.

2.2.3.2. Interlingual Interference (Transfer)

The final results indicate that the interlingual interference has an effect on the learners' second language learning. So that, such errors are caused by the interference of the learners' mother tongue. Consequently, second year EFL learners mother tongue negatively interfere their knowledge of the target language. This source of errors is known as the mother-tongue interference and it represents 23.33% of second year EFL learners' errors.

Examples

- 1) Wrote : Went my brother with his friends.
Correction : My brother went with his friends.
- 2) Wrote : Passed we an enjoyable holiday.
Correction : We passed an enjoyable holiday.
- 3) Wrote : Enjoyed I the vacation.
Correction : I enjoyed the vacation.
- 4) Wrote : Went my cousin on a trip.

Correction : My cousin went on a trip.

5) Wrote : Last summer, we went to the see with my neighbours.

Correction : Last summer, we went to the sea with my neighbours.

6) Wrote : We slapt in a camp.

Correction : We slept in a camp.

7) Wrote : I mat my friends there.

Correction : I met my friends there.

2.2.4. Discussion of the Learners' Short Paragraphs

As a paramount reminder, the above data have been gathered by means of analysing learners' written short paragraphs. The latter was distributed to a random sample of 30 second-year EFL learners. According to the findings, researchers may come to a clear conclusion about their participants whether they transfer the past tense from Arabic to English correctly, or they make mistakes when transfer it. In this phase, these conclusions will be presented below in order to clarify the research questions as previously mentioned.

First of all, the most striking point is that second year EFL learners tend to decide on the right tense to be used with the most appropriate circumstances or contexts. For instance, they use the marker "s" (present tense) instead of "ed" (past tense). As it is shown in table 2.1, researchers noticed that learners' frequent errors when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English are misformation errors with 90 errors. The researchers can speculate that such type of errors is due to their misunderstanding of simple present and simple past usage.

According to the analysis, researchers noticed that another type of errors was committed by the participants known as addition errors. As proven in table 2.1, the learners

made 24 errors. Thus, they sometimes add "to" to the verb in the past tense. This kind of errors was produced since the participants did not pay attention when they should omit "to".

Regarding to the analysis, the data obtained revealed that the participants also tend to omit the auxiliary "to be" in the past as well as they delete "did" or "did not". So, as it is obvious in table 2.1, learners made 20 errors. Thus, these errors might due to the inability to recognize and to apply the appropriate rule of the simple past tense.

On the light of the analysis, researchers also noted that misordering errors are less problematic compared to the previous types with 16 errors. Hence, learners sometimes are not aware about the correct order when transferring the simple past tense. For instance, one may place the auxiliary "to be" in the past before the subject i.e, they put the verb out of place.

On the other hand, the researchers concluded that the prevalent source of all learners' errors is due to intralingual interference with a percentage of 76.67%. This pointed out that learners still fought with L2 structure and most of them have difficulties in transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English. In addition, the general findings clarified that interlingual transfer are another source of errors the learners committed with a percentage of 23.33%. Thus, this source is resulted from the interference of the learners' MT.

In summary, the results of the current research work revealed that intralingual transfer is the main source of learners' errors i.e, the inability to understand the L2 structure itself helps to make such a source of errors and not because of the interference of the MT. Thus, the results of the current research work are relevant with the findings of Dulay and Burt (1974), Krashen (1983) (as mentioned in Wood 2017) that learners' errors

do not arise from the influence of L1 but were the result of incomplete knowledge of L2. However, the present findings contradict Mourssi's (2013) findings that learners' errors occurred because they were transferring the grammar rules of their MT into English. Furthermore, Taufik (2013), and Muhsin's (2016) findings claimed that misformation errors are the most current errors committed by their students. Likewise, the researchers' results from the learners' short paragraphs articulated that errors of misformation are the most reoccurring errors all over their research work.

2.2.5. Overall Analysis of the Results

The overall analysis of this research work primarily concerns with the study of errors the learners made when transferring simple past from Arabic to English. Importantly, the learners were given a writing task by which the researchers could carry out the aim of the study. Necessarily, the answers of the research questions introduced at the very beginning are as follow:

The Research Question 01: What are the most common errors made by second year EFL learners when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English?

Based on the results shown in table 2.1, generally, second year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia tended to decide on the right tense to be used with the most appropriate verb form. So that, the most frequent errors the Algerian second year EFL learners committed when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English is the misformation errors.

The Research Question 02: What is the primary source of errors those learners commit when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English?

With regard to the results introduced in table 2.2, researchers can give an answer to the question that the primary source of the Algerian second year EFL learners when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English is the intralingual transfer.

Briefly, the analysis of the data gathered revealed that the first assumption (once second year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, make mistakes when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English mostly commit misformation errors) was supported because the most reoccurring type of errors in learners' written paragraphs is the misformation errors. However, the second assumption (the learners frequently make errors when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English because they influence by of their mother tongue) was rejected since the main source of second year EFL learners when transferring simple past tense is intralingual interference and not interlingual one.

2.2.6. Pedagogical Recommendations and Suggestions

Another study with a larger sample of students is recommended so as to get more insights about the types and causes of errors that they make. The current study presents the following recommendations and suggestions:

- Teachers should focus more on simple past tense usage.
- Teachers would encourage their students to pay attention to the exceptional contexts and circumstances where simple past tense should take place.
- Make the learners aware of the importance of tenses for successful foreign language learning and successful writing.
- Teachers should give more importance to the reading skill because it is a helpful way to enrich learners' vocabulary.

- Students must practice language more in class or outside classroom in order to learn the language effectively.
- It is recommended that designers of syllabus must shed light on writing production according to its importance to develop students' levels.
- Teachers' feedback has to be done more often and any error should be corrected by teachers without any suggestion as it will promote proper assessment of learners' performance or progress in English language.

2.2.7. Limitations of the Study

Actually, we found many barriers and limitations all long the process of conducting this piece research. When we request from (60) second year EFL students to write short paragraphs most of them refused and only (30) students accepted to write because they were in the exams period. In addition to the case that we are facing because of Covid19, and learning via internet, so that students weren't present all the time. As well as, time is another problem that we faced during conducting this research.

Conclusion

This empirical part aimed to discuss the findings from the data analysis. The data gathered through a writing task distributed to second year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University. Later on, the data were analysed to determine the types of errors made by students in order to explain and classify them. Finally, it summed up and clarified the sources of those errors. Thus, illustrative examples from the learners' short paragraphs were provided to be evaluated and formally corrected.

General Conclusion

Both students and teachers have to care much more on grammar, because it is an important subject in the learning process. As a matter of fact, the correct use of simple past tense shows the usefulness of grammar. The present study discusses three keywords: Error Analysis, Simple Past Tense and Transfer. Accordingly, it aims at analysing the learners' errors when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English.

This study investigated the errors that second year EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University commit when transferring simple past tense from Arabic to English in the use of the English past tense. After the analysis of the statistical data gathered from the learners' short productions, this research get to a conclusion that is mostly all the students commit misformation errors and that the primary source of their errors is intralingual transfer.

Briefly, the findings obtained tend to support the first research assumption stated earlier in this research. That is to say, it supported the research assumption that second year EFL learners mostly commit misfromation errors. However, it rejected the second research assumption that that native language interference is the main source of learners' errors. Since, the primary source of learners' errors is intralingual transfer.

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Appendix 01

Appendix 02

University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia - Jijel-

Faculty of Letters and Languages.

Department of Letters and the English Language.

"Students' Problems in Transferring the English Simple Past Tense from Arabic to English."

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to answer this question for the sake of our study entitled "A study of EFL learners' transfer from Arabic to English in the use of the English simple past." Thank you in advance for your cooperation and for the time devoted to answering this question.

Question:

In a paragraph, write about the best holiday you ever spent in your life.

I remember well my holiday of last year, it was the best holiday I spent in my whole life. We go to the mountain, and I enjoyed the sounds of birds and rivers, my little sister taked selfies and shared her moments in the forest with her best friends through live shows at Facebook and Instagram, my brother and my father go far to bring us woods for cooking, cooking with my mother in the forest was very enjoyable, it remembered me of vintage age. At night we used to set fire and talk and laugh together till midnight and sleep in tents, it was a beautiful experience, I enjoyed so much.

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Question:

In a paragraph, write about the best holiday you ever spent in your life.

who didn't like to have good holiday full
of the most enjoyable things. I me as an example
of wait every year the end of the year in order to
enjoy my holiday but my last year holiday was
the best vacancy I had ever had.
First, I went to my grandmother house. I met
my aunts childrens and my aunties. we planned
a lot of picnics together full of joy and
delicious food.
second, when my other cousins came we
went to the beach who didn't like the
beach. we swam, took lectures for our
social media account and goes to the park
in order to try every toy there.
Finally, we were wedding this time came
we started to prepare for them. we brought
clothes and shoes and, we really pass
an enjoyable holiday.
in conclusion, holiday is the best opportunity to
enjoy and relax so appreciate it and
do whatever you want.

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Question:

In a paragraph, write about the best holiday you ever spent in your life.

The best holiday I ever had was when I went to Bejaia with my family. When my brother told me I was very excited because it was going to be my first time in the beautiful town. I was packing my suitcase. I packed in a lot of shirts and shorts. I spent my holiday to go on tour on a hill station with my family. It was very joyful and interesting day for me. After a journey of 8 hours we reached at 4 hours we booked a hotel to stay for three days. every day we went to the beach and play with each other. people there was very nice and lovely people. I loved every thing there. I wish I can visit there one day. holidays is a awaited break from bustling life, everyone should deserve some time to unwind from the tedious lifestyle.

+ Source

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Question:

In a paragraph, write about the best holiday you ever spent in your life.

My last summer holiday is amazing, I go to Tunisia, I found it exciting and interesting, I enjoyed everything, first I stay in luxury hotel, where food is so delicious, and explore the place and new people, cultures and habits. I also visit monuments and ruins and visit museums and art galleries and make pictures to save them as a souvenir. I came back to my home land Algeria after a month, really this holiday is the best holiday in my life.

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Question:

In a paragraph, write about the best holiday you ever spent in your life.

My best holiday was in Capital city of Algeria, in 2017 I spent my the best holiday in my life. I go at that time to the sea and the parks of animals, also I go to the central commercial that present a lot of (clothes) beautiful clothes. I go with my family that add more entertainment and enjoyment. The Capital City of Algeria is the best beautiful city that I see ever.

Résumé

Cette recherche dans notre main est principalement sur les erreurs qui sont commises par les apprenants de deuxième année d'EFL lors du transfert du passé simple de l'arabe à l'anglais à l'Université Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. L'objectif de cette étude est de déterminer si les apprenants de deuxième année d'EFL comptent sur leur langue maternelle pour transférer le passé simple de l'arabe vers l'anglais ou non. Par conséquent, cette étude s'articule autour des hypothèses de base selon lesquelles les apprenants de deuxième année d'EFL commettent principalement des erreurs de formation et que l'interférence de la langue maternelle est la principale source de ces erreurs. Pour obtenir des réponses convaincantes aux questions de recherche, une tâche de rédaction a été confiée à trois apprenants de deuxième année d'EFL sur un sujet spécifique afin de découvrir les principaux types d'erreurs et les sources qu'ils ont faites. L'analyse des données à la disposition des chercheurs a révélé que le type d'erreurs le plus fréquent que commettent les apprenants de deuxième année d'EFL est des erreurs de formation, et que le transfert intralingual est la principale source de ces erreurs. Ainsi, la première hypothèse de recherche a été confirmée, mais la seconde a été rejetée.

Mots-clés: Analyses des Erreurs, Passé Simple et Transfert.

ملخص

يتعلق هذا البحث الذي بين أيدينا بالأخطاء التي يرتكبها متعلمي السنة الثانية في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى عند تحويل الماضي البسيط من اللغة العربية إلى اللغة الانجليزية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد ما إذا كان متعلمي السنة الثانية للغة الانجليزية يعتمدون على لغتهم الأم عند تحويل الماضي البسيط من اللغة العربية إلى اللغة الإنجليزية أو لا. و للحصول على إجابات مقنعة على الأسئلة البحثية اعتمدنا في بحثنا على استبيان لحوالي 30 متعلما من متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للسنة الثانية حول موضوع معين من أجل كشف الأنواع الرئيسية للأخطاء و المصادر التي ارتكبوها، و كشف تحليل البيانات المتاحة للباحثين أن أكثر أنواع الأخطاء شيوعا لمتعلمي السنة الثانية هي أخطاء في تركيب الجمل و أن المصدر الأساسي لتلك الأخطاء هو النقل اللغوي اللامركزي و على هذا فقد تم تأكيد الافتراض البحثي الأول غير أن الثاني رفض.

الكلمات الأساسية : تحليل الأخطاء الماضي البسيط والنقل .