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**Students' Attitudes towards the Impact of the First Language Tense
System on the Use of English Tenses in Written Production**

**The Case of Second Year License Students at the English Department
of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master Degree in Didactics

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Dedication

All my gratitude is to Allah the almighty

I would like to dedicate this work

*To my favorite people in the world my mother “Halima”, and My father “Ali”,
your affection, support and love were my source of inspiration in every success I have made*

To my brothers “Zahir” and “Abderraouf”, and to my beautiful sister “Basma”

To my Beloved husband “Abderrahim”,

To my sweetheart daughter “Takoua” the gift whom I blessed with,

To my mother and father-in-law

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To my sisters-in-law “Somia”, “Ilhem” and her daughters “Mira” and “Hidaya”

To my supervisor “Nouri Malika” and my work partner “Karima”

To all my relatives, thank you for helping me finishing this work.

Fatiha

Dedication

In the Name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful, All the Praise is due to God alone, the

Sustained of all the worlds

Firstly and foremost, we would give our undeniable and unforgettable thanks to the most graceful and most compassionate the almightily (Allah), that has gave us the patience to complete this research and provided us with a lot of blessing that can never be counted.

I dedicate this simple work:

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To my dearest brothers “Elyasse”, and “Ahmed” and my little sister “Siham”.

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Abstract

This study explores the influence of first language tense system on the use of English tenses by EFL students'. The main goal is to present a clear explanation of tense systems in English and Arabic, focusing on their similarities and differences and to find out whether their native language affects their learning and use of English tenses. The assumption on which the present thesis is based on is whether English 2nd year students face difficulties while using English tenses in written production due to their mother tongue interference. To achieve the ultimate aim, a questionnaire was handed to 50 second year students at the department of English. The findings of this study revealed that second year students have difficulties regarding their usage of tenses since the grammatical structures and forms in the Arabic language differs from the English one. Their native language hinders their learning since there is a negative interference that leads to errors and inappropriate forms in English.

***Key words:* language interference, tense system, English, Arabic**

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

%: Percentage

CA: Contrastive Analysis

CAH: Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

EA: Error Analysis

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

I.E: That is to say

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

MSA: Modern standard Arabic

N: Numbers

NL: Native language

Q: Question

SL: Second Language

SLA: Second language acquisition

TL: Target Language

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Résumé

ملخص

Introduction:

It has long been argued that learners of foreign languages (FL) face difficulties in mastering English due to the differences between their native language and those languages. Mastery of the language is the main objective behind learning a FL. However, this cannot be easily achieved due to language interference. During the process of foreign language learning, learners rely on their mother tongue in their attempts to facilitate the task of target language (TL) production. Thus, learners' structures will be incorrect and the message they intend to convey will be misunderstood.

Native language interference, also known as L1 interference or transfer is considered as an obstacle in learning and applying foreign language rules. The effect of transfer can be on any aspect of the language including grammar, vocabulary, and spelling. Common errors which results from first language (L1) interference occur at the level of grammar particularly the use of tenses.

Indeed, one cannot deny that tenses are considered as difficult for non-native learners who have to spend much time to understand how to use them correctly and properly. Most researches in second/foreign language conclude that language transfer is a major cause of difficulties for mastering English tense by foreign learners.

It is important to understand that English and Arabic tenses are interesting subjects to investigate. Therefore, this study examines the influence of the Arabic tense system on the use of English tenses. It is an investigation of whether the mother tongue (Arabic) is the main reason for students' errors and difficulties or there are other reasons which should be taken into consideration too. Furthermore, the study tries to identify, analyze, and contrast the meanings, types and uses of tenses in these two languages in order to reveal the possible

universals of the two languages in this field, and to determine as much as possible the similarities and differences between them.

5. Background of the Study

One of the main obstacles when learning a second/foreign language is the influence of the first language. The difficulty of learning comes from the differences between the first and the target language. As it known, the L1 influences the process of learning a second language; this influence leads learners to make errors. The study of learners' errors has long been part of language pedagogy. It has received significant interest by many researchers.

A preliminary literature review shows that past studies have primarily focused on the analysis of the student's errors that happened because of mother tongue interference. In his paper, Alesawe (2015) stated that both language forms Libyan Dialects and Modern Standard Arabic have a degree of influence on the acquisition and use of English tense, aspect, and verb. However, Libyan dialects appear to have more effect. This is very clear in the use of simple past instead of present perfect and in the use of what is so called "activation" which is deemed a Libyan dialects marked form as this appears in the participants' responses when using the English tense, aspect, and verb. Besides this, some other grammatical structures such as the use of continuous and perfect tenses are also affected by Libyan dialects.

Furthermore, Ghaltan (2017) conducted a study with the title "Mother Tongue Interference in Using Present Perfect Tense and Past Simple Tense." The findings of this study showed that learners' mother tongue and inadequate competence of the second language influence the use of present perfect and past simple tenses. The study also stated that the use of mother tongue influences on Al-Neelain University students writing skills. In addition, the students misuse the present perfect and past simple tenses to the degree that they mistranslate English and Arabic sentences. Moreover, the findings showed that the students use the past

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simple tense more than the present perfect one. Finally, the results showed that the students make different types of errors when using English tenses.

from the observational researchers and works we can revealed that it still there is a need for conducting a study about students attitudes towards mother tongue interference on the use of English tenses when written production.

6. Statement of the Problem

It is obvious that every foreign language teacher has an experience with the impact and the interference of the native language, especially the ones who teach grammar or written expression because they suffer a lot with such problem. Selecting the appropriate tense is the big dilemma for many students because of its difficulties encountered as well as importance of appropriate use of tenses. Therefore; many teachers of English believe that teaching the use of tenses to EFL learners is a complex task. Language learners have to work hard in order to produce good compositions. Yet, they still make different errors and mistakes when using tenses in writing. According to some teachers, one of the main causes of this problem is the negative impact of their mother tongue; students think in L1 and translate the tense into L2 because they are not aware of the grammar differences and rules between Arabic tenses and English tenses.

7. Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study is to examine students' attitudes towards the impact of the first language tense system on the use of English tenses in written production.

4. Research Questions

This subject of research is the interference of EFL learner's mother tongue in English tense use in written production. On this basis, the questions that are worthy to be asked are the following:

- 1) - Is the mother tongue interference the main cause of errors in EFL learners' English tense use in writing?
- 2) - What difficulties do second year students have regarding the use of English tenses?
- 3) - Are second year students aware of the similarities and differences between Arabic tense system and English tense or not?
- 4) - What are the main solutions that may help both teachers and learners to overcome this problem of language interference at an early stage of language learning?

5. Research Assumption

The assumption on which the present thesis is based on is as the following:

- ✓ English 2nd year students face difficulties while using English tenses in written production due to their mother tongue interference.

6. Research Methodology

Any researcher should opt for the right method which is more appropriate to the nature of the study. For the sake of investigating the impact of the mother tongue on students' English tense use in writing and to fulfill the research aim, a students' questionnaire was implemented.

The sample is chosen randomly, it consists of 50 students at the department of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University Jijel. Second year students were selected to be as a population, because they have not fully mastered English tense system.

7. Structure of the study

The present study divided into two main chapters. The first chapter consists of two sections which presents a theoretical framework. The first chapter is about language interference and theories about language transfer. It also deals with the interlanguage theory, contrastive analysis in general, and error analysis. The second chapter is a detailed study of the tense systems of English and Arabic in order to determine the differences and similarities between the two tense systems. The third chapter is the Field of Investigation. It includes the analysis of the questionnaire, as well as the interpretation of the results in relation to the research questions and hypothesis. Finally, the general conclusion and some pedagogical recommendations are provided.

Chapter One: Interference of the Mother Tongue

The interference of mother tongue can be known as a transfer that affects learning a second language both negatively and positively. In other words, it is possible that learners can produce some mistakes or errors when learning a second language due to the negative interference of the mother tongue. One of the major obstacles in acquiring the second language is mother tongue or L1 interference especially in the productive skills of speaking and writing. Mother tongue interference affects L2 learning as “language” is considered as a set of new habits while “learning” is considered as the establishment of habits (Jie, 2008).

1.1. Mother Tongue

Mother Tongue, native Language, or a first language is the language that it is learned informally from birth by hearing purposeful speech. It indicates the child’s native or first acquired language which is exposed to it immediately after his/ her birth. According to Yadav (2014, p. 572), “The term “mother tongue” harks back to the notion that linguistic skills of a child are honed by the mother and, therefore, the language spoken by the mother would be the primary language that the child would learn.”

1.2. Second Language

According Susaan and Selinker (2008, p. 7), “the second language commonly referred to as the L2, refers to “any language learned after learning the L1, regardless of whether it is the second, third, fourth, or fifth language”. According to Troike (2006, p. 4), it is typically an official or societally dominant language needed for education, employment, and other basic purposes. It is often acquired by minority group members or immigrants who speak another language natively

1.3. Foreign Language

A foreign language can be defined as a language not commonly spoken in the country of the speaker. According to The European Conference on Language Learning (2013, p. 4), a “foreign language” is a language which has generally no direct link with the person’s immediate social or personal environment. The selection of a target foreign language is thus largely a personal choice of the learner, except in cases where children and adults are compelled to learn foreign languages for academic or professional reasons.” It is used for the purpose of contacting with other nation cultures.

2. Errors Theories and Second Language Acquisition

Zamel (1981, p. 146), thinks that errors indicate not that the student has not yet learnt but rather she/he is in the process of doing so. The best way to benefit from these errors is to identify their nature and quality in order to seek for the possible causes beyond them, and then decide for the possible and adequate corrective work to help them to get rid of their second language acquisition problems.

Many years ago, the studies in second language acquisition have focused on two things; the nature, and sources of errors. For that reason, two different linguistic approaches have emerged in order to describe and identify learners’ problems which are contrastive analysis, and error analysis.

2.1. Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive analysis is considered as a branch of knowledge; it is a kind of study and research that works among languages. Contrastive analysis can be defined as the comparison of two languages usually, or at most no more than a small number of languages. It seeks to

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provide better descriptions of their similarities and differences and to provide better teaching materials for language learners; it has often been done for practical/pedagogical purposes.

Contrastive analysis was first suggested by Whorf in 1941 as “contrastive linguistics”, which is a comparative study that emphasizes linguistic differences. Later on, it was developed by Charles Fries (1945) as an integral component of the methodology of FL teaching (Al-khresheh, 2013).

In his famous book “Linguistics across culture” Robert Lado (1957) used the term contrastive analysis to account for the acquisition of the second language in a systematic way by comparing the first language system and culture to the foreign system and culture. In later studies the term contrastive Linguistics changed to contrastive analysis.

Corder (1973, p. 148) writes that contrastive analysis is a kind of comparison which compares two different languages, the mother tongue of the learner and the second language. Therefore, contrastive analysis is used to compare and to find out the differences and similarities of those languages, and, hence, can predict the difficulties to encounter in the language teaching-learning process.

According to Gass and Larry (2001, p. 72), "contrastive analysis is a way of comparing languages to determine potential errors for the ultimate purpose of isolating what needs to be learned and what does not need to be learned in a SLL situation."

2.1.1. Contrastive Analysis and Behaviorism

Contrastive analysis is based on the assumptions of behaviorism. The latter considers language learning as a set of habit formation and L1 habits can interfere with target language ones. In other words, second language learners usually carry the habits of their mother tongue over into L2. Therefore, language learning can be reinforced by the existing habits; CA associated with these assumptions and focus on the differences between the mother tongue and the TL in order to help language learners master the target language.

2.1.2. Contrastive Analysis and Foreign Language Teaching

Contrastive analysis seeks to make a comparison between two languages and designs a curriculum with focusing more on the differences. According to Johansson (2008), many textbooks were designed on the basis of a systematic comparison of L1 and L2 in order to identify the possible difficulties.

In the course of learning a foreign language, learners regularly produce utterances or write sentences which are judged by the rules of the foreign language as erroneous, or ill-formed. Lado (1957, p. 9) wrote: “the teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students will know better what the real problems are and can provide for teaching them.”

The background for contrastive analysis, as applied to language teaching, for language use, is the assumption and the belief that the mother tongue influences. The contrastive analysis and foreign language teaching are built on the assumption that the mother tongue influences the process of learning a foreign language. That influence from the mother tongue is not always negative, i.e., learning a foreign language that is related to the mother tongue of the learner is easier and helpful than learning one that is very different. For example, Ringbom has shown that Swedish-speaking Finns have a huge advantage in learning English compared with Finnish-speaking Finns (Ringbom 1987, p. 80).

Contrastive analysis is a systematic comparison of the mother tongue and the foreign language. Its basic ideas are: the description of the mother tongue and the foreign language, the prediction of the difficulties, and then using these results to improve teaching materials. Lado emphasizes this point when he states: “The plan of the book rests on the assumption that we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty by comparing systematically

the language and culture to be learned with the native language and culture of the student.”

(Lado, 1957, p. vii)

2.1.3. The Procedures of Contrastive Analysis

CA can be defined as the linguistic comparison of the structures of two or more languages so as to demonstrate their differences and similarities. It can be of great help in understanding a second language. Whitman (1970, p. 191) contends that “A contrastive analysis must proceed through four steps; description, selection, contrast, and prediction. Unfortunately, most analyses are weakened by insufficient care or attention at one or more of these steps, each of which is beset with a host of problems.”

1. Selection: the analysis should be limited. What is to be compared with what should be carefully selected as it is impossible to compare every sound, word, structure, etc., of the two languages. In the same vein, selection is formulated to form certain linguistic terms, rules, and structures for contrast because it is almost not possible to contract the problems of two languages.
2. Description: the two languages should be linguistically described within the same theory which is CA. Furthermore, for studying and describing syntax and morphology, there is no specific theory. The main focus in the description should be on differences, not similarities. In other words, the teacher applies the formal grammar and describes the two languages clearly.
3. Comparison: comparison needs a full description. The similarities and differences are compared in three levels; a form which refers to any linguistic unit of any size, meaning, and distribution of items in the two languages which have been collected.

4. Prediction: i.e. identifying which areas are likely to cause errors. Thus, we can predict the problems that will appear.
5. Verification: this final step of a contrastive study seeks to find out if the predictions made in the fourth step (prediction) are true in reality

2.1.4. Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

The origins of the contrastive analysis hypothesis are from Lado's "Linguistics across Cultures" (1975). According to him, what is resulted from the differences between the learner's first language and the target one is considered a second language error, (Ellis, 1985).

In other words, Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis claimed that a language learner's first language will have a crucial influence on the learning of the second language. Most obviously, errors made in the process of learning the second language will bear significant traces of interference from the first language (...). The learners' difficulties can be analyzed and even predicted in advance, by a systematic contrastive comparison of the two languages involved."(Carter, 1993, p. 14-15)

Explaining this hypothesis, Lado (1957, p. 2) stated: "Those elements that are similar to his (the learner's) native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult." As a conclusion, the difficulty in learning a foreign language and the errors in performance occur when the structure of the mother tongue and the foreign language is different. There are two versions or assumptions of the contrastive analysis hypothesis according to Wardhaugh (1970): The strong version and the weak version.

2.1.4.1. Strong Version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

The strong version of contrastive analysis hypothesis claimed that all L2 errors can be predicted by identifying differences between the target language and the learner's first

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language, (Wardhaugh, 1970, p. 124). It means that through identifying the differences, all errors that will occur can be guessed. This version, supported by Lado (1957) and Fries (1972), claims that based on a comparison and through identifying the differences of two languages, the difficulties and errors in learning a second language can be predicted.

2.1.4.2. Weak Version of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

In the weak version, the difficulties are explained not predicted. Therefore, it can be used to identify which errors are the results of the interference. The weak version is a model with an explanatory power as opposed to predictive power. That is, it is claimed that researchers can look at errors once they have been identified and offer an explanation based on a CA of that area as to why those errors occurred (Mair, 2005). Wardhaugh (1970, p. 125) maintains that the weak version starts with the evidence provided by linguistic interference and uses such evidence to explain the similarities and differences between them. The weak version starts by explaining the sources of errors in language learning and has later been developed into “Error Analysis”.

2.1.4.4. Criticism of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

Starting from 1970 onwards, CAH was criticized. One of the important causes of this criticism is the appearance of Chomsky’s (1959) classic review of “Skinner’s Verbal Behavior.” Both the strong and weak versions have been criticized in their approaches.

For Wardhaugh (1970, p. 13) the strong version relies on a weak linguistic theory. Similarly, the weak version is unsatisfactory because it does not predict anything except its identification of the already occurred errors. Al-khresheh (2015) also points out that “the main criticism of CA was that interlingual interference from first language (L1 hereinafter) is not the only reason for the occurrence of errors in SLA” (p. 123).

2.2. Error Analysis

Error analysis is a theory that was developed as a reaction or a result of the criticisms which CA received. The father of error analysis Stephen Pit Corder established this theory with his colleagues in the late of 1970. The first time he introduced it was in his article “The significance of learner errors” in 1967 when he said that errors in second language are important because they can reflect some of the underlying linguistic rules.

2.2.1. Definition of Errors

Researchers gave many definitions for errors. In the past error was considered as a “negative” thing in the learning process, but since the appearance of error analysis, it has become an important and essential indicator of progress in the learning process. According to Dulay, Burt Krashen (1982, p. 138), “People cannot learn a language without first systematically committing errors.”

According to Ellis (1994), an “error” committed by learners in the language use is defined as “a deviation from the norms of the target language.” (P. 51). Errors can be defined also as systematic deviations from the rules of a target language. For James (1998, p. 1) an error is “an unsuccessful bit of language.”

Another definition of “error” worth mentioning was provided by Lennon (1991, p. 182), who said that an error is “a linguistic form or combination of forms which, in the same context and under similar conditions of production, would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the speakers’ native speaker counterparts.”

2.2.2. Errors vs. Mistakes

According to Crystal (1992, p. 125), errors which reflect systematically the level of competence achieved by a learner are contrasted with mistakes, which are performance imitations that a learner would be able to correct.

Errors and mistakes were defined differently by many experts. Brown (1994, p. 205), defines linguistic errors as “a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the interlanguage competence of the learner.” Whereas, a mistake refers to a performance error that is either random guess or a slip in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly”.

According to the Dictionary of Language Teaching, and Applied Linguistics (1992) by Richards and Schmidt (2002 , p. 201) claim that “a learner makes a mistake when writing or speaking because of lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness, or some other aspects of performance. Thus, mistakes can be self-corrected when attention is called.” Whereas, they are defined error as “the use of linguistic item in a way that a fluent or native speaker of the language regards it as showing faulty or incomplete learning.”

2.2.3. The Classification of Errors

In a foreign language or in the native language, learners make errors while speaking or writing; errors have been examined from different sides: the source of the errors, the classification of errors, their effect on the learning process and how to treat them. According to Corder (1973, p. 277), errors are classified as follows:

- ✓ Omission: Leaving out some linguistic elements. For example: “My father is doctor” instead of “My father is a doctor.”

- ✓ Addition: The redundant use of certain elements in a sentence and the addition of some unnecessary or incorrect elements. For example: “She was going to home when I saw her” instead of “she was going to home” without adding the unnecessary element “when I saw her.”
- ✓ Selection: Wrong selection of the wrong morpheme, structure of vocabulary features. For instance: Phonologically French students substitute the /ð / sound with the /z/ sound; like saying /zi/ dog.
- ✓ Ordering: Incorrect word order can occur at the syntactic level in a sentence or in pronunciation. For example: We last night went to the cinema.

2.2.4. Sources of Errors

Errors have many sources. Brown (2000, p. 224) maintained that errors arise from several possible sources, two of which are “interlingual errors of interference from the native language, and intralingual errors within the target language, context of learning and communication strategies.”

2.2.4.1. Intralingual Errors

Intralingual Errors are those originated within the structure of the target language itself. They are the type of errors which are caused by the target language itself. The mother tongue does not play a role in producing such type of L2 learners' errors. Richards (1971) stated that intralingual errors are those that reflect general features of the rule learning like faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules, and failure to learn the conditions under which rules apply. Al-Tamimi (2006) asserted that the errors that are not reflecting the structure of their native language or mother tongue are caused by intralingual interference from the target language itself. He considers this type of interference as one of the major factors that might affect the process of second language acquisition. These errors occur when

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learners attempt to use concepts and build up hypotheses about L2 from their limited experience to it.

2.2.4.1.1. Overgeneralization

It simply refers to applying a certain rule in the language learning process to several situations when there are different rules which need to apply. Overgeneralization errors were also defined by Ellis (1994, p. 59) as those which “arise when the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language.” In other words, learners very often create a deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language (Ellis 2000, p. 59). Examples of such errors:

- ✓ Generalizing the “ed” past forms for all verbs of English “writed” instead of “wrote”.
- ✓ Forming the plural by adding “s” to even irregular plurals: e.g. “fishes” instead of “fish”.

2.2.4.1.2. Ignorance of Rule Restrictions

Learners of a second language apply the rules of the target language in inappropriate contexts where they are not applicable because they fail to understand the restrictions on the existing structure. According to Richards (1974, p. 176), ignorance of rule restrictions is the inability to uphold the limits (borders) of present formations, specifically, administering rules to inappropriate situations. As examples:

- ✓ “I enjoy to learn about English language”. It is better to change the word “to learn about” with the word “learning”.
- ✓ “He made me to smile” instead of “He made me smile”.

2.2.4.1.3. Incomplete Application of Rules

According to Richards (1974, P. 177), incomplete application of rules refers to “occurrence of structures whose deviancy represents the degree of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances.”

- ✓ “You like to play”? In place of “Do you like to play?”
- ✓ “The man works hardly”, instead of “the man works hard”

2.2.4.1.4. False Concept Hypothesis

According to Corder (1981), “false concept hypothesis does not mean that the teacher gives false information, but rather, that he gives incomplete information, so that logically the learner may perhaps draw wrong conclusions.” (pp. 52-53). Al-Tamimi (2006, p. 44) explains that this type of intralingual error is sometimes a result of “poor gradation of teaching items.” The following examples of this type are the wrong interpretation of “is” and “was”:

- ✓ The use of “was” as a marker of past tense in “It was rained yesterday”
- ✓ The use of “is” as a marker of present tense in “He is plays football”
- ✓ “I don’t know why did he leave” instead of “I don’t know why he left”

2.2.4.2. Interlingual Errors

It refers to errors which are caused by the negative influence or the interference of the native language or the mother tongue. The dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (1992) defined inter-lingual errors as errors which result from language transfer, which are caused by the learner’s first language. They are defined by Schachter and Celce-Murcia (1977, p. 443) as “those caused by the influence of the learner's MT on production of the TL in presumably those areas where languages clearly differ.” The term interlingual was

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first introduced by Selinker (1972). He used this term to refer to the systematic knowledge of a second language which is independent of both the learner's first language and the target language (Abi Samra, 2003, p. 5).

2.2.5. Definition of Interlanguage

The term interlanguage was originally introduced by Selinker (1972); he viewed interlanguage as an impermanent grammar which L2 students formulate for themselves. According to Cook (2008, p. 13), L1 helps learners when the language components of the L2 and L1 are similar; in other words, these similarities are considered as important elements that help learners when transferring aspects of the L1 language to L2. According to Richards et al. (1996), interlanguage is the type of language which can be produced by FL/L2 learners who are in the process of acquiring or learning a new language. From a cognitive perspective, IL refers to the separateness of an L2 learner's system, a system which includes a structural status between the NL and TL (Brown, 1994).

2.2.5.1. Interlanguage Theory

The theory of IL was the first main attempt to explain the process of SLA; it was one of the few theories of that time that did not contradict the critical period hypothesis. To explain the procedure of SLA better, McLaughlin argue that "interlanguage theory has undergone almost constant development but one common theme is the notion of hypothesis testing i.e. the idea that learners form hypothesis about what the rules of the target language and then set about testing them, confirming them if they find supportive evidence in the input and rejecting them if they receive negative evidence." (as cited in Ellis, 1994, p. 30)

2.2.5.2. The Origins of Interlanguage Theory

“Interlanguage” as mentioned by Ellis (2000, p. 33) was coined by the American linguist Selinker (1972) who claims that L2 learners who have not become fully proficient form a linguistic system based on L1, but which is different from it and also from L2.

Ellis (1995) has reexamined the origins of interlanguage theory; he indicated that it contains of two different opinions of SLA. The first one was set by a mentalist who said that theories of language acquisition claim that the learner acquires L2 in the same way as L1 and that it is due to the inner strength of language acquisition. The second opinion is grounded on the concept of SLA with environmental elements and L1 interference acquisition.

The mentalist view is widely established on Chomsky’s concept of universal grammar (1959) which maintains that people are born with innate linguistic principles making up the initial state which commanded the form a sentence of any given language could take (Ellis, 1995).

2.2.6. Language Transfer

Language transfer is also known as cross-linguistic interference or interference. It is based on the influence of the learner’s first language on the production of the target language as a result of the similarities and the differences between the TL and the one previously acquired (Odlin, 1989, p. 27).

2.2.6.1. Definition of Transfer

Transfer is considered as one of the most important factors which are directly related to the process of second language learning. According to Gass (1996, p. 321). On the other hand, behaviorists consider transfer as the most important source of foreign language problems as a result of the differences between the systems of L1 and L2. Lado confirms this

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when saying that: “the student who comes into contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to the learner’s native language will be simple for him and those that are different will be difficult.” (1957, p. 1). In other words, when the previously acquired features of the first language appear in speaking or in writing the second language, language transfer occurs. This transfer or interference is made unconsciously. The notion of language transfer involves the use of native language (or other language) information in the acquisition of a second (or additional) language

As behaviorists believe, the transfer of the FL is a common source of foreign language problems which is the result of the differences between the system of both first language and second language. Lado confirmed this when saying that: “the student who comes into contact with a foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to the learner’s native language will be simple for him and those that are different will be difficult.” (1957, p. 1)

2.2.6.2. Types of Transfer

According to Allen and Corder (1975), transfer can be positive (helps to acquire new learning tasks), as it can be negative (obstructs the acquisition of new learning tasks). Language transfer is generally divided into two main categories: positive or negative.

2.2.6.2.1. Positive Transfer

According to Gass and Larry (2001), positive transfer results in correct utterances and facilitates language learning. Basically, the learner’s L1 might facilitate L2 learning. Lado (1957, p. 158) asserted that “The basic premise of CAH is that language learning can be more successful when the two languages – the native and the foreign – are similar”.

Yule (2006, p. 167) states that “if the first language and the second language have similar features (e.g. marking plural at the ends of nouns), then, the learner may be able to benefit from the positive transfer of the L1 knowledge to L2”. In other words, when the mother tongue is similar to the target language this may facilitate the process of learning the target language rules and applications. This means that learners relate what they already know and acquired of their first language to what they discover in second language.

2.2.6.2.2. Negative Transfer

Negative Transfer is considered as a problematic transfer. It occurs when there are differences between the first language and the second language. describing negative transfer, Yule (2006, p. 168) states that “transferring a first language feature which is really different from the second language (e.g. putting the adjective after the noun) results in negative transfer and it may make the second language expression difficult to understand.” Hence, negative transfer refers to the errors a speaker introduces into one language as a result of contact with mother language (Crystal, 1992, p. 180), although there are cases where the relevant features are similar for both languages and which results in a positive transfer.

Al-khresheh (2013) pointed out that there are four types of divergences that are caused by differences between NL and TL:

1. Overproduction: Or Overuse is sometimes the outcome of avoidance; the learner will use other infrequent structures when he avoids using the TL patterns (Ellis, 2008, p.358).

2. Underproduction (or avoidance): Ellis (2008, p. 357) describes the phenomenon as follows: Learners also avoid using linguistic structures which they find difficult because of the differences between their NL and their TL. In such cases, the effects of the L1 are evident not in what errors they do, but in what they do not and omit.

3. Misinterpretation: This type of errors occurs when L1 structures influence the interpretation of L2 messages.

4. Production: This type of errors can be classified into six categories: substitutions (i.e. think is pronounced as /fink/ in Poland and /sink/ in Egypt, people as /beoble/ in Arabic, love as /laugh/ in Saudi Arabia, fish as /fis/ in Malaysia, and thirty as /dirty/ in India), calques, under-differentiation, over-differentiation, hypercorrection and alterations of structures.

2.2.7. Definition of Errors Analysis

Ellis (1985) defines Error Analysis as a procedure which researchers and teachers tend to use. Among these procedures, there is a collection of samples of learner language, identification of the errors in the sample, their classification according to their hypothesized causes, and finally evaluation.

As explained by Corder (1973), Error Analysis follows a comparative process, in the sense that there is a comparison of synonymous utterances in the learner's language and the target one. This is a particular matter of contrastive analysis which deals with two languages, and it is its starting point indicating the same message as error analysis.

Brown (1980, p. 160 in Hasyim, 2002, p. 43) defined error analysis as “the process to observe, analysis, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second languages and then to reveal the systems operated by the learner.” In other words, in the process of learning a second language, errors are considered important because they can be observed, analyzed, and then classified to know the sources of these errors and the types of needed solutions.

2.2.8. The Procedure of Errors Analysis

There are some steps that needed to be followed when conducting an error analysis. Indeed, according to Corder (1974, p. 55), there exist five steps in conducting an Error

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analysis: collection of a sample of learner language, identification of errors, describing of errors, explaining of errors, and error evaluation.

2.2.8.1. Collection of a Sample of Learner Language

The choice of data collection methods is differ from one researcher to another. At this stage, five important factors influence the learners' errors. Ellis (1994, p. 49) asserted that these factors are significant in "collecting a well-defined sample of learner language so that clear statements can be made regarding what kinds of errors the learners produce and under what conditions." The factors are summarized as follows with their description:

a- Language

- ✓ Medium: Learner production can be oral or written.
- ✓ Genre: Learner production may take the form of a conversation, a lecture, an essay, a letter, etc.
- ✓ Content: The topic the learner is communicating about.

b- Learner

- ✓ Level: Elementary, intermediate, or advanced
- ✓ Mother tongue: The learner's L1
- ✓ Language learning experience: This may be classroom or naturalistic or a mixture of the two

2.2.8.2. Identification of Errors

In this step, an error analyst needs to identify and recognize students 'errors. He/she should distinguish in certain ways between an error and a mistake. Corder (1981) has provided a common model for identifying errors in the utterances of L2/FL learners. According to his model "every sentence is to be regarded as idiosyncratic until shown to be otherwise" (p. 21).

2.2.8.3. Description of errors

Description of errors comes after the step of identifying learner's errors. For purposes of analysis Troike (2006, p. 39) stated that "errors are usually classified according to language level (whether an error is phonological, morphological, syntactic, etc.), general linguistic category (e.g. auxiliary system, passive sentences, negative constructions), or more specific linguistic elements (e.g. articles, prepositions, verb forms)."

According to Ellis (1994, P. 54) "the description of learner errors involves a comparison of the learner's idiosyncratic utterances with a reconstruction of those utterances in the target language. It requires, therefore, attention to the surface properties of the Learners utterances (i.e. it does not attempt, at this stage, to identify the sources of the errors.)"

2.2.8.4. Explanation of Errors

This stage is considered the most important for EA research. After collecting a sample of learner language, identifying, and describing errors, researchers or error analysts try to explain and interpret the reasons of why such errors happen. Ellis (1994, P. 57) stated that the explanation of errors stage is significant for SLA research because it includes an endeavor to establish the operation responsible for L2 acquisition. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005.p, 62) declare that "explaining errors involves determining their sources in order to account for why they were made."

2.2.8.5. Evaluation of Errors

In this final step, the different errors of learners are being weighed in order to distinguish and decide which error should get more attention in class. According to Ellis (1997, p. 19) evaluating errors means that teachers should give more attention to errors that

seem to be serious and can affect communication, and less attention to those which have little effect on the learner's learning of L2.

2.2.9. Significance of Errors Analysis

Error Analysis is based on analyzing the learner's errors to obtain a better understanding of the process of second language acquisition. Corder (1967, p. 168-169) explains the value of errors in three different ways; the teacher's awareness of the learner's progress, the researcher's investigation for the strategies or procedures the learner is employing in his discovery of the language, and finally for the learner himself who encounters those errors as being an important device for his progress and development. Similarly, Brown (2000, p. 218) claimed: "The fact that learners do make errors and these errors can be observed, analyzed, and classified to reveal something of the system operating within the learner leads to a surge of learners' errors, called "error analysis"

According to Dulay and Burt (1974, p. 129-36), errors have played an important role in the study of language acquisition in general and in the examination of L2 acquisition in particular. Researchers see that errors contain valuable information on the strategies learners use to acquire a language.

2.2.10. Limitations of Errors Analysis

Though playing significant role in the process of second language acquisition, error analysis has some limitations. As stated by Troike (2006, p. 40), these limitations can be summarized as follows:

- ✓ Ambiguity in classification: it is hard to say, for example, if a Chinese L1 speaker who excludes number and tense modulations of English is doing so due to L1 influence

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(Chinese is not an inflectional language) or due to a universal developmental process which results in simplified or “telegraphic” utterances.

- ✓ Lack of positive data: due focusing only on errors, it does not provide information on what the L2 learner has acquired, furthermore, correct uses may not be taken into consideration. In other words, EA concentrates only on the aspect students fail in and ignores the ones they have studied successfully.
- ✓ Potential for Avoidance: When learners avoid difficult structures this will lead to absence of errors in which EA cannot reveal it.

Conclusion

In summary, what has been discussed above is a positive learning experience in order to help the learners to improve their language and use English flawlessly. All of the three theories; contrastive analysis, errors analysis, and interlanguage theory can be considered as important factors in second language acquisition. In the process of learning a second language, learners could make errors due to the mother tongue interference. The application of both Error analysis and contrastive analysis when analyzing those errors is significant because they could facilitate second language learning. Sources of errors sometimes are not due to mother tongue interference or language transfer. Furthermore, learners produce errors every time error analysis place them into crucial object in second language learning that facilitate the students learning, while the in contrastive analysis era they just became unpredicted problems for the learners. In sum, it is important to learn more about errors theories and second Language acquisition in English classroom.

Chapter Two: The English and Arabic Tense System

Introduction

Every language has its specific rules and ways that distinguish it from other languages in talking about time. English language, like any other language, is characterized by its rules and has its own way to express the notion of time. Therefore, students of English as a foreign language should be aware of these ways and how they differ from those of their mother language if they are to use them correctly and to produce accurate written texts.

1. English Tense System

In review, tense, aspect and time are discussed from a theoretical point of view. This discussion is about when and how English tenses are used. Only the common and usual uses of each tense will be discussed. English has twelve tenses, combining past, present, and future.

1.1. Time, Tense, and Aspect.

For Quirk et al (1985, p. 175), time can be thought of as a line, theoretically of non-finite length, on which the present moment is located as a continuously moving moment; anything ahead of this moment is in the future and anything behind it is in the past. When defining time as related to language, Quirk and Greenbaum (1973, p. 46) stated that it is a universal non-linguistic concept with three divisions past, present and future. Lewis (1986, p. 48) states that time is naturally divided into past, present and future. The past is before now, the present is now and the future is after now.

Furthermore, tense, is a linguistic term that represents these three time divisions. (Lewis 1986). Tense, according to Lewis, is represented morphologically by changing the verb form. Thus English has only two tenses, present and past. Any verb form that is made

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using auxiliaries is not a tense, it is an aspect. In terms of the use of auxiliaries, Binnick (1991) regards tense and aspect as the same when he says that tense is marked either morphologically by verb form variations or syntactically by an auxiliary word. Both tense and aspect are concerned with time but in different ways (Comrie 1976).

There are 12 tenses in English which have resulted from the combination of both tense and aspect system (Celce, 1999). According to Celce, there are “four aspects simple (sometimes called zero aspect), perfect, progressive, and their combination perfect progressive.” (1999, p. 110).

1.2. The Past Tenses

1.2.1. The Past Simple Tense

According to the Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar (2014, p. 296), the grammatical label past tense is typically used of a verb form that refers to a situation that took place in the past. However, this association can be misleading. It is known as the simple past, because it does not require any auxiliary with the verb. We make regular past simple verbs by adding -ed to the base form. The irregular past simple verbs have different and unpredictable forms. They need to be learnt individually through using a list. We make past simple negative sentences using didn't (or did not).

Eg1: You worked very hard.

Eg2: I went to school.

Eg3: She did not go with me.

According to Eastwood (1994, p. 87) we use the past simple to:

- ✓ We use the past simple for an action in the past.

- ✓ For repeated actions.

1.2.2. The Past Progressive Tense

It is also known as the past continuous. We use it to say what we were in the middle of doing at a particular moment in the past. The Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar (2014, p. 335) define it as the construction (tense in some frameworks) formed with a past form of the verb be + an -ing form either to indicate that the action was in progress in a certain period of time in the past or to show that the action started in the past and still in progress until the present moment. They need the suffix “ing” at the end of the base word, which is called the present participle. They also follow the helping verb, "to be" in the past.

The affirmative form of the past progressive is constructed as follows: was/were+ verb-ing; whereas the negative statement is formed with: was/were+ not+ verb-ing. Such as:

Eg1. I was watching TV.

Eg2. We were not joking.

According to Scrivener (2010, p. 150.151) the past progressive tense is used for:

- ✓ Something in progress over a certain past period.
- ✓ Something in progress at certain past moment / time - often using at or on.
- ✓ Something in progress at the same time as something else was in progress.
- ✓ Polite enquiries.
- ✓ Setting the background.

1.2.3. The Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect, also called the pluperfect, is a verb tense used to talk about actions that were completed before some point in the past? It is also is used to indicate that the action occurred before something in a certain period of time in the past, as it can show that the action

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finished before something in the past. The past perfect tense is quite an easy tense to understand and to use. This tense talks about the “past in the past”.

The past perfect is formed by the past form of the auxiliary “to have” and the past participle of the verb. The negative form of the past perfect is formed as follows: had not+ past participle. For instance:

Eg1. I had finished my work.

Eg2. She had not gone to school.

As Scrivener states (2010, p. 179. 180) we use the past perfect to describe:

- ✓ One thing happened before another.
- ✓ Background events.
- ✓ Something expected, intended or planned didn't happen (or was unfinished) at a certain time or before something else happened.
- ✓ Superlative experiences.
- ✓ Reported speech.
- ✓ Being very polite (especially with wondered and hoped).

1.2.4. The Past Perfect Progressive Tense

This type of past tenses is used to describe an action that started and progressed before a specific time in the past, as it indicates actions which occurred over time in the past. The past perfect progressive tense is constructed by the past form of the auxiliary “to have”, the past participle of “to be” and the present participle of the verb (had + been + verb-ing). For the negative statement, it is formed by the placement of the negation “not” between the two auxiliaries had not been + verb-ing. For example:

Eg1: The baby had been crying all the night.

Eg2: You had been playing tennis.

Eg3: We had not been expecting her.

We use the past perfect progressive to Scrivener (2010, p. 184. 185)

- ✓ For a past event that was in progress up to a certain point in the past. This event could be temporary or unfinished.
- ✓ To emphasize the duration of something, perhaps to make a point of the time, work, stress, commitment, inconvenience etc.
- ✓ To explain a reason for something in the past.

1.3. The Present Tenses

The present tenses are used either to refer to actions which occur in the present or to talk about factual and habitual things. There are basically four present tenses in English language:

1.3.1. The Present Simple Tense

The simple present tense is formed by using the simple form of the verb; that is, the form which is listed in the dictionary which is also called infinitive without “to” (Cook and Suter, 1983, p. 49). In order to form the simple present tense “to” needs to be omitted, and when the third person singular subject is present, a suffix –es or –s is added to the verb. The negative statement of the present simple tense is formed by the addition of the auxiliary to do in the present and the negation “not” before the stem, do/does + not + verb. Such as:

Eg1: I am French.

Eg2: The boy goes to visit his grandmother.

Eg3: I do not eat chocolate.

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According to Eastwood (1994, p. 83. 84. 85) we use the present simple to talk about:

- ✓ Repeated actions.
- ✓ A present state: a feeling, opinion or relation.
- ✓ An instant action i.e. describing actions as they happen.
- ✓ Verbs of reporting.

1.3.2. The Present Progressive Tense

According to Svivenner, J (n.d.), the present progressive tense means things which we think of as occupying a limited period of time, temporary things - with a beginning and end - either now or around now. The affirmative statement of the present progressive is: am/is/are + verb-ing i.e. the auxiliary “to be” in the present and the present participle of the verb. The placement of the negation “not” between the auxiliary and the verb is sufficient to make the negative form of the present continuous. For instance:

Eg1: He is playing now.

Eg2: They are not moving to the new house.

According to Scrivener (2010, p. 120. 121. 122) we use the present continuous tense to talk about:

- ✓ Things happening right at this moment, now
- ✓ Things happening around the current moment, though maybe not at the precise moment of speaking.
- ✓ Repeated actions over a temporary period
- ✓ Changes over time - for situations that are developing or changing.

1.3.3. The Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect is a tense which indicates that the action started in the past and has recently finished i.e. before the present time. It is a rather important tense in English, but it gives speakers of other languages a difficult time, mainly because it uses concepts or ideas that do not exist in those languages. In fact, the structure of the present perfect tense is very simple. The problems come up with the use of the tense. In addition, there are some differences in usage between British and American English. The present perfect is constructed by the present form of the auxiliary “to have” and the past participle of the verb: have/has+ PP. The negative statement of the present perfect has the following structure: have/has + not + PP. For example:

Eg1: I have seen her.

Eg2: We have not played football.

This tense is called the present perfect tense. There is always a connection with the past and the present:

- ✓ Experience
- ✓ Change
- ✓ Continuing situation

According to Scrivener (2010, p. 163. 164) we use the present perfect to talk about:

- ✓ Things that happened once or a number of times in an unfinished period of time that started in the past and continued up to now.
- ✓ Changes over time - with verbs like *increase*, *grow*, *fall* in an unfinished period of time that started in the past and continued up to now etc.
- ✓ States that started in the past and continued up to now (and may go on into the future).

1.3.4. The Present Perfect Progressive Tense

This type of present tenses is used to indicate actions that started in the past and progressed until the present time. The present perfect tense is constructed with the present form of the auxiliary “to have”, the past participle of the auxiliary “to be” and the present participle of the verb: have/ has + been + verb-ing. The negative statement of the present perfect tense is formed as follows: have/ has + not + been + verb-ing. For instance:

Eg1: I have been waiting for one hour.

Eg2: It has not been raining.

This tense is called the present perfect continuous tense. There is usually a connection with the present or now. Eastwood (1994, p. 91. 92) maintains that the present perfect continuous used for:

- ✓ An action over a period of time up to now, the period leading up to the present. An action continuing up to now.
- ✓ Repeated actions up to now.

1.4. The Future Tenses

The future tenses indicate that something will take place in the future and the actions will occur later not now. There are several types of future tenses in English:

1.4.1. The Future Simple Tense

We make the simple future tense with the modal auxiliary will/shall. This is the basic tense which indicates the appearance of certain actions in a future time. There are mainly two ways to make the future tense either with “will + stem” or with “am / is / are +going to +stem”. The negative statement is formed through two ways as well either with “will/ shall+ not + stem” or “am/is/are + not+ going to + stem”. Such as:

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Eg1: I will open the door.

Eg2: She will not be at school tomorrow.

Eg3: I am going to leave soon.

According to Scrivener (2010, p. 190) we use will the simple future tense for:

- ✓ “Certain” future events.
- ✓ Making predictions about the future.
- ✓ Announcing decisions about the future as they are made.
- ✓ Promises, requests, willingness and offers.

Furthermore, Scrivener (2010, p. 196) stated that we use going to for:

- ✓ An all-purpose future.
- ✓ Events initiated before now.

1.4.2. The Future Progressive Tense

This tense shows that the actions progress over time in the future. The future progressive tense has two forms. The affirmative form uses either the first form which is “will+ be+ verb-ing” or the second one which is “am / is / are +going to + be +verb-ing”. For the negative forms, the first form is “will + not + be+ verb-ing” and the second one is “am / is / are + not+ going to + be +verb-ing.” For example:

Eg1: I will be working at 10 am.

Eg2: We will not be having dinner at home.

Eg3: He is going to be working to a very late time.

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The future continuous tense expresses actions which will be in progress at a particular moment in the future. The action will start before that moment but it will not have finished at that moment.

As Scrivener (2010, p. 209) we use the future progressive for:

- ✓ A planned action that will be in progress at a certain time in the future or when something else happens.
- ✓ A planned action in progress over a certain period of time in the future.

1.4.3. The Future Perfect Tense

The future perfect tense indicates that an action will be completed before sometime or something in the future. The future perfect tense expresses action in the future before another action in the future. This is the past in the future.

For the affirmative form, the future perfect tense uses “will+ have +PP”; whereas for the negative form it uses “will+ not + have +PP”. For instance:

Eg1: I will have revised my lessons before I go to bed.

Eg2: She will not have gone to school.

The future perfect tense expresses action in the future before another action in the future. This is the past in the future.

According to Eastwood (1994, p. 102) we use the future perfect:

- ✓ to look back from the future
- ✓ to talk about something that will be over at a future time.

1.4.4. The Future Perfect Progressive

This type of future tenses is used to show that an action will progress until some point of time in the future. The future perfect progressive is formed as follows: “will + have + been + verb-ing”, and the negative statement is formed with the placement of the negation before the verb. For example:

Eg1: I will have been working for four hours.

Eg2: We will not have been waiting long.

We use the future perfect continuous tense to talk about a long action before some point in the future.

- ✓ I will have been working here for ten years next week.
- ✓ He will be tired when he arrives. He will have been traveling for 24 hours.

This is used for actions that will last for a specified period of time at a definite moment in the future. That is, by a certain time in the future, an action will have been taking place for a period of time. - Next year at this time, I will have been studying English for 12 years.

2. Arabic Tense System

Wightwick and Gaatar (2008, p. 14) stated that Arabic is relatively straight forward when it comes to tenses. Some languages have many tenses and are very specific about the time of an action and whether or not the action has been completed. In contrast to tenses of the English language, the Arabic tenses can basically be divided into three tenses: past, present and imperative, and these three tenses are mainly expressed by the verb. (Alsamerrai (2003), Abduhamid (1980), Mobarak (1992), and Hassan (1995)). On the other hand, Alhawary (2011), Haywood and Nahmad (1965) say that there are only two tenses in the

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Arabic language, the perfect (past) and the imperfect (present). The imperative, according to Haywood and Nahmad (1965) is a modification of the imperfect (present) verb form.

There is no future tense corresponding to the time-tense relation for present and past. The future tense is rendered by adding an initial future particle /s/ (سَ) as in: /sayugha:diru/(سَيُغَادِرُ), or (سَوْفَ يُغَادِرُ) /sawfa yugha:diru/ “he will leave”.

2.1. The past (or perfect) الماضي

According to Declerck (2006), The Perfect الماضي is an act which at the moments of speaking has been completed and remains in a state of completion as: هِيَ لَعِبَتْ “she played”

The perfect or the past expresses an event which happened before the moment of speaking, it denotes a completed action in the past whether these actions are close to the present or happened long ago, it inflected by means of suffixes such as:

حَضَرَ أَبِي “My father came” (or), my father has come.

To form a past stem, the three root letters are used with a fatHa after the first root and a fatHa (or sometimes a kasra) after the second root letter (fa'la فَعَلَ/shariba شَرِبَ). Some endings are added to the stem to show the subject of the verb like (sharibat شَرِبْتُ), the person markers in the past tense also denote number (singular, dual, plural).

However, Hassan (1995) and Alsamerrai (2003) report that there are four cases of the past: First, the verb is morphologically and semantically past; which means that is, it is in the past form and it is used to indicate past actions whether these actions took place in the near or far past, and this use is the most common for the past. Secondly, the verb is morphologically past but not semantically. The verb is in the past form, but it could be used for present actions. For example, in what they call “contract” terms, the verb is in the past but it is used to indicate present situations such as (بِعْتُ bi't, اشْتَرَيْتُ ishtarayt, and هَبْتُ hibt) means (sold, bought, and

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gave). Thirdly, the past verb form could be used for future actions especially in some religious expressions such as in supplications: (ساعدك الله sa'adaka Allah) or (بارك الله فيك Baraka Allahu fika) meaning (May Allah help you and May Allah bless you). The past can also be used for future actions to show that these actions are sure to happen. Besides this, the particles: (ان inna, اذا idha,) as well as (لا la - when used with oath particle) convert the meaning of the past verb into future.

- ✓ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ “And the trumpet shall be blown” (Ya Sin, verse 51) (emphasized future event)
- ✓ ان لعبتم لعنا “if you played, We too will.”
- ✓ اذا جاء الرجل “If the man came.”
- ✓ والله لا كلمتك بعدها wallahi la kalamtuka ba`daha. By my God, I will not talk to you after that.

The fourth case is when the verb is morphologically past but semantically could refer to the past, present or future as in:

- ✓ سواء عليك ذهبت أم بقيت “Whether you go or stay.”
- ✓ هلا ساعدت المحتاج “Will you help the poor?”

2.2. The Present (or Imperfect) المضارع

The imperfect tense ‘المضارع’ is paralleled to the English “present” which is inflected by means of suffixes and prefixes: He eats a lot ‘يأكل كثيرا’. To form the stem of present tense in Arabic language, the three root letters are used (ktub/كُتِبَ/shrab/شَرِبَ) with adding prefixes and sometimes some endings to the stem to show the subject of the verb (يَكْتُبُ/yaktub/يَشْرَبُ/yashrabo). The present in Arabic describes a current state or circumstance. The use of it

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is for both continuous, habitual actions and states while in English we might use a different tense. The following are some examples:

- ✓ Habitual action: “هو يذهب عادة بالحافلة” He usually goes by bus.
- ✓ Continuous action: “انه يدرس العلوم” He is studying science.
- ✓ General state: “يَتَحَدَّثُ العربية جيداً” He speaks Arabic well.

2.3. Imperative

According to Rev and Thatcher (1922), and Haywood and Nahmad (1965), there are two aspects of the Arabic verb: perfect (past) and imperfect (present). The imperative is a modification of the imperfect (present). That is, the imperative is somehow not considered to be a tense. In addition, Alsamerrai (2003) claimed that the meaning of the imperative is only for requesting something to happen in the future. In terms of its form, the imperative verb is formed by deleting the subject marker prefix (يَ ya) or the (تَ ta or تُ tu) from the present verb form (yaktub يَكْتُبُ/yashrabo يَشْرَبُ), (Ryding, 2005). Alsamerrai (2003) mentioned three situations where the imperative is used:

- 1- For commands: اغلق الباب “Close the door.”
- 2- For supplications: ربي اغفر لي “Allah, forgive me.”
- 3- For advice and instructions: البس ملابسك كي لا تمرض “Wear your clothes so that you do not get sick.”

2.4. Future

The future time in the Arabic tense system is expressed by one of the past, or present tenses, by means of some of time phrases that indicate future, or by using some particles and prefixes such as (لَنْ lan) and (sa, or سَوْفَ sawfa).

Furthermore, Abdel-Hafiz (2006, P. 72) says that: "... Arabs use the particle sawfa plus the imperfect indicative form of the verb in order to express remote future. But the particle sa- plus the imperfect indicative form of the verb is used to express near future time." The second future time reference is the present tense itself. As mentioned in the present tense section it can be used for present or future actions, especially if the verb is one of the (أفعال المقاربة), such as (يكاد yakadu), (Hassan, p. 1995).

3. Similarities and Differences between the Arabic and the English Tense Systems

English and Arabic belong to two different language families: Western Germanic and Semitic. Therefore, their tense systems are sharply different. The two verb systems are going to be explained in terms of form and meaning. Form refers to the grammatical categories which constitute the construction of the verb which are: tense, aspect and mood. Tense refers to whether the verb is in the present or the past tense, aspect refers to whether the verb is in the progressive or perfective aspect, and mood refers to whether the verb is subjunctive or indicative. On the other hand, meaning refers to the message that the verb form conveys, or in other words, to the function of a certain verb form. According to Leech (1971, pp. 106-122), modern English has a threefold distinction between factual, theoretical and hypothetical meaning which has substituted the distinction between indicative and subjunctive moods. The theoretical meaning is truth-neutral; it leaves the question of truth and falsehood open. The theoretical meaning is usually expressed by verbs like believe, suppose, expect, etc. The theoretical meaning can also be expressed by conditional sentences; by either real or unreal conditions. The factual meaning is truth-committed, it only refers to facts; and it is usually expressed by the indicative mood. Finally, the hypothetical meaning refers to imaginary past events. It has the categorical sense of "Contrary to Fact" and it is usually expressed by the past tense of full verbs and modal auxiliaries. In carrying out the actual, according to Sabbah

(2005, p. 269-288) the contrast between the Arabic and English verb systems when conveying the same meaning or not are the following:

The Present Tense:

a) The Simple Present:

Generally, the form “subject, verb, and object” is used in English to refer to Universal statements:

The boy eats the apple.

Modern standard Arabic (M.S.A.) uses the imperfect tense which is equivalent to the English simple present in order to express the same meaning:

تشرق الشمس من الشرق.

This form is also used in English to indicate habitual activities:

I get up at six every day.

That girl eats too much.

M.S.A. expresses this meaning by the use of imperfect form of the verb:

أستيقظ في الصباح على السادسة كل يوم.

ذلك الفتى يدخن أكثر من اللزوم.

Moreover, English employs the simple present to indicate actual present, i.e. an event that takes place at the moment of speaking:

I see an aero plane there.

The headmaster wants to speak to you.

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M.S.A. also employs the imperfect tense to indicate actual present:

أرى طائرة هناك.

يريد المدير أن يكلمك.

Furthermore, the simple present can be used to refer to future time, i.e. arranged or fixed future:

We leave for London tomorrow.

The plane arrives at 8.30.

Arabic also employs the imperfect form of the verb to refer to fixed future time:

نغادر إلى لندن غدا.

تصل الطائرة في الثامنة والنصف.

The simple present is also used in English to refer to events that took place in the past, i.e. “the historic present”.

I was sitting in my room reading, when suddenly the lights go off.

M.S.A. also employs the imperfect form of the verb to refer to the “historic present”:

كنت جالسا في غرفتي أقرأ وإذا بالأضواء تنطفئ فجأة.

Finally, the present simple usually indicates theoretical meaning when used in conditional sentences:

If you touch me, I'll scream.

This meaning is expressed in M.S.A. by the use of the perfect form of the verb:

إذا لمستني سأصرخ.

b) The Present Progressive:

The present progressive is used in English to denote an action or an activity that is in progress:

He is drinking water.

The present progressive form does not exist in the Arabic verb form system. Instead the meaning is conveyed by means of the imperfect form of the verb:

إنه يشرب الماء.

Moreover, the present progressive can also be used in English to refer to the near future:

I am going there next week.

He is coming tonight.

M.S.A. employs اسم الفاعل (Active participle) which partakes the nature of the verb to express the same meaning:

أنا ذاهب إلى هناك في الأسبوع القادم.

Furthermore, the present progressive is used in English to refer to the duration of an activity that is taking place at the moment of speaking:

He is smoking a cigarette.

The meaning is rendered in Arabic by the use of the imperfect form of the verb:

إنه يدخن سيجارة.

c) The Present Perfect:

This verb form links up past activities with the present moment. It denotes an action connected through its effect with the present moment:

Twenty years have passed since we first met.

In order to express this meaning M.S.A. uses the perfect form of the verb preceded by the particle **لقد** or **قد**.

لقد مرت عشرون سنة منذ التقاءنا.

The present perfect is also used in English to indicate a very recent and completed activity:

He has just gone out.

This function is rendered in M.S.A. by means of the perfect form of the verb preceded by the particle **لقد**:

لقد خرج للتو.

Moreover, the present perfect denotes an action beginning at some time in the past and continuing up to the moment of speaking. In other words, it expresses duration and continuity:

We have known each other for years.

This function is expressed in Arabic by the use of the incomplete form of the verb:

نعرف بعضنا منذ عدة سنوات.

It is worth mentioning here that the present perfect refers to future time whenever it is used in subordinate clauses:

As soon as I have saved enough money, I shall retire from business.

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In order to express this meaning, Arabic uses the subjunctive of the imperfect form:

سأتقاعد حالما أوفر مبلغا من المال.

The Past Tense:

a) The Simple Past:

English uses the simple past to refer to a completed activity:

I received his letter last week.

Arabic employs the perfect form of the verb which is equivalent to the English simple past in order to express the same meaning:

تسلمت رسالته الأسبوع الماضي.

This form is also used in English to indicate consecutive actions in the past:

She cooked the dinner and washed the dishes.

In order to express the same meaning, M.S.A. employs the perfect form of the verb:

طبخت العشاء وغسلت الأطباق.

Furthermore, the past simple can also express hypothetical meaning, which in turn denotes unreality:

I wish I knew the fellow's name.

This meaning is rendered in M.S.A. by means of the imperfect form of the verb:

ليتني أعرف اسم الرجل.

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It should be noted that the perfect form of the Arabic verb system has other functions that is not rendered in English by the use of the past simple form. Instead these functions are rendered in English by means of various verb forms.

The Arabic perfect form can be used to denote a prayer or a wish:

ساعدك الله/رحمها الله

This meaning is rendered in English by the use of the infinitive with or without the auxiliary:

(May) God help you. (May) God have mercy upon him.

The Arabic perfect can also be used to refer to an act which is concluded as soon as it is spoken of:

زوجتك ابنتي.

This function is rendered in English by means of the simple present:

I give you my daughter in marriage.

Furthermore, the perfect form of M.S.A. indicates an act that has often taken place and still takes place; or the result of which is felt now; e.g.:

اتفق المفسرون.

English uses either the past perfect or the simple present to express this meaning, e.g.:

Commentators agree.

Commentators have agreed.

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Arabic also has some verbs that refer to different times of the day when used in the perfect form. These verbs are called sisters of كان; أصبح “in the morning”, أمسى “in the evening”, بات “at night” and أضحى “in the afternoon”:

أصبح الرجل في مكة.

أمسى الرجل تعباً.

English uses time adverbials and the past tense of "to be" to convey the same meaning:

In the morning the man was in Mecca.

In the evening the man was tired.

Moreover, the sisters of كان can also be used to denote duration and continuity to the present moment; e.g:

ما زال يسبح.

ما زال في الملعب.

In the first example the function is rendered in English by means of the present progressive:

He is still swimming.

While in the second example the meaning can be rendered by means of the simple present:

He is still in the playground.

Finally, the perfect form in M.S.A. can refer to the future perfect if the main verb is preceded by the imperfect of كان (يكون) and قد; e.g:

يكون قد كتب كتاباً.

This function is rendered in English by means of “will” + present perfect:

He will have written a book.

b) The Past Progressive :

English uses this form to denote an activity that is in a state of incompleteness; e.g.:

I was reading a book.

I was painting the house.

M.S.A. does not have an obvious progressive verb form. Instead it employs the perfect form of the verb “to be” Kana followed by the imperfect form of the main verb:

كنت أقرأ كتاباً.

كنت أدهن البيت.

This form is also used in English to denote an activity that started and possibly continued after the time implied:

When we arrived she was making coffee.

This meaning is rendered in Arabic by means of the perfect Kana followed by the imperfect form of the verb:

عندما وصلنا كانت تعمل قهوة.

This form is also used to denote temporary habitual activities; e.g.:

In those days, we were getting up at 7 o'clock.

This meaning is rendered in Arabic by the use of the perfect form of كان followed by the imperfect form of the main verb:

في تلك الأيام كنا نستيقظ في السابعة.

c) The Past Perfect:

This form is used in English to link up past activities to the moment indicated in the sentence:

When I arrived home, my father had already left.

Arabic does not have an obvious past perfect form. Instead, this function is rendered in Arabic by the use of كان+ the particle قد+ the perfect form of the main verb:

عندما وصلت البيت كان والدي قد غادره.

Moreover, this form is also used to indicate past activities; e.g.:

My brother had come back.

In order to express this meaning Arabic employs the perfect form كان+ the particle قدand the perfect form of the main verb:

كان أخي قد عاد.

The past perfect also indicates an intention or expectation when used with verbs like hope, expect, wish, etc. In this case, it has a hypothetical meaning; e.g.:

I had hoped to catch the 8.30 train, but found it was gone.

Arabic expresses this meaning by the use of كانfollowed by اسم الفاعل:

كنت أمل أن ألحق القطار لكن وجدته قد رحل.

The Future:

As stated earlier, English does not have an obvious future tense. Instead, it uses various verb forms to refer to future time. These verb forms may or may not have equivalent forms in Arabic.

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"Will/shall" + infinitive is used in English to make predictions for the future:

Tomorrow's weather will be cold and rainy.

Arabic uses the imperfect form of the main verb preceded by the particle سوف/س to denote a prediction:

سيكون الجو غدا باردا وممطرا.

"Will/shall" construction is also used in English for prophetic statements; e.g.:

In twenty years, man will live on the moon.

This meaning is rendered in M.S.A. by means of سوف/س+ the imperfect form of the verb:

في خلال عشرين سنة سيعيش الإنسان على القمر.

Moreover, "will/shall" can express past in future if it is followed by the perfect infinitive:

By next month I'll have gone back home.

In order to denote this meaning, Arabic uses the imperfect verb form of the main verb preceded by the particle س and the imperfect form of كان:

في الشهر القادم سأكون قد رجعت إلى الوطن.

English also uses "be going to" + infinitive to express future time:

They're going to get married next June.

M.S.A. uses the perfect form of the main verb preceded by the particle سوف/س in order to express the same meaning:

سوف يتزوجان في شهر جوان المقبل.

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This construction can also be used in English to refer to the future of the present cause; i.e. the continuity of events exists at the present moment:

It's going to rain.

This function is rendered in M.S.A. by means of سوف/س+ the imperfect form of the verb:

ستمطر.

The English verb system has another verb form that can be used to refer to future time, which is "will/shall" + progressive infinitive. This verb form is used to denote temporary situation in the future:

This time next week I shall be sailing across the Atlantic.

This function is rendered in Arabic by means of سوف/س+ the imperfect form of the verb:

في هذا الوقت من الأسبوع القادم سأبحر عبر الأطلسي.

Finally, this construction is also used in English to refer to future as a matter of course, i.e. the event will happen independently of the will or intention of anyone:

The train will be arriving at eight o'clock.

This form is rendered in Arabic by the use of the imperfect form of the verb preceded by the particle سوف/س:

سيصل القطار في الساعة الثامنة.

According to Al-Saleemi (1987), both English and Arabic deal with the field of tense in the very general sense of the word; sometimes in the same way i.e. the two languages use the same verb form (congruent), sometimes in a different way i.e. the two languages use different verb forms in order to express the same meaning (equivalent). The two languages have two

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simple verb forms which quite often agree in form and meaning; but English has a more clear-cut system of compound forms than Arabic with which to express the other aspects of meaning that can be expressed by the verb-system. However, the Arabic verb system of compound verbs is also capable of indicating certain shades of meaning that are not expressed by the normal English verb system.

4. Interference of Arabic Tense System on English Tense System

According to Sabbah (2015), most EFL learners tend to commit errors when writing in English because of the negative interference of their first language (Arabic). The following are the major tense errors learners commit when writing in English:

Tenses:

The clear differences between Arabic and English, lead Arab learners of English to commit several mistakes. In Arabic, there are only two tenses: the perfect (only the past) and the imperfect (the non-past, simple present and simple future), whereas English has many tenses resulting from conjoining these two tenses with aspects (perfective and progressive). (Ali, 2007; Aoun, Benmamoun, & Chueiri, 2010). Arab learners of English cannot produce progressive and perfect tenses so easily. They use simple present instead. So, we might find such errors in their writing:

- INCORRECT: I eat my sandwich now.
- CORRECT: I am eating my sandwich now.

Another example is this.

- INCORRECT: I didn't see you since last Christmas.
- CORRECT: I haven't seen you since last Christmas.

Word Order:

Arab ESL learners make errors in word order when forming English sentences.

For instance, there are no auxiliary verbs in Arabic. So, Arabic-speaking learners of English might not use “verb to do” to form a question. Here is a student’s version and its equivalent CORRECT form:

- INCORRECT: Where Huda spend her summer vacation?
- CORRECT: Where does Huda spend her summer vacation?

Errors in Using Some English Modal Verbs:

1. Deletion of the Copula (verb to be) or substituting it with “verb to do”: As there is no “verb to be” in Arabic, Arab learners of English tend to delete them when forming their English sentences. Hence, we can find such sentences in their writings:

- INCORRECT: Huda happy.
- CORRECT: Huda is happy.
- INCORRECT: While my mother cooking, I preparing the table.
- CORRECT: While my mother was cooking, I was preparing the table.
- INCORRECT: Does he your teacher?
- CORRECT: Is he your teacher?

2. Omitting the third person singular morpheme -s (Muftah1 and Rafik-Galea, 2013). Here are few examples of students’ versions and their CORRECT forms:

- INCORRECT: My mother work in a school.

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- CORRECT: My mother works in a school.
- INCORRECT: My friend speak English.
- CORRECT: My friend speaks English

3. Omitting the auxiliary “verb to do”. Here is an example.

- INCORRECT: My father not drive a bus.
- CORRECT: My father does not drive a bus.

4. Replacing only the auxiliary form of “verb to do” with “verb to be”.

- INCORRECT: Is Bob wears a suit today?
- CORRECT: Does Bob wear a suit?

5. Evaluation

In many cases, second language learners tend to apply knowledge from their native language to a second language when speaking or writing. This process is called language transfer which is also known as linguistic interference, cross meaning and L1 interference. It is largely observed and discussed in learning and teaching English as a second language due to its important impact on the learner ability to acquire the new language. Generally, we can distinguish between two types of language transfer. The first one is called positive transfer which occurs when the structure of a sentence is the same in L1 and L2 and here the learner succeeds to make a correct sentence. The second type is called negative transfer which means that by transferring knowledge from L1 to L2, the learner forms a wrong sentence in L2 because the structure is not the same in the two languages. Therefore, the greater the differences between the two languages, the more negative transfer can be expected.

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Arabic speaking students should be aware of the fact that English and Arabic are quite different languages. If students are taught how to think in English and avoid doing a mental translation, their learning will be greatly enhanced. Teachers certainly have a great role to play in the process of acquainting and familiarizing their students with the language areas that are likely to hinder their language acquisition.

Conclusion

To conclude, we can conclude that the difference between Arabic and English is not only at the level of culture but spreads and extends to reach the grammatical level and especially tenses. This difference obliges linguists and scholars to find the equivalents of the 12 English tenses in Arabic which consists of only three tenses. Consequently, this leads the learner to interfere from these three Arabic tenses when using the English tenses in written production.

Introduction

The previous chapter had presented a review of the related literature. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the student's attitudes towards the impact of the first language tense system on the use of English tenses in written production and to give a piece of practical evidence to prove that the problem exists. Accordingly, the data presented in this chapter were collected from a questionnaire directed to second-year students in the department of English at the University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia, during the academic year 2019-2020. Hence, this chapter is devoted to the description, the analysis, and the discussion of the findings obtained from the students' questionnaire.

1. Students' Questionnaire

1.1. The Sample

To investigate the issue presented in this research work, the sample under scope is constituted of (50) of second-year students at the department of English at Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University. All of students are native Arabic speakers who were chosen randomly from the total number of population. The 50 students were thought to be appropriate for this study because we assumed students have been already taught the tense system of the English language and they are supposed to have reached a certain level of proficiency in the English tense system.

1.2. The Questionnaire Administration

The questionnaire of the present research was administered to second year LMD students of English at the department of English at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. In an attempt to gather valuable information for the study, a representative sample was randomly selected from the population. The questionnaire has been distributed to fifty students whom

were asked to answer the questions honestly, for the answers will be anonymous and will only be used for the purpose of the research.

1.3. Aim of the questionnaire:

The main purpose of the questionnaire is to obtain information about the student's attitudes towards the impact of the first tense system on the use of English tenses in written production.

1.4. Description of Students' Questionnaire

A questionnaire is one of the most useful research instruments; it consists of a series of questions for the purpose of collecting data from a population. According to Nunan (1992, p.143) a questionnaire is "an instrument for the collection of data usually in written form consisting of open and/or closed questions and other probes requiring a response from subjects". The present questionnaire consists of 23 questions. It is directed to second-year students at the English department of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia University. The questionnaire is divided into three sections. Each section includes open-ended questions and closed questions

Section one is made up of two questions involving personal information about the number of years the students have been learning English and their evaluation of their present level of English.

Section two contains of eight questions concerning students' views about Arabic language interference and to what extent does it occur. Students were first asked to evaluate their awareness of the similarities, differences, and contrasts between Arabic and English. In addition to that, learners were asked whether those similarities, differences, and contrasts affect their learning of English and to justify how. Other questions aim at identifying the student's opinions and perceptions about the language interference, in general. Moreover,

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they were asked about what type (s) of grammatical errors they usually commit, and to indicate the source of these errors. The last question was about whether they tried to learn English grammar rules and patterns by translating them to their mother tongue or not.

The last section consists of 13 questions, multiple-choice and yes/no questions; It aims at investigating the second year LMD students' perceptions and attitudes toward the impact of first language tense system on the use of English tenses at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel.

1.5. Analysis of the Questionnaire Results

The data presented below are gathered by the students' questionnaire. Answers of questions are transformed into tables and figures using numbers and percentages.

Section one: back ground information

Q.1. How long have you been learning English?

Table 1.

Students' Years of Learning the English Language.

Options	N°	%
9 years	45	90%
More than 9 years.	5	10%
Total	50	100%

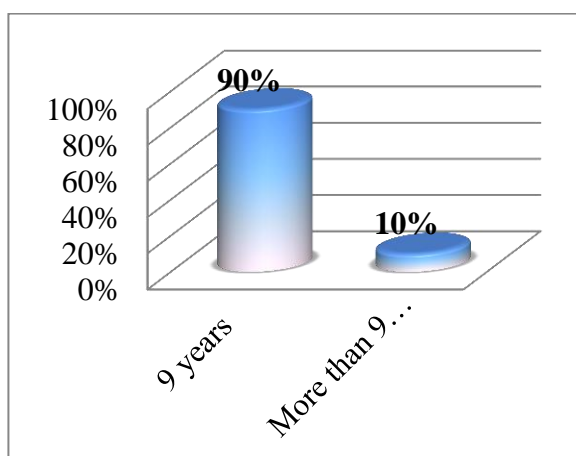


Figure 1.
Students' years of learning the English language.

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Concerning the number of years students have spent learning the English years of, the majority of them (90%) opted for 9 years. In fact this is the expected average in the Algeria context of learning English language in Algeria; since, students studied English for four years at the middle school and three years at the secondary school .Students are required to study English at the university whatever the field of study is. Only (10%) of the students claimed that they studied English for more than 9 years, The results of this question prove that the majority of students were exposed to the English language only when they started to learn it in an academic setting.

Q.2. How would you evaluate your current present level in English grammar?

a- Good b- Average c- Low

Table 2.

Learners' Own Assessment of their Level at English Grammar.

Options	N°	%
a- Good	20	40%
b- Average	28	56%
c- low	2	4%
Total	50	100%

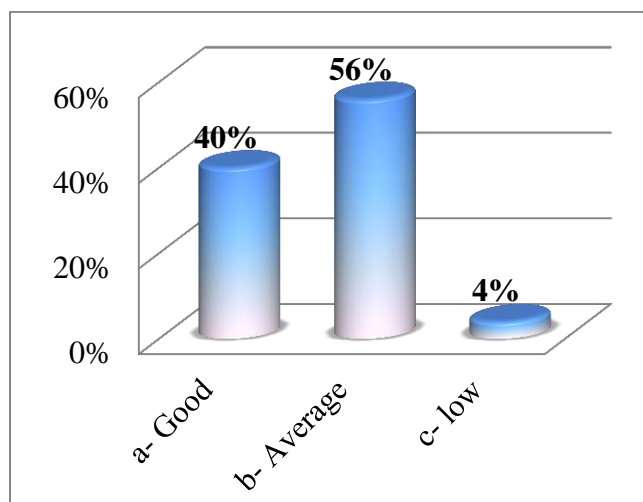


Figure2: Learners' own assessment of their level at English grammar.

The aim of this question was to examine the students' perceptions of their levels in English grammar. The findings presented in the table and figure above show that the majority of students consider themselves as average (56%), while (40%) of them claimed to have good

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level and only (4%) of the respondents admitted that their level is rather low. These results indicate that students in the department of English still in need for much efforts in order to enhance their level in English grammar.

Section Two: Language Interference:

Q.1. how would you evaluate your awareness of the similarities, differences, and contrasts between Arabic and English?

- a- Completely aware
- b- Somehow aware
- c- Not aware at all

Table 3.

Students' Awareness of the Similarities, Differences, and Contrasts between Arabic and English.

Options	N°	%
a- Completely aware	18	36%
b- Somehow aware	31	62%
c- Not aware at all	1	2%
Total	50	100 %

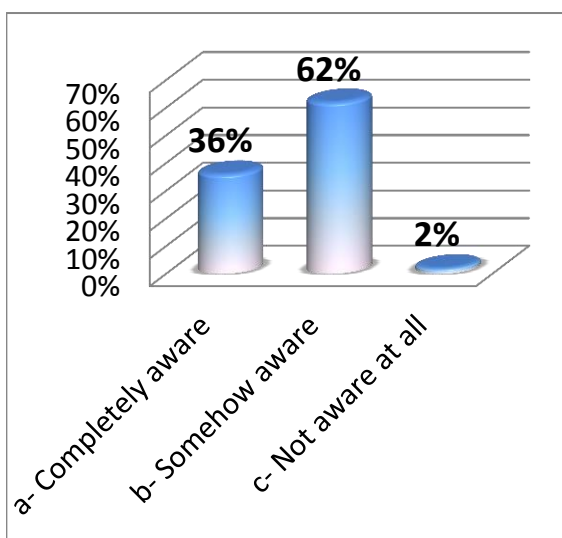


Figure 3.
Students' awareness of the similarities, differences, and contrasts between Arabic and English.

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The results displayed in the above table and figure clearly indicate that somehow aware received the highest percentage by participants (62%), while completely aware had a percentage of (36%), and not aware at all had a percentage of (2%). These findings regarding students' awareness of the similarities and differences between Arabic and English are not really satisfactory. This indicates that learners depend on Arabic in learning English without taking into consideration the effect it has on their English learning.

Q.2. do you think that those similarities, differences, and contrasts affect your learning of English?

Table 4.

Students' attitudes towards the impact of the similarities and differences between Arabic and English on their learning of English.

Options	N°	%
a- Yes	44	88%
b- No	6	12%
Total	50	100%

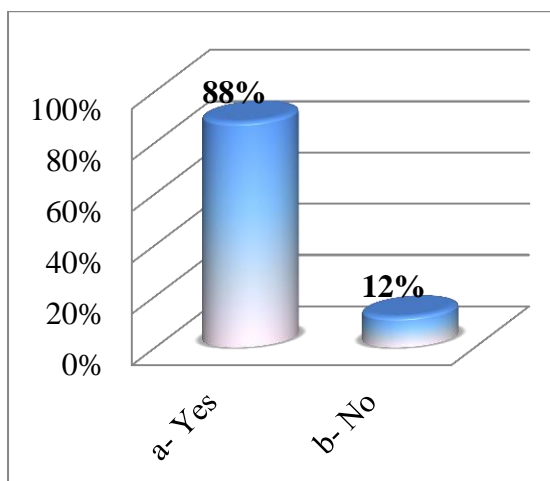


Figure 4.
Students' attitudes towards the impact of the similarities and differences between Arabic and English on their learning of English.

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The results to this question show that (88%) of the students believe that these similarities, differences, and contrasts between their mother tongue (Arabic) and the target language (English) affect their learning of English.

With the aim of getting participants to provide more explanations, they were asked to justify their responses. Students' justifications are presented in the following table.

➤ **If yes, how?**

a- Positively, they make learning English easier.

b- Negatively, they lead to errors and inappropriate forms in English.

Table 5.

The Impact of Similarities and Differences between Arabic and English on Student's learning of English.

Options	N°	%
A	28	63.6%
B	16	36.4%
Total	44	100%

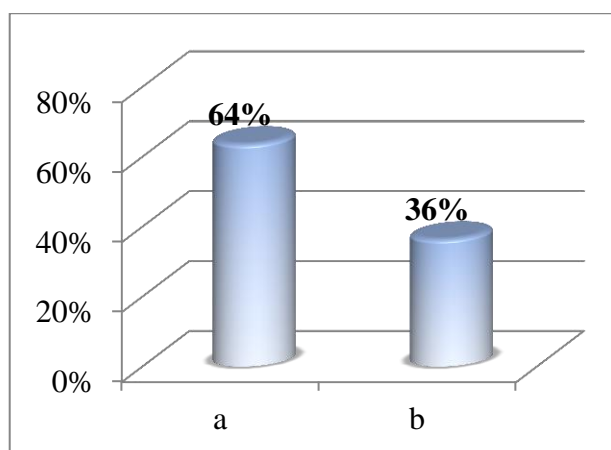


Figure 5.

The impact of similarities and differences between Arabic and English on students' learning of English.

Concerning learners' views about the type of Arabic transfer on their English learning, more than the half of learners (63%) believe that those similarities and differences

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affect their learning positively, they make learning English easier. while (36.4%) say that those similarities and differences affect their learning negatively. This means that some learners avoid using Arabic rules in learning English because it leads to the production of erroneous structures and inappropriate forms in English. Consequently, they think that Arabic does not help them in learning the TL.

Q.3. in the process of learning English as a foreign language, where do you experience interference from the mother tongue (Arabic) when?

- a- writing
- b- speaking
- c- reading

Table 6.

The Areas in which students experience Interference from the Mother Tongue.

Options	N°	%
a- Writing	27	54%
b- Speaking	21	42%
c- Reading	2	4%
Total	50	100%

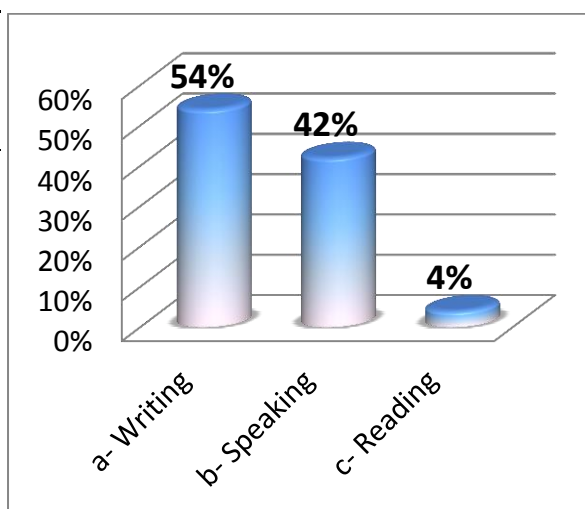


Figure 6

The Areas in which students experience Interference from the Mother Tongue.

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As it is shown in the table and figure (6), more than the half of students (54%) experience interference from the mother tongue when “writing”; whereas. (42%) of students claimed that they make errors when speaking. The rest of them (4%) selected reading. This is a clear indication that writing is somehow a problematic area for EFL students. Hence, learners believe that they commit more writing errors than speaking errors, may be because when writing they can verify their structures; but when they speak they cannot check their utterance, so they cannot produce erroneous sentences.

Q.4. in which language area do you experience most interference with the mother tongue?

a- grammar

c- pronunciation

b- vocabulary

d- spelling

Table 7.

Learners’ Views towards the Language Area in which they Experience Interference with the Mother Tongue

Options	N°	%
a- Grammar	19	38%
b- Vocabulary	17	34%
c- Pronunciation	8	16%
d- Spelling	6	12%
Total	50	100%

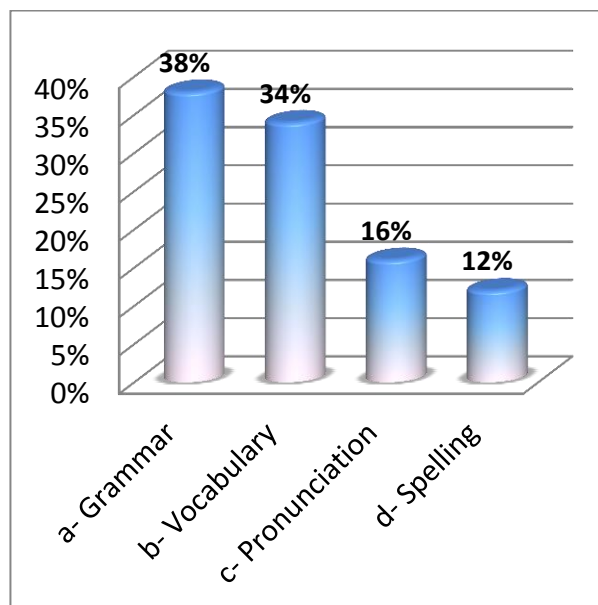


Figure 7.

Learners’ views towards the language area in which they experience interference with the mother tongue

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In response to this question, grammar received the highest percentage (38%). Other (34%) of the respondents opted for the second option “vocabulary”. The third option ‘pronunciation’ was selected by eight students. However, six learners (12%) found that spelling is the area where they experience with the mother tongue. It can be said that students experience interference with the mother tongue in all areas of language.

Q.5. how often do you commit grammatical errors when writing?

a- always b- often c-sometimes

d- rarely e- never

Table 8.

The Frequency of committing grammatical errors when writing.

Options	N°	%
a- Always	1	2%
b- Often	26	52%
c- Sometimes	9	18%
d- Rarely	13	26%
e- Never	1	2%
Total	50	100%

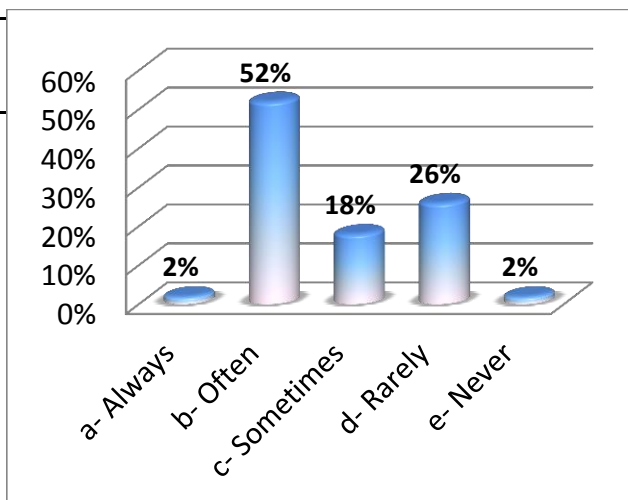


Figure 8.

The Frequency of committing grammatical errors when writing.

Responses to this question show that (52%) of the students often commit grammatical errors when writing. These results affirm what has been said in the theoretical part as well as

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in different research works that writing is a difficult skill to be mastered. That is EFL students are struggling with the complexity of writing.

Q.6. what type(s) of grammatical errors do you usually commit?

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| a- Tenses | f- Subject-verb-agreement |
| b- Prepositions | g- Direct/indirect speech |
| c-Conjunctions | h- Articles |
| d- Question tags | i- Conditional |
| e- Voice | Other |

Table 9.

Students' Common Grammatical Errors in Writing.

Options	N°	%
A	32	44.44%
B	14	19.44%
C	17	23.61%
D	1	1.38%
E	2	2.77%
F	2	2.77%
G	1	1.38%
H	1	1.38%
I	2	2.77%
Total	72	100%

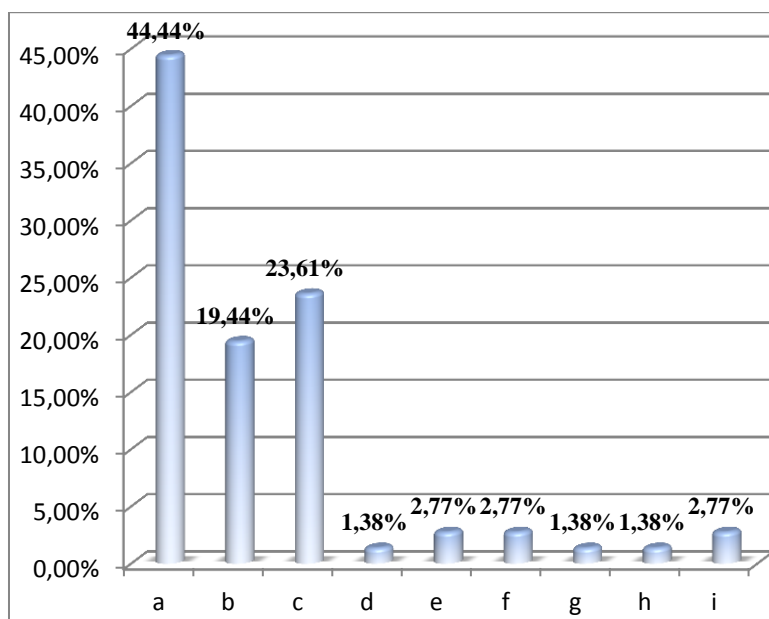


Figure 9.
Students' Common Grammatical Errors in Writing.

The table and figure (9) represent the most common grammatical errors when writing.

A detailed analysis of the results shows that the whole sample opted for different options.

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However, the dominant responses provided by the students relate to item (a) tenses with (44.44%), (23.61%) agreed on conjunctions, (19.44%) chose prepositions, the items (e), (f) and (i) represented by (2.77%), whereas the items (d), (g) and (h) represented by (1.38%). This implies that writing is a difficult skill to be mastered.

Q.7. what is the source of making errors?

- a- Incomplete knowledge or lack of knowledge of the grammar rules.
- b- Interference of the mother tongue
- c- Complexity of the English language grammar
- Others

Table 10.*Sources of grammatical Errors.*

Options	N°	%
A	14	28%
B	19	38%
C	11	22%
Others	6	12%
Total	50	100%

The bar chart displays the percentage distribution of responses for each source of grammatical errors. The vertical axis (Y-axis) is labeled from 0% to 40% in 5% increments. The horizontal axis (X-axis) lists four categories: 'a', 'b', 'c', and 'others'. The bars are blue. The values are: 'a' at 34%, 'b' at 38%, 'c' at 22%, and 'others' at 6%.

Figure 10.
sources of grammatical errors.

This question was designed to elicit students' views concerning the main sources of their grammatical errors. The obtained results show that the majority of students (38%) stated that the source of such a large number of errors is due to interference of the mother tongue. (34%) of the respondents argue that the main source of grammatical errors is incomplete

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knowledge or lack of the grammar rules. Others (22%) admitted that they commit errors because the complexity of the English grammar rules. While (6%) of the students said that the main source of their errors are because the lack of practicing and focusing in the session.

Q.8. do you try to learn English grammar rules and patterns by translating them to your mother tongue?

a- Always b- Often c- Sometimes

d- Rarely e- Never

Table 11.

Students' Translation as a Method of Learning English Grammar rules and Patterns.

Options	N°	%
a- Always	4	8%
b- Often	19	38%
c- Sometimes	6	12%
d- Rarely	8	16%
e- Never	13	26%
Total	50	100%

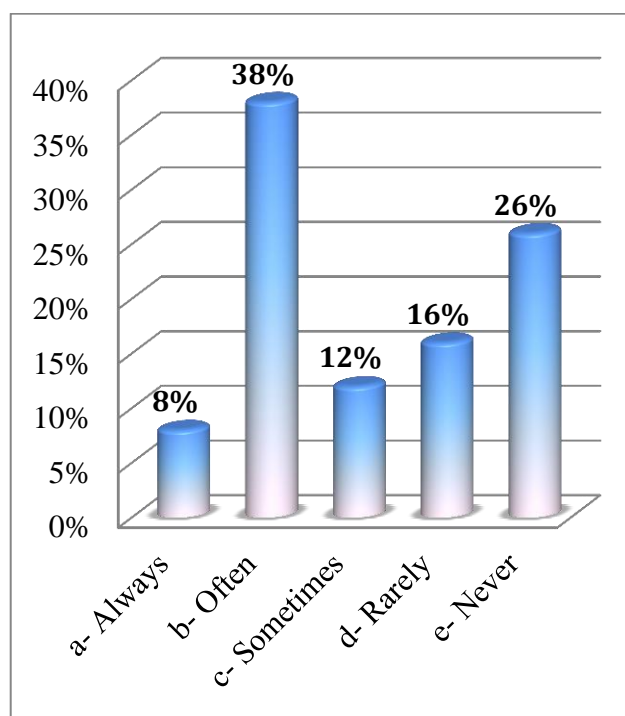


Figure 11.

Students' translation as a method of learning English grammar rules and patterns.

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The answers tabulated in the above table and figure reveal that (8%) of the participants have chosen always, (38%) of them opted often, (12%) went for the third choice, whereas only (16%) said rarely. However, the rest of them (26%) selected the last choice. The obtained results clearly denote that there are some students who try to learn English grammar rules and patterns by translating them to mother tongue, while others do not like translation.

➤ **Why? Please explain**

Table 12.

Students' Justifications for Using Translation as a Method of Learning English Grammar rules and Patterns.

Options	N°	%
Answered	45	90%
Not answered	5	10%
Total	50	100%

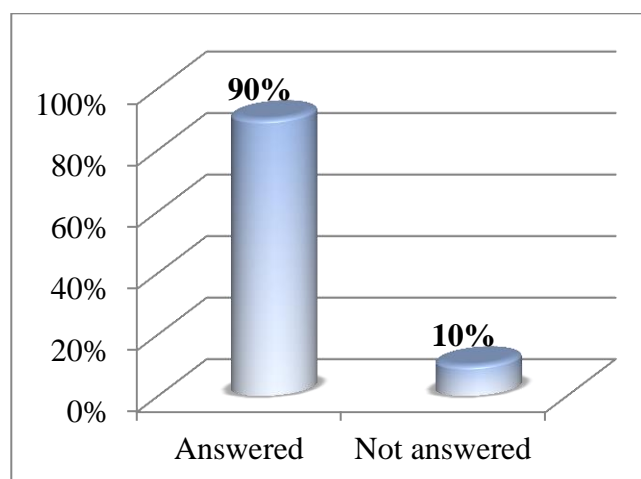


Figure 12.

Students' justifications for Using Translation as a Method of Learning English Grammar rules and Patterns.

When asked to explain why they try to learn English grammar rules and patterns by translating them to their mother tongue, few students (10%) skipped the answer, while the majority of them (90%) stated different reasons to do so. The reasons provided by students were as follows:

Students' reasons for translating:

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- ❖ For better understanding (5 students).
- ❖ Translation facilitates the complexity of English grammar rules and makes learning much faster (10 students).
- ❖ It gives a push for students to do their best when writing (08students).
- ❖ It improves students' self-esteem and confidence (4students).

Students' reasons for not translating:

- ❖ Each language has its own specific rules and patterns, so, each language should be learned in isolation (6 students).
- ❖ Each language is independent by its own grammar (12 students).

Section Three: The Impact of the First Language Tense System on the Use of English Tenses.**Q.1. how would you evaluate your knowledge of the English tenses?**

- a- Excellent
- b- Good
- c- Average
- d- Fair
- e- Poor

Table 13.

Students' evaluation of their Knowledge of the English Tenses.

Options	N°	%
a- Excellent	6	12%
b- Good	23	46%
c- Average	20	40%
d- Fair	1	2%
Total	50	100%

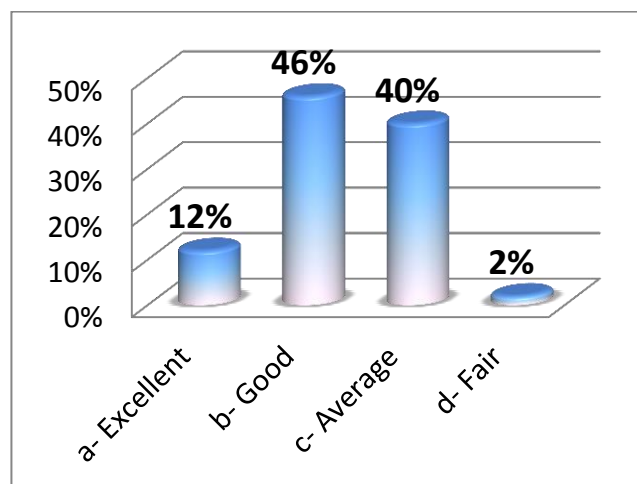


Figure 13.

Students' evaluation of their Knowledge of the English Tenses.

This question attempts to find out how second year students consider their knowledge of the English tenses. As it shown in the table above, (46%) of students evaluated their knowledge of the English tenses as good, twenty students (40%) agreed that their level is average. Six students (12%) chose the first option which is excellent; this indicates that the majority of the students think that their level in English language tenses is acceptable.

Q.2. When writing in English, how often do you make errors in tenses?

a -always

b-often

c-sometimes

d-rarely

e-never

Table 14.*The Frequency of Students 'Errors in Tenses when Writing.*

Options	N°	%
a- Always	1	2%
b- Often	26	52%
c- Sometimes	7	14%
d- Rarely	14	28%
e- Never	2	4%
Total	50	100%

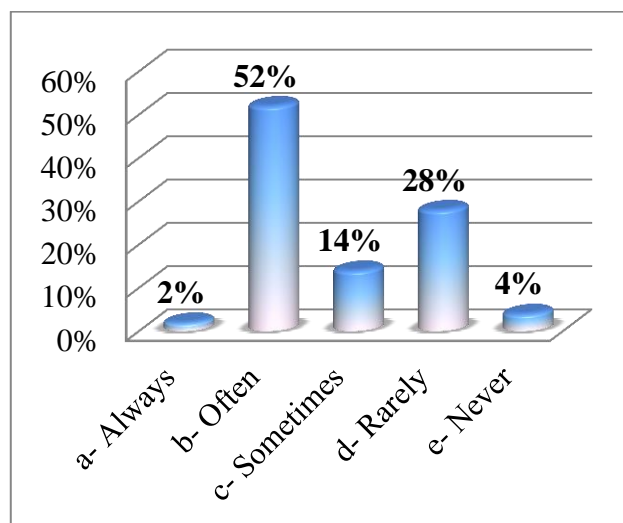


Figure 14.
The frequency of students' errors in tenses when writing.

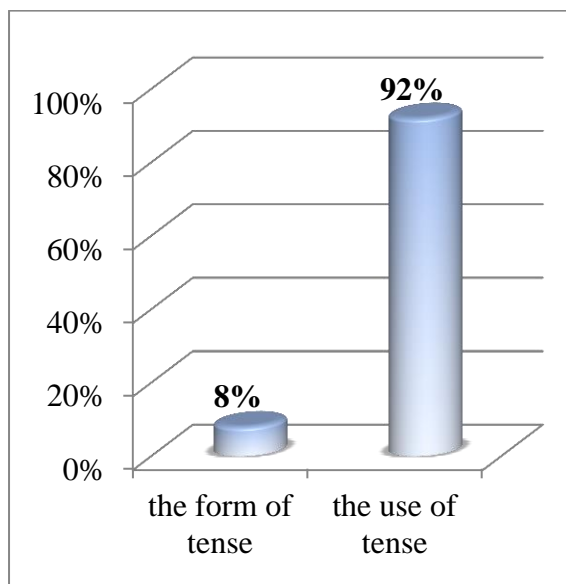
The results from the above table and figure (14) clearly demonstrate that students' responses to this question show that (52%) of them often commit errors in tenses when writing. Fourteen students selected (28%) the fourth option which is rarely. However, seven students (14%) chose "sometimes" and only two participants (4%) from the whole group went for "never". This reveals that students face difficulties when to use a tense than the other when writing.

Q.3. Are the errors you make related to:

- a. the form of tense
- b. the use of tense

Table 15.*Types of Students' Errors in tenses.*

Options	N	%
a. the form of tense	4	8%
b. the use of tense	46	92%
Total	50	100%

**Figure 15. Types of students' errors in tenses.**

This question seeks to know if errors in the case of tenses are related to the form of tense or the use of tense. (92%) of the students stated that their errors are related to the use of tenses. While the few others (8%) said that their errors are related to the use of tenses. Based on these results, it can be said that most of students' errors are related to the use.

Q.4. Do you think that the English tense system and the Arabic one are:

a- Similar

b- Different

Table 16.

Students' Views about whether the Arabic Tense System and the English one are Similar or Different.

Options	N	%
a- similar	7	14%
b- different	43	86%
Total	50	100%

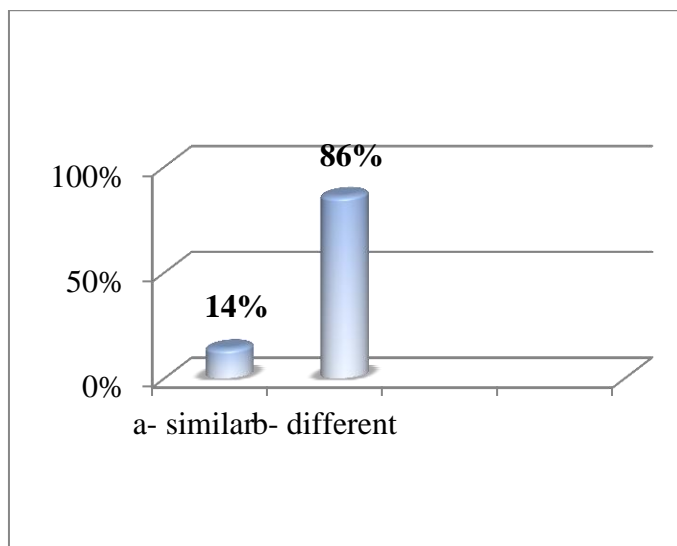


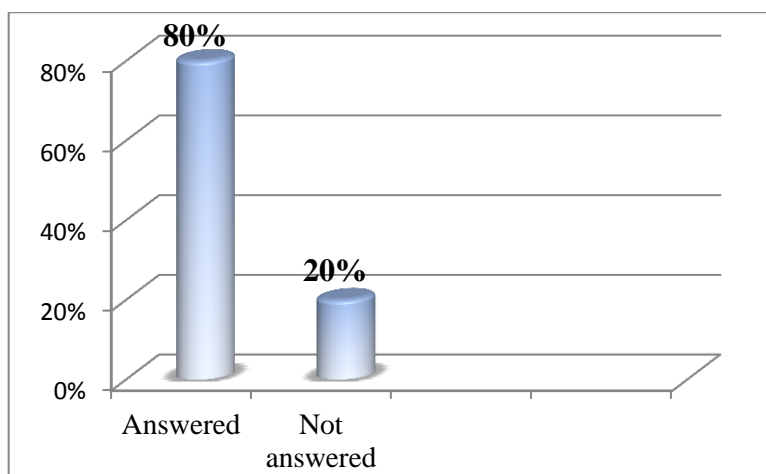
Figure 16. Students' views about whether the Arabic tense system and the English one are similar or different.

This question aims to investigate students' attitudes about whether the English and Arabic tense systems are similar or different. Most of the students (86%) stated that the English and Arabic tense systems are different. In contrast, only (14%) said that they are similar. The obtained results denote that the Arabic tense system and the English one are different.

➤ **Please explain how?**

Table 17.***Students' Explanation of how the Arabic Tense System and the English One are Similar or Different***

Options	N°	%
Answered	40	80%
Not answered	10	20%
Total	50	100%

***Figure 17. Students' explanation of how the Arabic tense system and the English one are similar or different***

The statistics represented in the table and figure above show that (20%) of the participants did not explain their answers, whereas (80%) of the students did. The students who chose 'yes' explained how the two systems are different saying:

- ❖ The two tense systems are different in the structure and the form of tense (9 students).
- ❖ The English tense system is more “detailed” and “precise” and “complicated” than the Arabic one (8 students).
- ❖ In Arabic there are 3 tenses but in English there are 12 with aspects which have different uses (15 students).
- ❖ Different languages which means different rules (5 students).

Whereas those who believe that they are similar said that:

- ❖ All the languages or most of them follow the same tense systems. (3 students).

Q.5. according to you, do the Arabic and English languages use the same verb forms or structures to convey the same meaning?

a- Yes b- No

Table 18.

Students Attitudes' toward the Use of Verb Forms and Structures of English and Arabic.

Options	N°	%
a- Yes	6	12%
b- No	44	88%
Total	50	100%

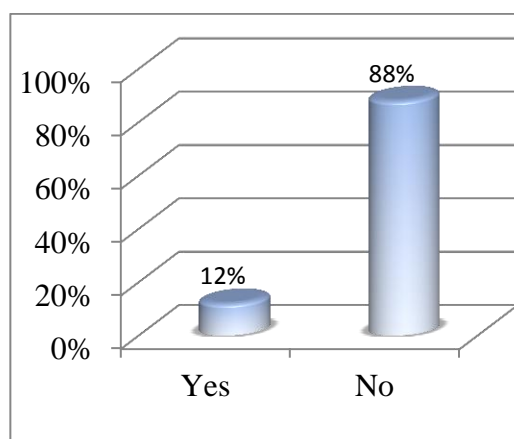


Figure 18. Students attitudes' toward the use of verb forms and structures of English and Arabic.

This is a closed question that aims at revealing students' opinions about whether the Arabic and English languages use the same verb form or structure to convey the same meaning. In the second part of this question, students are asked to justify their answers. From the obtained results we can say that the majority of students 88% agree that the Arabic and English languages do not use the same verb form or structure to convey the same meaning. In contrast, only 12% of the students claim that the two languages use the same verb form or structure to convey the same meaning. The results, in other words, could only imply that the Arabic and English languages have different verb forms and structures which are used to convey the same meaning and they do not use the same one.

➤ **Justify, please**

Table 19.

The Students' Justifications about the Use of Similar or Different Verb Forms and Structures in both English and Arabic.

Options	N°	%
Answered	34	68%
Not answered	16	32%
Total	50	100%

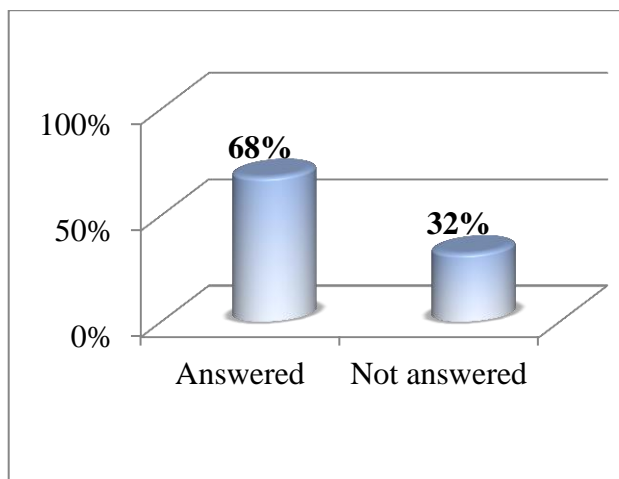


Figure 19. The students' justifications about the use of similar or different verb forms and structures in both English and Arabic.

From the 50 students who were asked to justify their answers, (32%) skipped the answer, while (68%) stated different justifications which are classified as follows:

Justifications of students who answered “No”:

- ❖ Some added information are needed to suit or to convey the same meaning in one of the two languages (3 students).
- ❖ Because translating the meaning of the verb from one of these languages to the other one will be wrong (4 students).
- ❖ Depending on the context (4 students).
- ❖ They differ from each other in their use and meaning (6 students).

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- ❖ Because each language has its own rules and system when it comes to the verb form (7 students).
- ❖ In Arabic there is only present, past, and imperative, while in English there are many tenses using auxiliaries and aspect and each one explains many uses and meanings (7 students).
- ❖ In English: subject, verb, and complement while in Arabic verb, subject, complement (1 student)

Justifications of students who answer “Yes”:

- ❖ Both of the languages use the same structure: subject, verb, and complement (1 student).
- ❖ The use of the past tense in Arabic is the same use in English, both refers to past actions (1 student).

Q.6. which Language do you think in when choosing the appropriate English tense?

a- English

b- Arabic

Table 20.

Students' Choice of what Language to Think in when Choosing the Appropriate English Tense.

Options	N°	%
a- English	37	74%
b- Arabic	14	26%
Total	50	100%

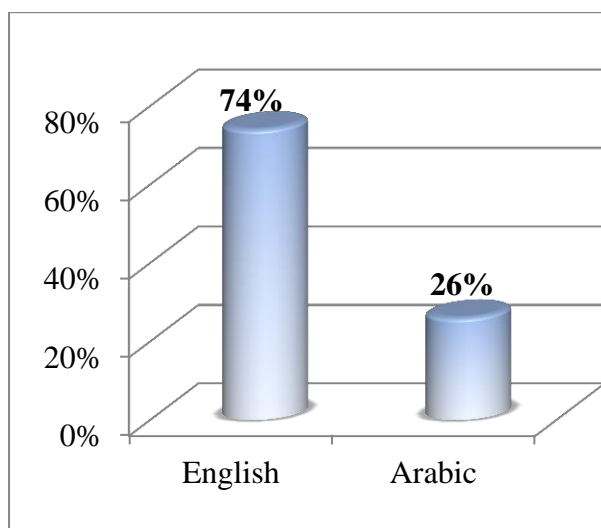


Figure 20. Students' choice of what language to think in when choosing the appropriate English tense.

This question aims to investigate whether 2nd year students think in the Arabic or in English when choosing the appropriate English tense. As it is represented in the table and the figure above the majority of the students (74%) think in English when choosing the appropriate English tense, while (26%) of them think in Arabic. Thus, most students think in English language when choosing the appropriate English tense.

Q.7. If your answer were "Arabic", does it influence the way you use English tenses when writing?

a- Yes

b- No

Table 21.

Students' Opinions about whether Arabic Influences their English Tenses Use when Writing.

Options	N°	%
a- Yes	9	64,3%
b- No	5	35.7%
Total	14	100%

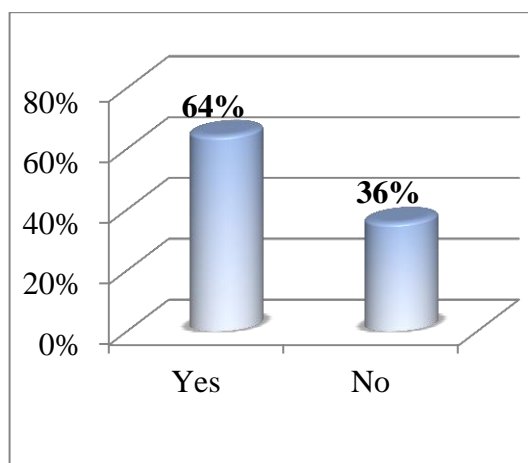


Figure 21. Students' opinions about whether Arabic influences their English tenses use when writing.

This question is somehow related to the previous one; it's a specific question directed to students who answered "Arabic". This question is designed to know whether Arabic influences the way they use English tenses when writing. The results in the table and figure above demonstrate that (64, 3%) of them are influenced by Arabic in the way they use English tenses when writing. However, the remaining (35, 7%) are not influenced. The responses provided by the students confirm that Arabic influences their English tenses use when writing.

- **If yes in "a" above, briefly explain how thinking in your mother tongue influences the way you use English tenses when writing?**

Table 22.

Students' Explanation how Thinking in Arabic Influences English Tenses Use when Writing.

Options	N°	%
Answered	8	88.88%
Not answered	1	11.11%
Total	9	100%

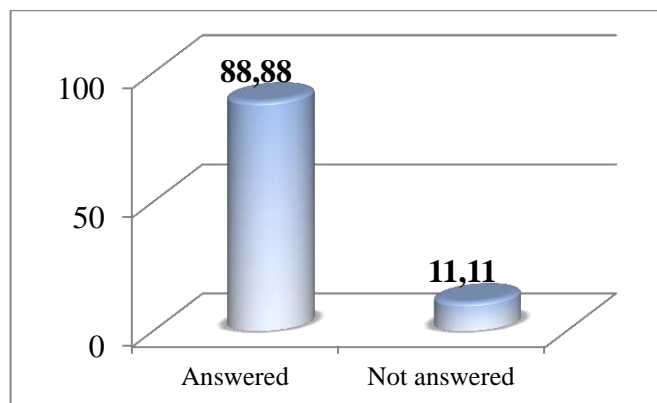


Figure 22. Students' explanation how thinking in Arabic influences English tenses use when writing.

Only (11.11%) of the students out of (9) did not explain how thinking in their mother tongue influences the way they use English tenses when writing, while the rest of the participants(88.88%) explained how saying that:

- ❖ Since the two tense systems are different, the influence is negative almost all the time (4 students).
- ❖ It helps when you don't have ideas about the subject (1 student).
- ❖ When thinking in Arabic, we directly apply these rules in English, so the errors happen (3 students).

Q.8. do you face difficulties when trying to select the right tense due to the interference of the mother tongue?

a- Yes

b- No

Table 23.

Students Attitudes' about Facing Difficulties when Selecting the Right Tense

Options	N°	%
a- Yes	20	40%
b- No	30	60%
Total	50	100%

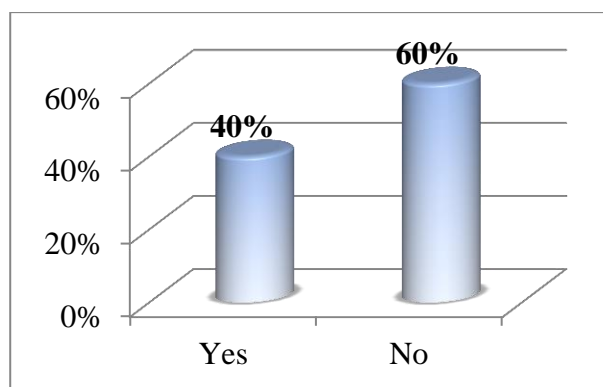


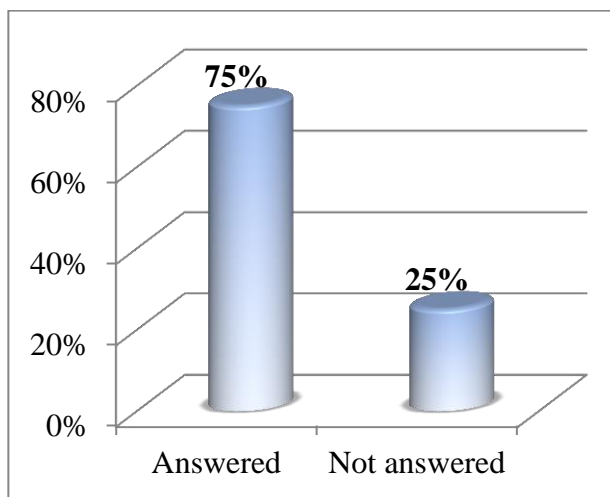
Figure 23. Students attitudes' about facing difficulties when selecting the right tense.

With regards to whether students face difficulties when trying to select the right tense due to the interference of the mother tongue or not, 60% of the participants agreed that selecting the right tense can be easy without facing difficulties. However, 40% of them had a different opinion. They asserted that they really face difficulties because of the interference of the mother tongue. From these results, we conclude that most students are not facing difficulties due to mother tongue interference when trying to select the appropriate tense.

➤ **If yes, what are these difficulties?**

Table 24.*The Difficulties Faced when Selecting the Right Tense.*

Options	N°	%
Answered	15	75%
Not answered	5	25%
Total	20	100%

**Figure 24. The difficulties faced when selecting the right tense.**

When students were asked to explain what difficulties they face when trying to select the right tense which are due to the interference of the mother tongue, (25%) of them skipped the answer, while the other students (75%) stated different difficulties:

- ❖ The different tenses system, so difficulty in selecting the appropriate tense (7 students).
- ❖ different rules, wrong transfer (3 students).
- ❖ Different structures (2 students).
- ❖ In English many similar tenses, each one has a specific use (2 students).
- ❖ not having this problem (1 student).

Q.9. before selecting the right tense in English, do you prepare it in Arabic, and then put it in English?

a- Yes

b- No

Table 25.***Opinions about whether Students Prepare English Tenses Firstly in Arabic.***

Options	N°	%
a- Yes	14	28%
b- No	36	72%
Total	50	100%

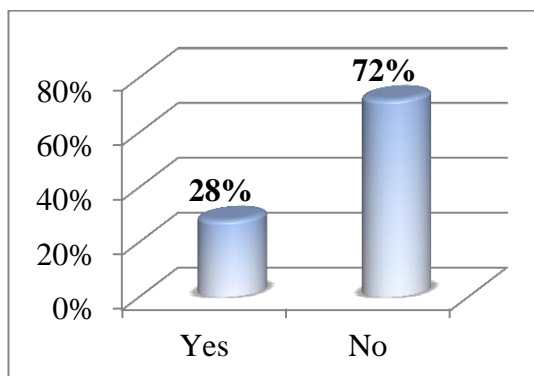


Figure 25. Opinions about whether Students Prepare English Tenses Firstly in Arabic.

As far as this question is concerned, it aims at finding out whether students prepare the right tense in Arabic and then put it in English or they select it in English directly. 72% of the students said that they do not depend on Arabic and they select the right English tense directly, while 28% of them prepare it in Arabic, and then they put in English. This shows that the majority of students do not prepare the right tense firstly in Arabic; in contrast, they select it in English directly.

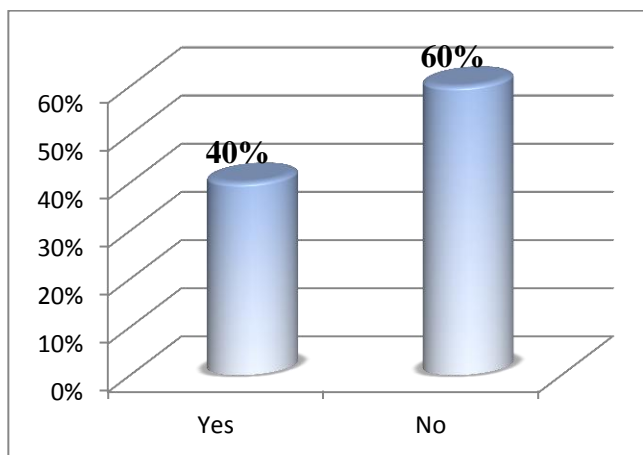
Q.10. have you ever committed an error in the use of an English tense because it has been wrongly translated into Arabic?

a- Yes

b- No

Table 26.*Students' Errors due to Wrong Translations.*

Options	N°	%
a- Yes	20	40%
b- No	30	60%
Total	50	100%

**Figure 26. Students' errors due to wrong translations.**

The aim behind asking this question was to know whether students have ever committed an error in the use of an English tense because it has been wrongly translated into Arabic or not. According to the results obtained from the above table and figure, more than half of the students 60% have not committed an error in the use of an English tense because of the wrong translation into Arabic. With 40% of the students claimed the opposite and they affirmed that they have committed errors because of the wrong translation of English tenses into Arabic. The responses provided by the students affirm that almost all of them did not ever commit errors due to wrong translation into Arabic.

- **If yes, could you please describe the error and how Arabic translation caused it?**

Table 27.*Students' Description of Errors and how Arabic Translation Caused them.*

Options	N°	%
Answered	8	40%
Not answered	12	60%
Total	20	100%

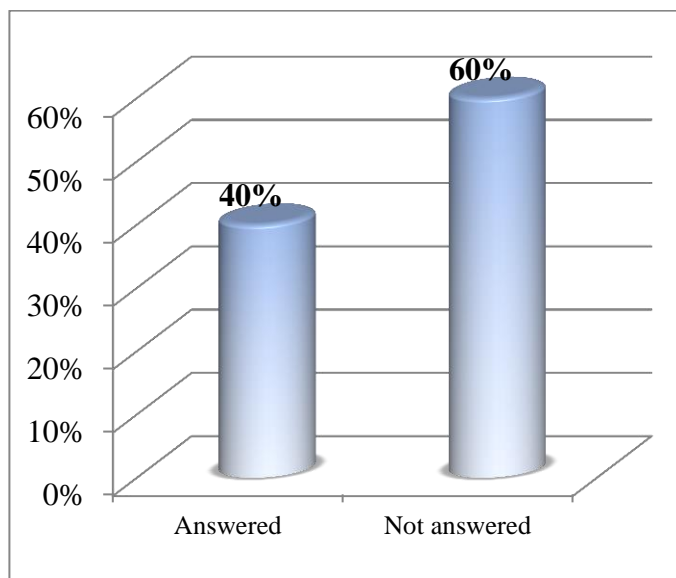


Figure 27. Students' description of errors and how Arabic translation caused them.

When asked to describe the error and how Arabic translation caused it, many students (60%) did not answer, while the rest of the participants (40%) provided the following answers:

- ❖ Errors in selecting the appropriate tense, the Arabic translation caused it since there are differences in the tense system (3 students).
- ❖ Omitting or adding things (2 students).
- ❖ Errors in the use of the grammar rules (3 students).

Q.11. what are the reasons that lead you to interfere from the Arabic tense system to English?

a- Being in a multilingual society.

b- Insufficient knowledge about the English tense system.

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c- I don't read books or articles about English grammar.

d- Not knowing the similarities and differences between the Arabic and the English tense system.

Others:

Table 28.

Students' Reasons for Interfering from the Arabic Tense System to English.

Options	N°	%
a	19	26,76%
b	21	29,57%
c	14	19,71%
d	15	21,12%
Other	2	2,81%
Total	71	100%

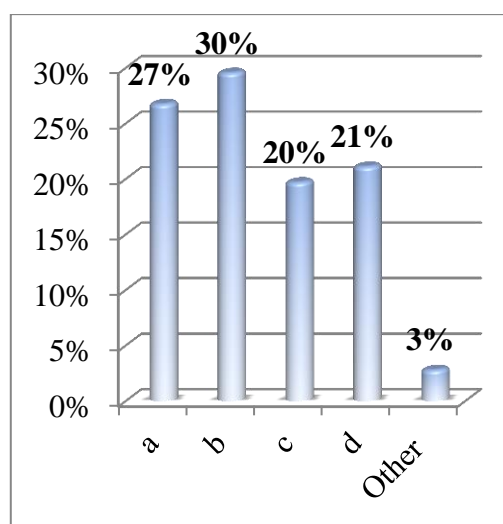


Figure 28. Students' reasons for interfering from the Arabic tense system to English.

The table and figure above represent the reasons that lead student to interfere from the Arabic tense system to English. The results show that the participants tick different options in varying proportions. (29,57%) of the students choose (b) i.e. insufficient knowledge about the English tense system which is the most reason that leads them to interfere from the Arabic tense system to English. While (26,76%) of them choose (a) i.e. being in a multilingual society, while (21,12%) of them affirm that the reason is (d) i.e. not knowing the similarities and differences between the Arabic and the English tense system. The percentage of (19,71%)

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refers to (c), that is, I don't read books or articles about English grammar. While others has only (2,81%). It can be concluded that the reasons that lead students to interfere from the Arabic tense system to English are insufficient knowledge about the English tense system and being in a multilingual society.

Q.12. while using tenses in English, do you face problems in using and combining the aspect with the tense since there is no aspect in Arabic?

a- Yes

b- No

Table 29.

Students Attitudes toward the Use and the Combination of English Aspects and Tenses.

Options	N°	%
a- Yes	30	60%
b- No	20	40%
Total	50	100%

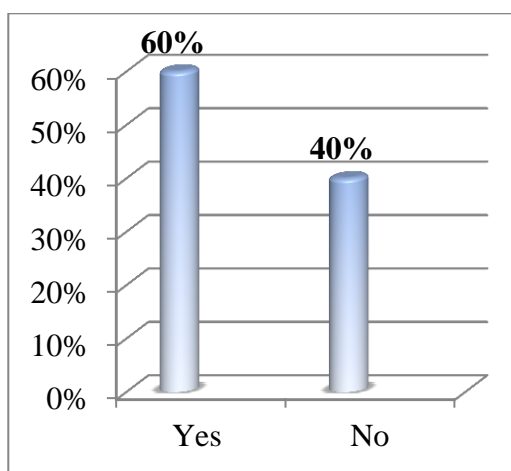


Figure 29: Students attitudes toward the use and the combination of English aspects and tenses.

This is a closed question that aims at revealing whether students face problems in using and combining the aspect with the English tense or no. The results obtained show that (60%) do really face this kind of problems. However, 40% said that they do not suffer from this problem. The results show that using and combining the aspect in English can be considered as a real problem for students.

Q.13. regarding auxiliaries which are not available in the Arabic tense system, how do you deal with them?

a- I use them correctly and there is no interference of the mother tongue.

b- I interfere from the Arabic tense system and I omit them.

Table 30.

Way Students Deal with Auxiliaries in English.

Options	N°	%
a	39	78%
b	11	22%
Total	50	100%

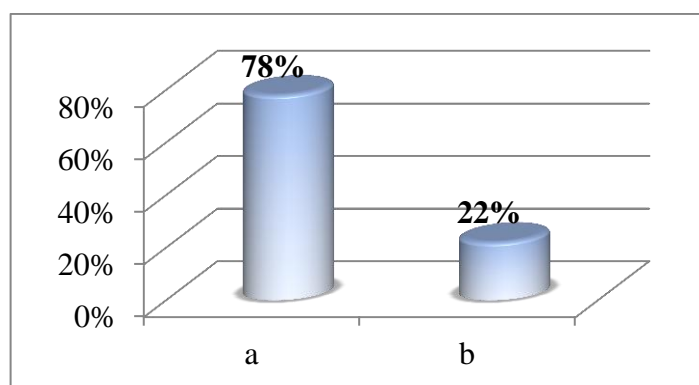


Figure 30. Way students deal with auxiliaries in English.

(78%) of the participants said that they use auxiliaries correctly without making errors. However, (22%) of them claimed that they suffer from negative interference of Arabic tense system in using the auxiliaries and they omit them. This proves that the majority of students use the auxiliaries correctly without any interference of the mother tongue.

1.6 Discussion of the Students' Questionnaire Results

The Students' questionnaire was advocated to investigate their attitudes towards the impact of the first tense system on the use of English tenses in written production. The results of the questionnaire have revealed many facts about our research. The current study was conducted with second year LMD students at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. The discussion follows the order of the survey questions.

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It is concluded that learners' level of students is in average, they are somehow aware of the similarities and the differences between the two languages. On the other hand, they indicate that the impact of their mother tongue on their learning of English is a positive one, while the interference of it is more on writing and speaking. Also, they experience this interference on grammar. They often committed grammatical errors in tenses and in conjunctions. They believe that the source of making these errors is the interference of mother tongue.

Through the analysis, it can be easily noticed that interference of the mother tongue is one of causes of grammatical mistakes. Yet, there are other causes that could make students commit grammatical errors when writing. (34%) of the students asserted that they make errors because of incomplete knowledge or lack of knowledge of the grammar rules. One of the contributing sources of students' grammatical errors is the complexity of the English grammar rules. (22%) of the students consider grammar rules as difficult to be learned. Lack of practice, is also a common cause of students mistakes. This is a clear indication that students' current practice is not really satisfactory, i.e. students do not spend enough time practicing grammar rules, whether inside or outside the classroom.

The findings highlight that the most recurrent grammatical errors in students' writing is tenses. It is clear that students face difficulties deciding what tense to be used. Students' errors in tenses can be explained by the incomprehensibility of English tense rules.

It was noticed that most students face difficulties and make errors when using tenses which explains why they stated that the errors they make are related to the use of tense. It was also observed that most students believe that English and Arabic tense systems are different because each one has its specific tenses, structures and forms. The majority of students think in English when choosing the appropriate English tense. The others who think in Arabic

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affirms that it influences the way they use English tenses when writing and believe that since the two languages are different the influence will be negative. Some students do not face difficulties due to the interference of the mother tongue when selecting the right tense which means that they are aware of differences between the two tense systems while others do and they point that these difficulties are because of the difficulty in selecting the appropriate tense and wrong translation. The majority of participants do not prepare the tense in Arabic before putting it in English; this implies that not all students' errors are due to mother tongue interference. The reasons that lead participants to interfere from the Arabic tense system to English are many; the main reason is being in a multilingual society followed by insufficient knowledge about the English tense system.

2. Limitations of the Study

The most important limitations which confronted us throughout the process of conducting this research are presented here to draw the attention of those who can make such experiences better.

- ❖ One of the major problems that faced us when doing this research is the lack of relevant resources about the Arabic tense system which led to the repeated use of some resources.
- ❖ “Covid-19” was another serious problem that hindered us from doing our research, meeting with our supervisor, and finishing this research at the right time.
- ❖ The third limitation was the sample representativeness issue. There was a lockdown which led us to work on a very limited number of participants because of the impact of “Covid-19”.
- ❖ The University was closed and there is no studying, therefore we were obliged administer the questionnaire using the official Facebook page of the English

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department, Facebook pages of groups of second years English students, and also sending them messages to their personal Facebook accounts.

- ❖ Another problem concerns students' answers, some of them did not answer all the questions especially those that require justifications. The research instrument was only a questionnaire so the answers provided reflect only the students' views and perceptions about the subject.
- ❖ Because of the paralysis of 'Covid-19', another research instrument which is students' test was dropped.

3. Suggestions and Recommendations

On the basis of what has been found in this research work, some recommendations are made to both teachers and students:

- ❖ Teachers should be aware of the areas of expected difficulty resulting from Arabic interference in order to help their students' to overcome such problems and should lead them to avoid most of these mother tongue interference errors.
- ❖ Teachers should highlight the grammatical differences and similarities between both mother tongue and target language and what can be transferable from one language to another to avoid negative language interference.
- ❖ Providing further explanations of the English tense system; (teachers should provide their students with more explanations and attempt to simplify to the maximum the complex tenses as well as the simple ones.)
- ❖ Students have to practice the use of English tenses inside and outside the classroom in order to improve their level specially when writing teachers should create English practice opportunities inside and outside the classroom for students to be exposed to

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the correct form of English tenses use. In this way, they will be more aware of their grammatical errors and will try to improve their writing after knowing their weak points.

- ❖ Language teachers need to focus on the areas in which learners face difficulties in mastering the English tense system.
- ❖ A special attention needs to be given to the students in relation to the teaching of English and Arabic tense systems.
- ❖ Teachers should use their creativity to develop teaching materials. They can use a variety of methods or strategies to teach English to solve the students' problems so that the students will better understand how to form and use.
- ❖ Students should be aware of the importance of knowing each tense system and use to improve their level and their writing skill.
- ❖ Students should learn how to think directly in English and to avoid translating into Arabic and applying its rules in English.
- ❖ Using other tools of collecting data (such as L2 test) to obtain better results.

Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the practical part of our study. It explored student's attitudes towards the impact of first language tense system on the use of English tenses in written production. To this end, a questionnaire was used as a research tool. It was administered to 50 second year English students. The questionnaire gave them the opportunity to express their beliefs and attitudes towards the impact of their mother tongue tense system on the English one when writing. Hence, the chapter described the students' questionnaire and provided the analysis and discussion of this tool, the main results. Moreover, the limitations of the study and some pedagogical recommendations were presented.

General Conclusion

English tenses misuse is a phenomenon that deserves to be investigated especially because it affects English learners' proficiency. The English tense system differs from the standard Arabic tense system in its use, structure, and form which makes Arab learners confused when using them. The present study aimed at investigating student's attitudes towards first language tense system interference on the use of English tenses in written production. The purpose was to find out whether the errors that second year students of English produce when using English tenses in written production are because of the first language interference or not. This research was divided into two chapters; a theoretical chapter and a practical one.

The first chapter dealt with the interference of the mother tongue. It first provided definitions of mother tongue, second language, and foreign language. Furthermore, it discussed the errors theories and second language acquisition starting by a discussion of contrastive analysis, error analysis, and Interlanguage. In addition, this section shed light on language transfer.

The second section, on the other hand was devoted for both of the English and Arabic tense systems. First, the English tense system was defined; starting with clear definition of what is time, tense, and aspect. Then, the section moves to talk about each tense individually; past, present, and future with its forms; simple, progressive, perfect, and perfect progressive. Moreover, this second section shed light on the Arabic tense system, in other words the past (or perfect), the present (or imperfect), and the imperative. It further discussed the similarities and differences between the Arabic tense system and the English one in addition to the influence (interference) of Arabic tense system on English tense system with its evaluation.

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The last chapter in this study reported on the field work. It dealt with the questionnaire. It was administered to 50 second year students in order to give them the chance to express their ideas and attitudes towards the impact of the mother tongue tense system on the use of English tenses in written production. The results obtained from this questionnaire were analyzed and discussed along with some limitations and pedagogical recommendations. The findings of this study revealed that second year students have difficulties regarding their usage of tenses since the grammatical structures and forms in the Arabic language differs from the English one .Their native language hinders their learning since there is a negative interference that leads to errors and inappropriate forms in English especially in the areas of writing and grammar. Some errors are not due to interference. In fact, some students were found to struggle with the grammatical structures of the target language itself.

The findings of our study support the idea that the first language tense system interferes on the use of English tenses, and since they are different, the interference will consequently be negative.

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