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الرمز البريدي ٥١٤١٣ صندوق البريد ٩١٠٠
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Linguistic Functions of \textit{fii/maafii} in Hejaz Gulf Pidgin Arabic

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Abstract:

This paper is a contribution to determine the functions of the syntactic device \textit{fii} (there is) and its negative counterpart \textit{maafii} (there isn’t) in its various forms as it is used in Hejaz Gulf Pidgin Arabic (Hejaz GPA). Beside its basic functions as a preposition and an existential element, it is used as a syntactic device to achieve predication, modality, negation and interrogative. Moreover, \textit{fii/maafii} is found to display a variety of functions in the Hejaz GPA system. The negative variety \textit{maafii} is one example, where it is substituted by the negative devices \textit{maa} and \textit{lala} quite often; the\textit{fii /maafii} disappears where expected and informants from Africa use this device minimally. They substitute the device with syntactic techniques which are borrowed from the lexifier Hejaz Arabic and thus modify Hejaz GPA. Those and other users of Hejaz GPA who have lived long in Hejaz have perceived at a certain structural and aspectual stage other functional devices which are subconsciously assimilated and used by those speakers. Beside this, the discussion concludes that the characteristic displayed features are in congruence with those in the related literature, and that HejazPGA speakers follow conventionalized norms, albeit with some inconsistency.

Keywords:
Hejaz GPA, pidginization, function, structure, \textit{fii /maafii} syntactic device, predication, simplified system, simplified linguistic variety
التركيب اللغوي لاستخدامات (فيه/مافيه)

في اللغة البسطة "البيجين" العربية الخليجية العجائبية

ملخص:
يعتبر هذا البحث إسهاماً لغويّاً لتحديد تركيب الوظائف اللغوية لأداة النحو بصيغتي التأكيد (فيه) والنهي (ما فيه) ويقدم محاولاً دقيقاً للاستخدامات اللغوية المختلفة لهذه الأداة في لغة "البيجين" المبسطة العربية الخليجية الحجازية إلى جانب استخدامها كحرف جر وفعال ك돈ون، نجد بها استخدام كأداة نحوية تفيد إسناد المفعول، وكأدوات شرط واستفهام ونفي. كما أن هذه الأداة تتمتع بالعديد من الوظائف الأخرى في لغة "البيجين" المبسطة العربية الخليجية الحجازية، فنجد منها كثيراً ما تُستخدم في صيغة النفي بكل من أداة النفي (ما) و(ل)، كما نجد بها نحتفي في لغة المغترين الأفقرة المبسطة عندما توقع استخدامها، أو يستعملونها بأقل ما يمكن، فنجد بحسب بديولوجيا أثر تناقش مع المعنى يستعرونها من اللغة العربية الحجازية وبدونها يدخلونها على نظام هذه اللغة المبسطة فيبدو لغة "البيجين" العربية الخليجية الحجازية هذه أكثر تطوراً من تلك التي تستخدمها العائلة الأخرى من آسيا والهند، وربما يرجع ذلك بتأثيره بلغتهم الأم، إلى جانب ذلك نجد أن هؤلاء الأفارقة والعلامة التي تعيش في منطقة الحجاز مدة أطول من خمسة عشر سنة يصبح استيعابهم لللغة العربية الحجازية وأهميتها الفعل الصرفي والثمة والعديد من التراكيب الأخرى المتعلقة بـ (فيه) (ما فيه) أكثر عمقاً مما يفعلونه بالضرورة تلفيقية لتشير في لغتهم البسطة. وبصفة عامة، فإن هذا البحث يفتح بشكل عام مع ما توصلت إليه الأبحاث (القليلة) السابقة فيها يتعلق باللغة المبسطة "البيجين" العربية الخليجية، واللغة المبسطة الحجازية وتتبع هذه العائلة غير العربية هذا النظام اللغوي ذو القواعد اللغوية التقليدية والترقية رغم افتقاره لاتساق التركيب لغرض التواصل، وهذه القواعد لا زالت في حاجة إلى دراسات لغوية أكثر لوصف تراكيبها.
1- Introduction

Gulf Pidgin Arabic (GPA) as used by the non-native labor force in the Gulf, including Saudi Arabia as one of the Gulf States, has never been documented in Hejaz before. The simplified linguistic variety GPA is used for communication among a large non-native immigrant population as well as with the natives as a practical solution to immediate needs.

This paper is a contribution to determine the precise scope of the function of the grammatical element of the affirmative *fii* (there is) and its negative counterpart *maafii* (there isn’t) uses as manifested in Hejaz GPA because of two main reasons. The first is that it hasn’t been studied before, and second is the popular use of this device by expatriates.

The study complements the substantial conclusions of the most recent documentations in this field (Næss 2008 and Bakir 2010) as well as related previous ones (Smart 1990, Holes 1995, Ingham 2006 and Wiswall 2002). This study adds more findings to the GPA linguistic system, linguistic specifications related to Hejaz GPA as a result of direct borrowing from the superstrate or lexifier language in this area. Moreover, cases where *fii* as a copula and a predication marker are found to be less frequently used in the Hejaz variety of GPA, and are never used excessively by the labor force from Africa such as Somalia and Eritrea. One reason can be related to their substrates which are of a different language typology than Urdu, Hindi, etc, where this lexical variety prevails (Bakir 2010: 218).

The descriptive analysis provided in this paper of *fii* /*maafii*’s structure and function depends on the theoretical framework manifested in a rich literature of sociolinguistics, dialectology and pidgianization since the nineteenth century. The study selects topics closely related to the topic of this paper, (Ferguson 1971, Holes 1995, Holm 2000, Owen 2001, Winford 2006, Trudgill 2009 and Al-Wer and de Jong 2009). However, GPA did not attract the researchers’ attention prior to Smart (1990), who was the first to coin the term GPA and whose data were provided by native Arabs imitating GPA (Bakir 2010 and Næss 2008).

The description in this paper of *fii* /*maafii*, which has been borrowed from the lexifier Gulf Arabic, has developed a wider range of use in GPA. It
is found to function as a syntactic tool to achieve predication (Bakir 2010). The discussion carries the analysis forward and explores more functions of \textit{fii}, one concerned with verb modality to indicate ability and possibility (as in examples 20 and 31 below). Structurally, \textit{fii} occurs in a pre-verbal position, preceded by a subject and followed by a verb (as in examples 1 and 11 below) or a noun (as in example 19 below). It also occurs as a predicator preceded by the subject and followed by a nominal (as in examples 20 and 21 below), an adjectival (as in example 22 below), or an adverbial (as in example 23 below). It functions as a syntactic device in different types of questions (as in examples 24 and 25 below). Its negative counterpart \textit{maafii} in the main sentences negate the main verb, nouns or adjectives (as in examples 42-45 below). Finally, there are cases where \textit{fii} does not appear when expected, and is minimally used by labor workers from Africa (as in examples 52-55 below). Comments on such functions and structures involve the status of GPA as another variety with its own, though related, conventionalized norms.

2- Preview of Literature

Smart estimated that GPA variety prevails from Oman to Kuwait and inland Saudi Arabia (1990: 83). Wiswall’s study contains a small corpus to document the linguistic behavior of workers in Kuwait, U.A.E, Qatar and East Saudi Arabia (2002: 7).

Two recent detailed linguistic contributions have been made by Næss (2008) and Bakir (2010). Næss’s MA thesis verifies GPA status as a separate language variety and discusses among many other things three grammatical features; namely: possession, negation and verbal system. On the other hand, Bakir offers in his article a detailed discussion of the verbal system of GPA in his ten Asian informants in Qatar. The conclusions complement one another where both found the same link between GPA development of a light verb system and several of the main substrate languages such as Urdu, but unparalleled in the superstrate or lexifier Gulf Arabic.

3- Pidginization Theory

The linguistic varieties of GPA and Hejaz GPA are a product of human creativity where speakers of more than seven different languages are compelled to interact and communicate in this area of the world. The linguistic pidgin system produced has occurred between a large group of expatriate non-native adults since mid-twentieth century (Bakir 2010), and whose population size started to increase dramatically in the last three
decades as a practical solution to immediate needs (Foley 2006:3). The non-national expatriates in Hejaz, like those in the Gulf, use this linguistic system among them since there is no other shared language.

Pidgin as a product of human activity and interactions is a practical solution and becomes a ‘target language’ for later arrivals on the scene (Winford 2006:279) in the same sociological situation. This pidgin system of communication is conventionalized and has a somewhat unified vocabulary and grammar and has limited functions unlike natural languages (Ferguson 1971, Trudgill 2009 and Grant and Guillemin 2012).

The immigrant population in Hejaz as a labor force uses the Hejaz GPA reduced linguistic system as a medium of communication with the local citizens, a case which exists in the various Arab gulf countries of the western coast of the Arab Gulf and Saudi Arabia (Smart 1990, Holes 2007). While no documentation of analyzing this system in Hejaz has been implemented, avery limited study of GPA has been documented relatively recently. Nowadays, it has become clear that this linguistic system has become a permanent feature of present life especially with the continued increase in the labor force. Hejaz GPA is used in a variety of contexts such as in the market, among drivers, domestic house cleaners, janitors, technicians, and others. The context of communication is characterized by the limited contact between L1 (or superstrate or lexifier) and L2 (or substrate) groups, and by the wide distance between the groups of speakers.

4- The Subjects

The study is based on collecting field data from Asian and African adult informants, who happen to be all males. They have been working in Hejaz, particularly Jeddah, Mecca and Medina for ten or more years.

Table (1) below summarizes specifications of the participants’ ages, first languages, lengths of stay and occupations. Data were collected from five hour conversations recorded during tea-time held privately between seven Hejaz GPA speakers. They participate together as all of them reside and work in Jeddah, and four used to work in Mecca and Medina prior to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. They all use a variety of Hejaz GPA to communicate. None of the subjects is a native speaker of Hejaz or Gulf Arabic; the latter term, first used by Holes (1995). All the participants are friends and share the same neighborhood, which facilitated the three occasions of tea-gatherings to converse and record simultaneously.
Table 1. Participants’ data

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>First Language</th>
<th>Length of Stay</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>Supermarket cashier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>worker/janitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>22 years</td>
<td>Supermarket janitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Swahili</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Electrician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Tigrinya</td>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>warehouse clerk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>22 years</td>
<td>Driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Tagalog(Filipino)</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
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Two of the above subjects belong to two African countries, namely Somalia and Eritrea (D and E informants), and the rest belong to the Asian expatriate community in Jeddah. None of the subjects share the same mother tongue.

5- Discussion

The discussion below involves the functions and structure of *fii*/maafii as used in our data.

5-1 *fii*/maafii as an expletive device

The point of focus is the affirmative *fii* (there is/are) and its negative counterpart *maafii* (there isn’t/aren’t), an expletive element which occurs extensively in Hejaz GPA where it is a borrowing from GPA (Bakir 2010). The affirmative *fii* occurs in usages such as:

1. *ana fii maluum.* (A)  
   I there is know  
   ‘I know.’

2. *fii bank fuluus katiir?* (C)  
   There is bank money plenty  
   ‘Do you have plenty of money in the bank?’

3. *fii ukti.* (D)  
   There is sister  
   ‘My sister is here.’
It also occurs in question forms as in:
(4) inta fii mazraa? (C)
youSG there is farm
‘Do you have a farm?’

fii also occurs twice in the same question such as:
(5) baaden fii raatib fii? (A)
then there is salary
‘Did you get your salary?’

In (5), the first fii is ‘to exist’ and the second fii functions as a copula.

The negative counterpart maafii consists of the negation maa- immediately preceding the expletive –fii. It is used for negation as in:
(6) maafii mushkila. (f)
there isn’t problem
‘There is no problem.’

(7) gariib zawaaz maafii kwayyis. (C)
near marriage there isn’t good
‘Early marriage is not good.’

(8) naas maafii fuluus. (A)
people there isn’t money
‘People have no money.’

(9) maafii kudaar. (B)
there aren’t vegetables
‘There aren’t any vegetables.’

(10) maafii shugul maafii faayda. (E)
there isn’t work there isn’t use
‘If there is no work, there is no benefit.’

The negative syntactic device maafii also occurs in usages as in:
(11) inta maafii maluum? (B)
youSG there isn’t know
‘You don’t know?’

(12) ana muk maafii. (G)
I brain there isn’t
‘I have no brain.’

(13) saah, naas maafii fuluus zay awwal. (C)
right, people there isn’t money as before
‘People do not have money like before.’
Below is a detailed description of fii/maafii with the related exemplification extracts from our data.

**5-2 fii/maafii as a preposition**

This usage is a borrowing from Gulf Arabic, and occurs as in:

(14) dahiin ana  fii imaara badeen fii ruuh beet. (A)
    now I SG in building then there is go house
    ‘Now, I am living in a building (flat), then I’ll move to a house.’

The first fii in (14) above conveys the meaning of the preposition ‘in’.

**5-3 fii/maafii as an existential element**

Existential element in Hijaz GPA is frequently used as well as in Gulf Arabic. It means literally (in it) and has the English meaning ‘there is/are’ (Holes 1995: 72) as in the following:

(15) inta  fii bezuura ? (C)
    youSG there is children
    ‘Do you have children?’

fii in (15) is an existential if the question is (Are there any children?) as well as a possessive as in the interpretation given above. If it is taken as an existential tool, it has no semantic role and is a dummy filler to fulfill and fill the existential place of the predicate.

The following example contains an expletive fii:

(16) dahiin  fii mushkila hina. (F)
    now there is problem here
    ‘There is a problem here.’

The above example is a statement where fii is functionally existential and occupies the position of the dummy subject.

**5-4 fii/maafii, as a copula in equative sentences**

The copula occurs in Hijaz GPA against the process described by Ferguson (1971: 145-147) who hypothesized copula absence in simplified speech. The following are extracts from the data:

(17) ana  fii farhan. (G)
    I there is happy
    ‘I am happy.’

(18) maafii tariig karbaan, alatuul ruuh bahar.(D)
    there isn’t road ruined ,straight away go sea
    ‘(when it rains) roads are not ruined as water pours into the sea.’
(19) iywa, ana *fii* hindi, *fii* taani paakistaani, kullu. (A)
    yes, I there is Indian, there is second Pakistani, all
    ‘Yes, I am Indian, the other one is Pakistani, all kinds of
    nationalities.’

The copula in the above sentence (17) describes the present state of the
speaker. (18) confirms the good state of the road using the negative form
and (19) coordinates two noun phrases to state nationalities.

5-5 *fii/maafii* in predication

Hejaz GPA *fii* enjoys a wider scope of meaning to achieve predication
which is found in equational sentences as in:

(20) ana *fii* masjid, ana *maafii* ziib mooya, insa. (A)
    I there is mosque I there isn’t bring water, forgot
    ‘I went to the mosque(in Mecca) but I forgot to bring
    (Zamzam) water.’

(21) Mooya *maafii* mushkila, laakin laazim *fii* omra. (C)
    water there isn’t problem, but must there is Omra
    ‘It isn’t a problem (to forget) the water, but it is a must to
    perform Omra.’

(22) fikir *maafii* faayda. (B)
    think there isn’t use
    ‘To think (a lot) is not useful.’

(23) Inta *maafii* hinaak. (D)
    youSG there isn’t there
    ‘You were not there.’

*maafii* in the above sentences (20-23) functions as a predicator marker,
linking the subject and the predicate, similar to the copulative in English. It
is located between a subject and a nominal in (20) and (21) above, an
adjectival in (22) and an adverbial in (23) above.

5-6 *fii/maafiīn* questions

Forming questions, *fii/ maafiīn* used in different positions in the sentence.
One occurrence is initially as in:

(24) a. *fii* yizi sodiyya? (C)
    there is come Saudi
    ‘Has he (his brother) arrived to Saudi Arabia?’

b. *maafii* kashaab *fii* mazbuut hinaa? (C)
    there isn’t wood there is quality here
    ‘Is there no wood which is good/proper here?’
Questions are formed with a question particle initially instead of fii/maafii which appears later as in:

(25) a. eesh masna \textit{fii}’? (F)
\begin{itemize}
\item what factory there is
\item ‘What kind of factory is it?’
\end{itemize}
b. keef \textit{inta fii} sugul dahiin? (C)
\begin{itemize}
\item how youSG there is work now
\item ‘How is your work going now?’
\end{itemize}

Questions also occur without the element fii/maafii. Instead, an adverbial is used initially as in:

(26) hina kullu taaza, sah? (C)
\begin{itemize}
\item here all fresh, right
\item ‘Here, everything is fresh, right?’
\end{itemize}

Moreover, a nominal is used initially in questions, with or without fii/maafii as in:

(27) a. suzaar kullu, sah? (E)
\begin{itemize}
\item trees all, right
\item ‘A lot of trees, right?'
\end{itemize}
b. lyoom eesh \textit{fii} tabbak? (C)
\begin{itemize}
\item today what there is cook
\item ‘What will you cook today?’
\end{itemize}

A verb also occurs initially in questions and fii/maafii exists also in the question as in:

(28) a. \textit{yizi fii} sugul feen? (G)
\begin{itemize}
\item go there is work where
\item ‘Where do you work?’
\end{itemize}
b. \textit{fii sawwi tazkira inta, sah?} (C)
\begin{itemize}
\item there is make ticket youSG, right
\item ‘You got your ticket, right?’
\end{itemize}

Adjectives also appear in questions initially without fii/maafii as in:

(29) a. kabiir omor kaam? (C)
\begin{itemize}
\item eldest age how much
\item ‘How old is the oldest one?’
\end{itemize}
b. sagiir kam omor? (C)
\begin{itemize}
\item youngest how much age
\item ‘How old is the youngest?’
\end{itemize}

The question word kaam (how much) exhibits free word order; finally as in (29 a) and medially as in (29 b). In (25 a and b) above, the question words as
eesh (what) and keef (how) occur initially and all are used by the same speaker, except for (25.a).

5-7 fii/maafii in modality

Tense, aspect and mood in Hijaz GPA are not indicated in the verbal usage of fii/maafii. Function is indicated through context. The verb is not inflected and suffers inflectional poverty as in GPA. However, continuous aspect has a possible function with fii as in:

(30) inta madam maafii kalaam maafii salli?
you SG wife there isn’t talk there isn’t pray
‘Didn’t you ask your wife why she doesn’t pray?’

In Hejaz GPA, the question formation is implemented systematically by means of reduction, as in (11) above and/or by the use of a question word in different sentence positions besides fii/maafii. All types of questions are achieved by rising intonation. Negation, as detailed in section 3.8. below, is achieved in (30) above by means of the device maafii which negates the verbs kalaam ‘talk’ and salli ‘pray.

The conditional is used in the data with fii and maafii as in:

(31) maafii shugul, maafii faayda. (D)
there isn’t work, there isn’t use
‘If you don’t work, there is no benefit.’

It is also found with the affirmative fii as in:

(32) fii shugul, shugul dukkaan. (B)
there work work shop
‘If there is work available, I’d rather work in a shop.’

The above examples (31) and (32) contain fii/maafii which indicate hypothetical conditions.

Examples below indicate affirmation:

(33) laa laa, fii, fii, laazim ruuh sawa sawa, hassil. A)
no no, there is, there is, must go together together, find
‘No, no, there is. One day we’ll go together and will find it.’

The above example (33) reveals that the function of the conditional fii extends to include the indicative affirmative modality.

5-8 fii/maafii in pre-verbal positions

Negative maafii in a pre-verbal position where it involves a past tense action as in:

(34) maafii ziib asli. (C)
there isn’t bring original
‘You can’t get the original.’

The following example involves an event which seems to fit the continuous aspect using the affirmative fii:

(35) fii ruuh. (F)
    there is go
‘You are going.’

The extracts below involve using the negative fii/maafii to describe a habitual state as in:

(36) ana maafii koof hurma. (B)
    I there isn’t fear wife
‘I am not scared of my wife.’

(37) haada fii hurma, waahid dagiiga maafii istanna. (D)
    this there is wife, one minute there isn’t wait
‘A wife doesn’t tolerate waiting for a single minute.’

(38) maafii kalaam inta? (E)
    there isn’t talk youSG
‘Don’t you talk to him?’

However, there exist a number of usages where various types of verbs are not preceded by fii/maafii as a syntactic device as in:

(39) huwwa ruuh suug. (G)
    he went market
‘He went to the market.’

(40) inta yizi laa maa yizi, kalamtu kida. (B)
    youSG come or not come talked this
My wife asked: "Are you coming or are you not coming?"

(41) hurma kalaam inta kamastaashar sana igelis, feen fuluus? (A)
    wife talk youSG fifteen years stay, where money
‘My wife told me you’ve been staying there for fifteen years. Where’s the money?’

The above selected usages contain various types of verbs, such as: the affirmative ruuh ‘went’ in (39), the negated yizi ‘come’ with the negative particle laa ‘not’ in (40), and the two affirmative aspectual events within a question using the verbs: kalaam ‘talk’ and igelis ‘stay’ in (41) above. The fii/maafii syntactic device is expected to appear in a pre-verbal position to achieve consistency following Hejaz GPA conventions.

Therefore, the reason for this disappearance is hypothesized as at a certain structural aspectual stage, the fii/maafii syntactic device being perceived as
serving another grammatical function. Such a precise function is randomly 
dominated by those speakers who are subconsciously satisfied by using only 
the verbs.

It is worth mentioning that the three above extracts, (39), (40) and (41), have 
been used by three different people who do not share the same mother 
tongue and that their length of stay in Hejaz has been between ten and 
fifteen years.

5-9 The negative *maafii*

The negative element consists of the negative particle /maa-/'not’ with /-fii/
‘there is/are’ or ‘in’. According to Næss (2008: 69), it is a pseudo-verbal 
negation of which the syntactic expletive *fii* is negated by *maa-*. However, 
Bakir’s (2010: 219) analysis is that *maafii* comes from the lexifier Gulf 
Arabic and has developed in GPA as a general negative particle with a 
wider scope of function. It is not only used to negate existential and 
question sentences as in:

(42) Inta *maafii* majnuun. (C) 
youSG there isn’t crazy
‘You are not crazy.’

It is also used to negate sentences with main verbs as in:

(43) inta *maafii* shugul katiir. (B) 
 you SG there isn’t work a lot
‘You don’t work a lot.’

(44) *maafii* akil tarabeeza? (A) 
there isn’t eat table
You do not eat on the table?

(45) *maafii* rakkib fuluus bank. (A) 
there isn’t deposit money bank
I do not deposit my money in the bank.

The above extracts are variations of the main verbal function negated by *maafii*. Moreover, the single negative particle *maa* (not) appear in our data as in:

(46) maa araf ana miin nafar. (G) 
not know I SG who guy
I do not know who the guy was.

Other negating particles also occur as in:

(47) laa, laa, lessa, baadeen. (B) 
no, no, no yet, later
No, no, not yet. Later.
(48) laa, laa, maa yizi. (A)
no, no, not come
No, no. He did not come yet.

No negating particles occur other than the above-mentioned, namely: ‘laa’ and ‘maa’ where both have the meaning (no~not) appear in our data and they occur quite often. ‘lessa’ (not yet) and ‘baadeen’ (later) are negating/adverbial phrases.

5-10 fii/maaffii does not appear where expected

The collected data reveal two basic contexts where fii/maaffii disappears where expected. The first one is when a Hejaz GPA user lives in this area for over fifteen years, as informants (A), (C) and (F) as in:

(49) katiir naas, zayy hajj. (A)
plenty people as Hajj time
There is a lot of people. It is like Hajj.

(50) nafar maluum ana shugul medina. (C)
people know I SG work Medina
People know I worked in Medina.

(51) haada katiir naas yizi ashaan mushkila wahid marra maa kaffi. (F)
this plenty people come because problem one one not enough
A lot of people come because the problem is one visit isn’t enough.

Generally, it has been noticed that the above informants’ speech contain minimal fii/maaffii syntactic device. Their speech can be characterized as borrowing sophisticated syntactic techniques from the lexifier language in Hejaz, such as ‘zayy’ (as..) in (49), and ‘ashaan’ (because) in (51) above. fii is likely to appear pre-verbally. Our hypothetical view is that at a certain stage, users of Hejaz GPA subconsciously dominate the precise function of fii/maaffii and randomly modify some limited structural aspects in the Hejaz GPA simple linguistic system.

The second instance is when our two informants (D) and (E) from Africa, specifically Eritrea and Somalia, show slight or no existence of the fii/maaffii syntactic device in their Hejaz GPA system as in:

(52) walla shugul miyya miyya. (D)
(by) Allah work hundred percent
Honestly, the work is a hundred percent.
(53) min kida tisaa ashara sana. (D)
from this nine ten years
I’ve been here for nine or ten years.
(54) keef maa yizi? ashara marra yizi. (E)
how not come? ten times come
What do you mean I did not come? I came over ten times.
(55) haada beet ana sawwi zayy kida, waahid gurfa. (E)
this house I made like this, one room
I made my house like this; one room.

The above utterances (52-55) are random selections of different structural forms to exemplify minimal occurrence of the fii/maafii syntactic device as appears in the usage by informants (D) and (E). Sentence (52) is a simple sentence, (53) is a conditional, (54) is a question conditional argumentation and (55) contains two sequential noun phrases and the adverbial phrase ‘zayykida’ (like this).

On the whole, the Hejaz GPA is characterized by being a simplified pidgin linguistic system of Gulf Arabic with the absence of functional categories as agreement, number and gender and containing very little affixation or inflection. Lack of inflectional morphology, strong reference for analytic structures, reduced verbal, nominal and pronominal paradigms compared to the substrate and superstrate languages make this simplified pidgin system non intimate and a cause of some laughter. One main distinguishing characteristic of a pidgin is that it does not have native speakers and is a first generation contact language. So GPA and Hejaz GPA have not developed into a Creole.

6- Conclusion

The status of Hejaz GPA reveals a significant structural description of fii/maafii linguistic variety in this article. Generally, the Hejaz GPA structure is characterized by its simplified rules and impoverished grammar. Some degree of consistency can generally be seen in its usage, although this is not always found to be the case depending on the speakers’ L1 typology.

As a pidgin language in its early stages, the Hejaz GPA is a simplified pre-grammatical system which is not yet fully stabilized. This degree of pidginization justifies variations found in the informants speech beside other aspects which lie outside the scope of this paper, such as the speaker’s level of education and amount of practice achieved in Hejaz GPA. Less variation and more consistency to increase regularity can be achieved when speakers
spend a longer time practicing this linguistic system.

The *fii/maaffii* syntactic device as a preposition and as an existential copula borrowed directly from the lexifier language has a wider scope of functions in Hejaz GPA. Besides predication, it occurs in questions with a free word order. It occurs initially after a question word, medially or finally. It is found to be used for indicating affirmative modality and conditionality, but inside a linguistic system that suffers inflectional poverty in general. It also occurs pre-verbally to involve a past action, continuous aspect and habitual state. The verb is also found to be used independently in a number of instances where it is not preceded by this syntactic device in some Hejaz GPA informants choices which is randomly dominated by those speakers who subconsciously are satisfied by not using them.

*maaffii* is also a pseudo-verbal negative device and appears in existential and question sentences. Simple ‘*maa*’ (not) ‘*laa*’ (no) as single negating particles are also used frequently in Hejaz GPA common linguistic devices for negation. Informants who spend longer than fifteen years in Hejaz show minimal usage of the *fii/maaffii* syntactic device. Their speech is characterized by borrowing more sophisticated techniques from the lexifier language of Hejaz and these are confidently used. Words such as ‘*ashaan*’ (because) and ‘*zayy*’ (like) are just two of many of these lexical forms and phrases.

Finally, informants from Africa use speech with little or no occurrence of *fii/maaffii* syntactic device. This case supports the hypothesis that their substrate language does not contain this syntactic device, a case that is found in the Asian labor force’s substrate languages such as Urdu, (Bakir 2010:218). More research is needed in this field to confirm the relevant hypotheses and to enrich the discussion with further related conclusions.

**References**


The Use of Arabic (L1) in Teaching and Learning English (L2): A Study Conducted on Non-Major EFL Students at King Khalid University

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Abstract

Researchers have different opinions regarding the use of mother tongue in the EFL classroom. Also, students and teachers are divided over the issue of using L1 in the EFL classroom. The present study aims at investigating student and teacher perspectives regarding the use of L1 in learning and teaching English. The sample includes (345) non-major EFL male students at King Khalid University in Saudi Arabia. Statistical analysis of the questionnaires given to students and teachers shows that students use L1 in varying degrees; (41.44%) of them always use L1 and (45.79%) of them sometimes use L1 in the EFL classroom. Concerning teachers, (72.72%) of teachers who are native speakers of L1 sometimes use L1 in the EFL classroom. Also, the majority of students (86.95%) think that it is useful to use L1 in the EFL classroom. Teachers, however, are divided over this issue, (63.63%) of the teachers who are native speakers of L1 think that it is useful to use L1, whereas only (28.57%) of the non-native speaker teachers of L1 support this idea. In addition, the majority of students (82.09%) prefer to have teachers of English who know their mother tongue. (63.63%) of L1 native teachers and (64.28%) of the teachers who are non-native speakers of L1 think that it is preferable if teachers of English know the students mother tongue. Furthermore, most of the students (46.69% strongly agree and 31.75% agree) think that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom has a number of benefits. If L1 is used occasionally and only when needed, it appears to be an effective teaching aid in the EFL classroom. However, we should maximize the use of L2 in the EFL classroom and students must use English not L1.
I. Introduction

The English Language Center of the Faculty of Languages and Translation at King Khalid University provides various intensive English courses for non-major EFL students. These students are pursuing their studies in various majors: Computer Science (011& 012), Engineering (013&014), Arabic Language (015), Religion (015), Science (016) and Medical Sciences (019). It is worth mentioning that English is the medium of instruction in Computer Science, Engineering, and Medical Sciences. This study aims at describing how often students and teachers use Arabic (L1) in the EFL classroom, for what purposes and in which contexts.

Since the end of the 19th century, the role of the mother tongue has been the most discussed methodological problem apart from the issue of teaching grammar (Butzkamm, 2009, 17). The Communicative Approach, developed throughout the 20th century as a response to the Audio-lingual Method and Grammar-Translation methods, recommends that language teachers and students use the target language as exclusively as possible during instructional time and if possible also beyond the classroom (Cook, 2001). In May 2009, The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) published a Draft Position Statement on the use of the target language (TL) in the classroom, which recommended that the TL should be used at least for 90% of the time in a foreign language (FL) classroom. (Osswald, 2010). “This anti-L1 attitude was clearly a mainstream element in the twentieth century language teaching methodology” (Cook, 2001, 405).

On the other hand, other researchers argue that L1 has been a neglected resource, and the mother tongue should be employed regularly and systematically when appropriate in the EFL classroom (Osswald, 2010). Furthermore, "Many teachers find that the use of some L1 provides more time to practice L2 because understanding is achieved much more rapidly (Morahan, 2003). Teachers may use L1 to explain the meanings of new words, to teach grammar, or in classroom management. Also, "teachers use L1 to establish a positive relationship with students” (Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney, 2008, 252).
Cook (2005) suggests that if the L1 is always present in the learners’ mind, its role in the classroom might have positive effects on learning and teaching as “a way of conveying L2 meaning,” “a short-cut for explaining tasks, tests, etc.,” “a way of explaining grammar,” and “practicing L2 uses such as code-switching (Cook, 2005,59).

Cook (2001) and Butzkamm (2009) argue that if L1 is used in a principled and systematic way, then it can promote and increase the use of L2. This is why guidelines have to be established that promote effective bilingual methods.

However, there are differences in the frequency of L1 use. For example, measures undertaken in the American university context and various secondary school contexts in Japan and New Zealand point to an overuse of L1. On the other hand, studies conducted in the Australian university context show low frequencies of L1 use (Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney, 2008). Duff and Polio (1994) and Macaro (2001) analyzed instructors’ use of English and TL alternation and found that the amount of TL used in a FL classroom depends on the individual teachers, the foreign language being taught and the environment. Macaro (2001) stated that there is a need for “a framework that identifies when reference to the L1 can be a valuable tool and when it is simply used as an easy option” (p.545).

The L1 shall now be used purposely to help learning through comparisons between the L2 and L1. Also, “the L2 meanings do not exist separately from the L1 meanings in the learner’s mind, regardless of whether they are part of the same vocabulary store or parts of different stores mediated by a single conceptual system” (Cook, 2001, 405).

When deciding to use or not use L1 in the classroom, we have to keep in mind that four factors should be taken into consideration “one factor to consider is efficiency: can something be done more effectively through the L1? A second factor is learning: will L2 learning be helped by using the L1 alongside the L2? The third factor is naturalness: do the participants feel more comfortable about some functions or topics in the first language … the fourth factor is external relevance: will use of both languages help the students to master specific L2 uses that they may need in the world beyond the classroom?” (Cook, 2001, 413), but now let us first have a look at the role of L1 in language teaching methods.

I.1. The Role of L1 in Language Teaching Methods

Everyone has his own opinion about when, how and how often a teacher would resort to students’ mother tongue. In the same way, different teaching
methods look at the issue of using mother tongue in the EFL classroom in various ways. Table (1) below summarizes the role of L1 in eight teaching methods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>The Role of Students' Native Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Grammar-Translation Method</td>
<td>Meaning of Target language is made clear by translating it into students' native language. Language that is used in class is mostly the students' native language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Direct Method</td>
<td>Students' native language should not be used in classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Audio-Lingual Method</td>
<td>Students' native language should not be used in the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Silent Way</td>
<td>Students' native language can be used to give instructions when necessary, to help students improve pronunciation. It is used (at least at beginning level of proficiency) during feedback sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desuggestopedia</td>
<td>Native-language translation is used to make meaning clear. Teachers use the native language in class when necessary. Teachers use native language less and less as the course proceeds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Language Learning</td>
<td>Native language is used in this method to enhance students' security, to give meanings of words and to give directions. As the course proceeds, the use of L1 reduces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Physical Response</td>
<td>TPR is usually introduced in L1. After the introduction, L1 is rarely used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicative Language Teaching</td>
<td>Judicious use of L1 is permitted in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Source: Adapted from (Larsen-Freeman, 2000)

It is clear from the table above that L1 is used in most of these eight methods of language teaching with the exception of the Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method. In addition, the use of L1 ranges from using it frequently in the classroom, as it is the case in the Grammar-Translation Method, to the judicious use of L1, as it is the case in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This raises two questions: First, why L1 is used? And second, why L1 is not used?
I.2. Reasons to Use the L1

According to Paul Nation, L1 is used because of the following reasons: “Firstly, it is more natural to use L1 with others who have the same L1. Secondly, it is easier and more communicatively effective to use the L1, and thirdly, using the L2 can be a source of embarrassment particularly for shy learners and those who feel they are not very proficient in the L2.” (Nation, 2001). Furthermore, Rell (2005) classified the reasons to use L1 into three categories: (1) cognitive reasons, (2) pedagogical reasons, (3) affective reasons. (Rell, 2005)

I.2.1. Cognitive Reasons

1- Meta-talk promotes acquisition. This means "that speaking out loud in L1 while processing L2 is a normal psycholinguistic process and that verbal thinking in L1 mediates one's relationship with the new language…and is quite necessary and natural." (Rell, 2005, 24)

2- The use L1 allows students to relate L2 learning to the knowledge they have about phonetics, phonology, syntax, and lexicon of their mother tongue.

3- L1 allows students and teachers to use more learning and teaching strategies. "Use of L1 should be viewed as a teacher strategy… and promoting use of varying learning techniques in the classroom, including the incorporation of L1, serves to validate different learning preferences and styles.” (Rell, 2005, 25).

4- L1 is useful in clarifying abstract ideas and difficult concepts of L2.

5- When L1 is used, students learn more. "According to various scholars, use of the L1 not only promotes L2 acquisition but allows students to learn more than when than when the L2 is excluded." (Rell, 2005, 27).

6- L1 remains in the students' minds even when prohibited. "The L1 will remain in the students' minds despite its prohibition and should therefore be permitted in the L2 classroom." (Rell, 2005, 28).

7- The use of L1 does not impede L2 learning. "No study so far … has been able to demonstrate a causal relationship between exclusion of the L1 and improved learning." (Rell, 2005, 30)

I.2.2. Pedagogical Reasons

1- Use of the L1 allows for more fluid conversation.

2- Establishes humanistic language learning. "The L1 serves the humanistic
function of allowing students to say what they really want to say". (Rell, 2005, 31)

3- The use of L1 makes the classroom look real.

4- Makes instructions clear.

5- The use L1 can save the time of teacher and students, and afford students more time to practice L2. "In the foreign language classroom where the L1 is forbidden, an inordinate amount of time may be spent in an effort to explain even one word not understood in the L2." (Wells, 1999)

6- Allows for comparison of two languages.

7- Teachers who do not believe in the sole use of L2. "If teachers do not believe theoretically nor pedagogically in sole use of the L2, then implementing this strategy into the classroom is unlikely" (Rell, 2005, 37).

8- Increases participation. "Certain scholars claim that allowing use of the L1 enables students to become more involved in the classroom" (Rell, 2005, 37)

9- Teachers who are non-native speakers of L2 rely on L1. The present study shows that (72.72%) of teachers who are native speakers of L1 sometimes use L1 in the EFL classroom and (27.27%) of them rarely use L1.

10- Translation activities can enhance L2 learning. "Translation activities, which incorporate use of the L1 in the L2 classroom, may form a communicative approach if implemented properly" (Rell, 2005, 39).

### 1.2.3 Affective Reasons

1- The use of L1 strengthens teacher/students relationship. “Developing a comfortable working relationship with the teacher is significant and it appears that the use of the L1 serves as a means to cultivate this association.” (Rell, 2005, 39).

2- The use of L1 Arouses interest/ increases motivation, increases confidence, allows learners to say what they want to say, decreases anxiety and some students prefer some use of the L1. The present study shows that (86.95%) of the students think that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom is useful.

3- The teacher serves as bilingual model, when students observe him/her
using L1 and L2. “In these circumstances, students demonstrate less anxiety in the classroom and show signs of increased confidence, all of which support the motivational system at play.” (Rell, 2005, 46).

I.3. Reasons Not to Use L1

In 1961, a conference was held at Makere University in Uganda. The following five basic tenets emerged from this conference: English is best taught monolingually; the ideal teacher of English is a native speaker; the earlier English is taught, the better the results; the more English is taught, the better the results; if other languages are used, standard of English will drop. (in Auebrach, 1993). These tenets are good reasons for teachers not to use L1 in English classrooms. Also, “These tenets have become the cornerstones of hegemony of English worldwide” (Auebrach, 1993). In addition, there are other reasons for not using L1, some of them would be:

1- If students in the classroom have different mother tongues, it becomes impossible to find a teacher who can use all these languages.

2- L1 is ignored in methodologies. "Many teacher training programs and university language departments do not specifically comment on the use of the L1" (Rell, 2005, 47)

3- Certain teaching methods, the Direct Method, the Audio-Lingual method, and CLT discourage the use of L1.

4- In order to learn L2, students need maximal amount of comprehensible input.

5- Teachers are inconsistent about L1 use. Some teachers support the use of L1, others ban it. The present study shows that (63.63%) of the teachers who are native speakers of L1 think that it is useful to use L1 in the EFL classroom, whereas only (28.57%) of the teachers who are non-native speakers of L1 support this idea.

6- Teachers and students have alternative strategies. They can use paraphrase, visual aids, pantomime, repetition, realia, simplification, etc.

7- Translation activities give students wrong idea about language learning. This is because there is no exact correspondence between two languages.

8- L1 should not be used to make life easier for teachers and students."Sole use of L2 creates stress but that stress benefits students more than slipping back into the L1" (Rell, 2005, 62)
I.4. Uses of L1

L1 can be used to convey the meaning of unknown words effectively. "There are numerous ways of conveying the meaning of an unknown word. These include a definition in L2, a demonstration, a picture or a diagram, a real object, L2 context clues, or an L1 translation. In terms of the accuracy of conveying the meaning, none of these ways is intrinsically better than any of the others." (Nation, 2001). Furthermore, giving the meaning of words in L1 enhances comprehension. "Research shows that L1 glosses provided by teachers or looked up in a good bilingual dictionary are beneficial for text comprehension and word learning." (Nation, 2005, 4)

According to Atkinson 1993, the mother tongue may be useful in the procedural stages of a class, for example: setting up pair and group work, sorting out an activity which is clearly not working, checking comprehension and using L1 for translation as a teaching technique (in Prodromou, 2002).

Larrea 2002, lists the following cases where we may use L1, when:
1- starting beginner classes to make students feel more comfortable when facing the enormous task of learning a foreign language.
2- L1 is used for the purpose of contrastive analysis, i.e. to introduce the major grammatical differences between L1 and L2.
3- the teacher's knowledge of students' L1 can also help him understand the learner's mistakes caused by interference.
4- L1 is used to explain complex instructions to basic levels.
5- L1 is used to get feedback from the students about the course, the teacher's approach, evaluation of teaching styles, etc.

Auerbuch (1993) mentions the following uses of L1: Classroom management, language analysis, presenting grammar rules, discussing cross-cultural issues, giving instructions, explaining errors and checking for comprehension (In Tang, 2002). According to Cook, mother tongue can be used positively by the teacher in the L2 classroom in many ways: to convey the meaning, to organize the class and to explain tasks to other students (Cook, 2001).

Schweers (1999) mentioned the following suggested uses for L1 in the EFL classroom:
1- Eliciting Language. "How do you say `X' in English?"
2- Checking comprehension. "How do you say I've been waiting for ten minutes in Spanish?" (Also used for comprehension of a reading or listening text.)

3- Giving complex instructions to basic levels

4- Co-operating in groups. Learners compare and correct answers to exercises or tasks in the L1. Students at times can explain new points better than the teacher.

5- Explaining classroom methodology at basic levels

6- Using translation to highlight a recently taught language item

7- Checking for sense. If students write or say something in the L2 that does not make sense, have them try to translate it into the L1 to realize their error.

8- Translating items can be useful in testing mastery of forms and meanings.

I.4.1. Appropriate Amount of L1 Use

Different scholars look at the amount of L1 use in different ways. Hammerly (1991) suggests employing the L1 “as little as possible”. Tang (2000) recommends using L1 not more than 10% of class time. He states that “the amount of the mother tongue used should not exceed 10% of the class time” (in Rell, 2005, 46-47). According to Nation, “The L1 needs to be seen as a useful tool that like other tools should be used where needed but should not be over-used” (Nation, 2001).

I.4.2. Ways of increasing the use of L2

If we want our students to learn English rapidly, we have to increase the use of L2 in the classroom. “You may find it necessary to give instructions or explain certain items of grammar in the mother tongue. However, think carefully about how and when you use it and take every opportunity to expose your students to English. Make clear to students when you expect them to use English and encourage and praise them at all times when they make serious effort to practice their English in class.” (Robertson et.al , 2000,16)

I.5. Statement of the problem

As a teacher in the English Department and in the English Language Center at the Faculty of Languages and Translation, King Khalid University, I noticed that many students want their teachers to use L1 in the
EFL classroom, whereas, others are against the use of mother tongue in learning English. Also, teachers are divided over this issue. This study, thus, is an attempt to investigate how students use L1 in the EFL classroom, to see the opinions of students as well as teachers regarding the use of L1 in learning English, and to find out the right way of using L1 to enhance learning and teaching of English to non-major EFL students.

I.6. Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study lies in:

1- The importance of understanding how students and teachers use (L1) in learning and teaching English.
2- The significance of exploring students' and teachers' opinions regarding the use of the L1 in learning English.
3- The importance of knowing how to use (L1) effectively in teaching and learning English.

I.7. Study Questions

1- Do students and teachers use L1 in learning and teaching English? How frequently is it used and in what contexts?
2- What are the opinions of students and teachers regarding the use of L1 in learning and teaching English?
3- Do students differ in their opinions regarding the use of L1 in teaching English according to their majors?
4- Is there a difference between opinions of teachers who are native speakers of Arabic and those who are non-native speakers of Arabic regarding the use of L1 in teaching and learning English?
5- What are the advantages and disadvantages of using L1 in learning and teaching English from students and teachers points of view?

II. Review of Related Literature

Schweers (1999) conducted research on the use of the mother tongue in English classes at the University of Puerto Rico. This research consisted of recording a 35-minute sample from three classes at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester. The classes were recorded to see how frequently and for what purposes these teachers used L1 (Spanish) in their classes. The teachers also filled out a short questionnaire about their attitudes toward the use of Spanish in the English classroom. The results showed that in English classes in a Puerto Rican University, L1 should be used to some degree.
Students feel there are clear cases where L1 would facilitate their comprehension of what is happening in class. A majority also agreed that the use of L1 helped them to learn English.

Cook (2001) in his study “Using the First Language in the Classroom” came to the conclusion that L1 can be a useful element in teaching L2. According to Cook, L1 can be used systematically in the classroom to:
1- provide a short-cut for giving instructions and explanations where the cost the L2 is too great
2- build up interlinked L1 and L2 knowledge in the students’ minds
3- carry out learning tasks through collaborative dialogue with fellow students
4- develop L2 activities such as code-switching for later real-life use (Cook, 2001, 418)

In Prodromou (2002) a questionnaire was addressed to 300 Greek students at three levels, beginner, intermediate and advanced. They were asked general questions regarding their view on whether the teacher should know and use the students' mother tongue. 65% of the students at beginner level and about 50% of students at intermediate and advanced level believed the teacher should know the students' mother tongue. 66% of students at beginner level, about 58% of students at intermediate level believe, and 29% of advanced learners found the use of L1 in the classroom acceptable. With regard to the use of L1 to explain grammar, beginners are significantly in favor (31%) and intermediate and advanced are almost against (7% and 0%). This means that the higher the level of the student, the less they agree to the use of the mother-tongue in the classroom. (Prodromou, 2000)

Ferrer (2002) carried out a comparative study of students', teachers', and teacher educators' perceptions regarding the role of the mother tongue in the monolingual classroom. This study was conducted at a private English language school in Spain, and participant students were divided into three levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Findings showed that all three levels "perceive the mother tongue as a legitimate tool to use when exploring the workings of the target grammar system, although, again, advanced students are the most reluctant." (Ferrer, 2002).

Tang (2002) conducted a study in China which aimed to know whether Chinese (L1) is used in tertiary–level English classrooms, how frequently L1 is used, and attitudes of teachers and students toward using Chinese in the ELF classroom. This study came to the conclusion that "limited and judicious use of the mother tongue in the mother tongue in the English
classroom doesn't reduce students' exposure to English, but rather can assist in the teaching learning processes." (Tang, 2002)

Miles (2004) conducted an experiment at the University of Kent, England. The participants in this study were male Japanese university students who spend their first year studying English in England. In this experiment three classes were compared. One class did not permit the use of L1 in the classroom, another did permit it, and the third utilized L1. The results showed that in the class were L1 was used, students showed a significant improvement in speaking. The findings of this study were supportive of the thesis that L1 use in the English classroom does not hinder the learning of L2, and can, in fact, facilitate it. (Miles, 2004)

Rell, (2005), conducted a study in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of California. In this study both the experimental and control groups studied two topics in grammar: (1) time expressions, and (2) direct and indirect object pronouns. The experimental group received instruction in the first language, whereas the control group received instruction in the second language. Findings showed that time expressions instruction in L2 resulted in higher gains for both short -term and long-term acquisition. On the other hand, the direct and indirect object pronoun results revealed that instruction in L1 resulted in higher gains.(Rell, 2006)

Seng and Hashim, (2006), conducted a study on four female Malay students. The purpose of this was to explore the extent of L1 in reading second language texts and to discover the possible reasons of the use of L1 in comprehending texts written in L2. Analysis based on the think-aloud protocols showed that "L1 was used by all the students in the study and that more than 30% of the total instances of strategy use involved the L1."The study also revealed various reasons for the students' use of the L1 while reading L2 texts."One reason was that the L1 facilitated resolutions of word-related and idea-related difficulties. Furthermore, using the L1 might have helped the students reduce affective barriers and gain more confidence in tackling the L2 texts." (Seng and Hashim, 2006)

Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008) investigated students’ views regarding the use of the first language in the classroom. Participants in this study were first–year students at the University of Queensland in Australia who are enrolled in an introductory French course. Findings of this study showed that the majority of students preferred the use of the first language to perform classroom management. Furthermore, this study showed that L1 use may reduce anxiety and it may also be a motivating factor.
The present study differs from the previous studies in a number of ways. First, this study focuses on the use of native language in an Arabic context. Second, the participants in this study are all university non-major EFL students. Third, teachers are native and non-native speakers of L1 (Arabic).

**III- Methodology & Results**

**III.1. Study Instrument**

In this study two questionnaires were used for data collection. The first one was addressed to students and was divided into five parts (see appendix 1). The second questionnaire was addressed to teachers and consisted of six parts (see appendix 2).

**III.1.1. Validity and reliability of the questionnaires**

**III.1.1.1. Validity:**

Validity can be defined as the degree to which the question has measured whatever it was designed to measure. For ensuring that the questions used would not be misinterpreted (and thus measure something completely different), three colleagues were asked to read the questions and write down what they thought each was designed to measure. Questions which produced varying responses were removed or reworded. Two questionnaires were modified in the light of the comments and suggestions given by the three colleagues who read them.

**III.1.1.2. Reliability**

Cronbach Alpha was used for measuring the reliability of the two questionnaires. The first questionnaire was given to a group of (40) students in the first semester (2008-2009), and the second questionnaire was given to (11) teachers in the first semester (2007-2008). The calculated Alpha, by the use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), for the two questionnaires was respectively (0.72.60), (0.91.19).

**III.1.2. Sample:**

**III.1.2.1. Teachers**

As shown in Table 2 below, the total number of teachers who teach English Intensive Courses is 39, 11 of them are native speakers of Arabic (L1) and 28 are non-native speakers of L1.
Table (2): Number of Teachers in Intensive Courses and their Qualifications, English Language Center, Second Term (2008-2009).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Native speakers of arabic</th>
<th>Non-native speakers of arabic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Who Returned the Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that 79.59% of the teachers at the English Language Center returned the questionnaire.

III.1.2.2. Students

On the other hand, the total number of students enrolled in Intensive Courses, English Language Center, King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia in the second term in the academic year (2008-2009) was 2,052, as shown in Table 3 below. These students studied in various colleges. From each college one section was selected randomly. Thus, the sample of this study consisted of 391 undergraduate male students (19.05% of the total number of students). As it is clear in Table 4 below, out of 391 students, only 345 students returned the questionnaire. It is worth mentioning that students who could not return the questionnaire were either absent when the questionnaire was administered, or failed to complete the questionnaire properly.
Table (3): Total Number of Students in Intensive Courses, English Language Center, Second Term (2008-2009).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Sections</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer (011)</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>262</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
<td>192</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>319</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>255</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic (015)</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>359</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>185</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>337</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (016)</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Sciences (019)</td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>143</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* S=section

Table (4): Sample and number of students who returned the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Sample Section</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Number of students who returned the questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer (011)</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (012)</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (013)</td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (014)</td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic (015)</td>
<td>S10</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharya’a (015)</td>
<td>S1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (016)</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Sciences (019)</td>
<td>S7</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>391</td>
<td></td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that 88.23% of participants (students) returned the questionnaire.
III-2. Findings:

III.2.1. Frequency of using L1 in the EFL classroom

It is clear from Table 5 below that 41.44% of the students always use L1 and 45.79% of them sometimes use L1 in the EFL classroom. It is worth mentioning that 78.26% of students from the Faculty of Shari’a always use L1 in learning English. This can be attributed to the fact that those students are very weak in English and they find L1 very helpful for them.

Concerning teachers, table (6) below shows that 72.72% of teachers who are native speakers of L1 sometimes use L1 in the EFL classroom, whereas 27.27% of them rarely use L1.

Table (5): How often students use L1 in the English classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer (011)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29.16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (012)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34.09</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.81</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27.27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (013)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36.95</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>56.52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.52</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (014)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25.58</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>65.11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic (015)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>54.16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>41.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari’a (015)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>78.26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.73</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sciences (016)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.66</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>53.33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Sciences (019)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A= Always, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N= Never

The table above shows clearly that L1 can be helpful when students’ linguistic proficiency is very low; e.g., students from Faculty of Shari’a (015).

Table (6): How often teachers use L1 in the English classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native speakers of L1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native speakers of L1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A= Always, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N= Never

The table above shows that teachers who are L1 native speakers use L1 in varying degrees.

III.2.2. Usefulness of using L1 in the English classroom

Table 7 below shows that the majority of students 86.95% think that it is useful to use L1 in the EFL classroom, but teachers are divided over this issue. Table 8 below shows that 63.63% of the teachers who are native speakers of L1 think that it is useful to use L1 in the EFL classroom, whereas only 28.57% of the teachers who are non-native speakers of L1 support this idea.

Table (7): Students' opinions regarding the usefulness of using Arabic in the English classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer (011)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>83.33</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (012)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>77.27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (013)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>86.95</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (014)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>83.72</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic (015)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>97.91</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari’a (015)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sciences (016)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>86.66</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Sciences (019)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>86.95</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>13.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows 30% of medical students think that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom is useless, whereas 100% of students from Faculty of Shari’a think that L1 is useful.
Table (8): Teachers' opinions regarding the usefulness of using Arabic in the English classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native speakers of L1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native speakers of L1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear from the table above that teachers are divided over the usefulness of using L1 in the classroom,

III.2.3. Preference of teachers who know learners mother tongue

Table 9 below shows that 82.09% of the students prefer to have teachers of English who know their mother tongue. As for teachers, table 10 below shows that 63.63% of teachers who are native speakers of L1 and 64.28% of teachers who are non-native speakers of L1 think that it is preferable that teachers of English know the students' mother tongue.

Table (9): Whether students prefer teachers of English who know their mother tongue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer (011)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>79.16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (012)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>79.54</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (013)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>82.60</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (014)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>88.37</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic (015)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>85.41</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari’a (015)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sciences (016)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66.66</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Sciences (019)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>286</strong></td>
<td><strong>82.09</strong></td>
<td><strong>59</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.90</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the table above, most students especially those with limited proficiency prefer teachers of English who know their mother tongue.
Table (10): Whether teachers think it is preferable to know the mother tongue of learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native speakers of L1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native speakers of L1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows that teachers (native and non-native speakers of L1) think that it is preferable to know the mother tongue of the learners.

III.2.4. Purposes of using L1 in the English classroom.

Table 11 below shows that 45.84% of the students always use L1 for the purposes of making casual queries to fellow-students and teachers, making some special/difficult query to the teacher, discussing an activity with his partner in a group, and confirming comprehension. Also, 31.88% of the students sometimes use L1 for these purposes.

As for teachers, both native and non-native speakers of L1 almost have the same opinion regarding the purposes of using L1, 26.78% of them strongly agree and 44.34% of them agree that L1 may be used for the stated above purposes (Table 12).
Table (11): Students perspectives regarding purposes of using L1 in the English classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A %</td>
<td>A %</td>
<td>A %</td>
<td>A %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (011)</td>
<td>24 50</td>
<td>15.75 32.81</td>
<td>5.25 10.93</td>
<td>3 6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (012)</td>
<td>21.75 49.43</td>
<td>14.25 32.38</td>
<td>5.25 11.93</td>
<td>2.75 6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (013)</td>
<td>27 58.69</td>
<td>13.5 29.34</td>
<td>5 10.86</td>
<td>0.5 1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (014)</td>
<td>21 48.83</td>
<td>13.75 31.97</td>
<td>5.75 13.37</td>
<td>2.5 5.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic (015)</td>
<td>18 37.50</td>
<td>15.25 31.77</td>
<td>7.5 15.62</td>
<td>7.25 15.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari’a (015)</td>
<td>17.75 38.58</td>
<td>14.25 30.97</td>
<td>7.25 15.76</td>
<td>6.75 14.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (016)</td>
<td>15 50 8.5 28.33</td>
<td>4.5 15</td>
<td>2 6.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine (019)</td>
<td>13.5 33.75</td>
<td>15 37.50</td>
<td>5.75 14.37</td>
<td>5.75 14.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>45.84 31.88</td>
<td>13.48 8.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows that students use L1 for certain purposes in varying degrees.

Table (12): Teachers perspectives regarding purposes of using L1 in the EFL classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers of L1</th>
<th>SA A</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>DA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A %</td>
<td>A %</td>
<td>A %</td>
<td>A %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Speakers of L1</td>
<td>3.00 25</td>
<td>5.50 45.83</td>
<td>1.50 12.5</td>
<td>2.00 16.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native Speakers of L1</td>
<td>8.00 28.57</td>
<td>12 42.85</td>
<td>4.50 16.07</td>
<td>3.50 12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>26.78 44.34</td>
<td>14.28 14.58</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, NS= Not sure, DA= Disagree

Also most of the teachers, as shown in the table above, think that L1 is used for certain purposes in the EFL classroom.
III.2.5. Advantages of using L1 in the English classroom:

Table 13 below shows that 46.69% of the students strongly agree and 31.75% of them agree that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom has a number of benefits, such as, L1 gives input to students with more clarity; it facilitates learning for the students; it leaves a good impression about the effectiveness of the teacher; it allows students to relate what they already know to the learning of L2; it facilitates communication and interaction between teacher and students; it helps teachers to use time effectively, it increases student's motivation and confidence and decreases student's anxiety.

As for teachers, Table 14 below shows that 37.17% disagree and 26.21% of them are not sure of these benefits, whereas 33.73% of them agree that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom can bring the benefits mentioned above.

Table (13): Student responses concerning the advantages of using L1 in the EFL classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (011)</td>
<td>26.60</td>
<td>55.41</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>29.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (012)</td>
<td>25.20</td>
<td>57.27</td>
<td>12.60</td>
<td>28.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (013)</td>
<td>21.10</td>
<td>45.86</td>
<td>16.90</td>
<td>36.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (014)</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>48.83</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>35.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic (015)</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>46.87</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>26.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari’a (015)</td>
<td>22.30</td>
<td>48.47</td>
<td>11.70</td>
<td>25.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (016)</td>
<td>12.40</td>
<td>41.33</td>
<td>10.20</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine (019)</td>
<td>11.80</td>
<td>29.50</td>
<td>15.40</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>46.69</strong></td>
<td><strong>31.75</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.46</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.06</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, NS= Not sure, DA= Disagree

It is clear from the table above that most students think that the use of L1 in the classroom has a number of advantages.
Table (14): Teacher responses concerning the advantages of using L1 in the EFL classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th></th>
<th>NS</th>
<th></th>
<th>DA</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Speakers of L1</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>34.36</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>29.72</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>32.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native Speakers of L1</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>9.27</td>
<td>33.10</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>22.71</td>
<td>11.81</td>
<td>42.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>33.73</td>
<td>26.21</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, NS= Not sure, DA= Disagree

The table above shows that teachers are not sure of the advantages of using L1 in the EFL classroom.

III.2.6. Disadvantages of using L1 in the English classroom

As shown in Table 15 below, 17.8% of the students strongly agree and 21.10% of them agree that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom has a number of disadvantages such as, the use of L1 brings in a dependence on L1 among students; it brings in L1 interference to L2 use; L1 minimizes the use and exposure to L2; there is no benefit from using L1 in learning English; L1 impedes the acquisition of L2; the use of L1 decreases communication and interaction between teacher and students and wastes the time of students and teachers; and the use of L1 decreases student's motivation and decreases student's confidence.

As for teachers, Table 16 below shows that 23.68% of the teachers strongly agree and 31.70% of them agree that the use of L1 in EFL classroom may lead to the disadvantages listed above.
Table (15): Student responses concerning the disadvantages of using L1 in the EFL classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>DA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (011)</td>
<td>6.44</td>
<td>13.41</td>
<td>8.88</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer (012)</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>12.86</td>
<td>7.88</td>
<td>17.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering (014)</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>15.23</td>
<td>9.33</td>
<td>21.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic (015)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22.91</td>
<td>11.22</td>
<td>23.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shari’a (015)</td>
<td>10.11</td>
<td>21.97</td>
<td>10.55</td>
<td>22.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science (016)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.88</td>
<td>22.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine (019)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>8.88</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>21.10</td>
<td>22.07</td>
<td>38.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, NS= Not sure, DA= Disagree

The table above shows that students are divided over the disadvantages of using L1 in the EFL classroom.
Table (16): Teacher responses concerning the disadvantages of using L1 in the EFL classroom.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>DA</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Speakers of Arabic</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>10.09</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>33.27</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>33.27</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>23.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native Speakers of Arabic</td>
<td>10.44</td>
<td>37.28</td>
<td>8.44</td>
<td>30.14</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>15.07</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>17.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23.68</td>
<td>31.70</td>
<td>24.17</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, NS= Not sure, DA= Disagree

As it is the case with students, the table above shows that teachers are also divided over the disadvantages of using L1 in the EFL classroom.

III.2.7. Situations where L1 might be used

L1 can be used in situations like explaining difficult words and phrases; explaining ideas and concepts; exemplification; giving further elaborations; and responding to questions asked by students and giving feedback to students about their performances. Table 17 below shows that 3.86 % of the teachers suggest that L1 can always be used in these situations, whereas 35.85 % of them suggest L1 can sometimes be used in these situations.
Table (17): Teacher suggestions concerning the situations where L1 might be used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHERS</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native Speakers of Arabic</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>7.72</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>38.90</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-native Speakers of Arabic</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.28</td>
<td>36.71</td>
<td>8.28</td>
<td>29.57</td>
<td>9.42</td>
<td>33.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>35.85</td>
<td>34.23</td>
<td>25.91</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A= Always, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N= Never

The table above shows that teachers are divided over the situations where L1 might be used.

In addition, two groups of students were selected from the Faculty of Computer Sciences. One of these groups (group 1) studied English grammar with frequent use of L1 in the classroom, whereas the second group (group 2) studied the same course but L1 was not used at all; as the teacher of this group was a non-native speaker of L1. Results of students in the final examination were compared. The comparison showed that there was no statistically significant difference, as shown in Table 18 below, between these two groups in terms of achievement in grammar.

Table (18): A comparison of students' achievement in grammar in the cases using and the non use of the L1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>T Value</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.799</td>
<td>0.256</td>
<td>16.22</td>
<td>76.50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2**</td>
<td>Achievement in Grammar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*= L1 is frequently used in the EFL classroom by the teacher who is a native speaker of Arabic.

**= L2 is only used in the EFL classroom by the teacher who is a non-native speaker of Arabic.
IV- Conclusion

Opinions vary about when, how and how often L1 should be used. In teaching methods, the use of L1 ranges from using it most of the time in the classroom, as in case of the Grammar-Translation Method, to the judicious use of L1, as in case of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). However, this study comes to a number of conclusions:

First, this study shows that students use L1 in varying degrees; 41.44% of them always use L1 and 45.79% of them sometimes use L1 in the EFL classroom. Also this study shows that students who are very weak in English use L1 more frequently; 78.26% of the students from the Faculty of Shari’a always use L1 in learning English. Concerning teachers, 72.72% who are native speakers of L1 sometimes use L1 in the EFL classroom.

Second, the majority of students (86.95%) think that it is useful to use L1 in the EFL classroom, but teachers are divided over this issue. 63.63% of the teachers who are native speakers of L1 think that it is useful to use L1, whereas only 28.57% of the teachers who are non-native speakers of L1 support this idea.

Third, the majority of students (82.09%) prefer to have teachers of English who know their mother tongue. As for teachers, 63.63% who are native speakers of L1 and 64.28% of the teachers who are non-native speakers of L1 think that it is preferable that teachers of English know the students mother tongue.

Fourth, 45.84% of the students always use L1 for the purpose of making casual queries to fellow-students and teachers. If students make some special/difficult query to the teacher or discuss an activity with their partner in a group to confirm comprehension, 31.88% of the students sometimes use L1 for these purposes. As for teachers, both native and non-native speakers of L1 almost have the same opinion regarding the purpose of using L1, 26.78% of them strongly agree and 44.34% of them agree that L1 may be used for the mentioned purposes (Table 12).

Fifth, 46.69% of the students strongly agree and 31.75% of them agree that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom has a number of benefits, such as, L1 gives input to students with more clarity. It facilitates learning for our students and leaves good impression about the effectiveness of the teacher. It allows students to relate what they already know to the learning of L2 and facilitates communication and interaction between teacher and students. It helps teachers to use time effectively, increases student's motivation and
confidence and decreases student's anxiety. As for teachers, (37.17%) disagree and (26.21%) of them are not sure of these benefits, whereas (33.73%) of them agree that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom can bring the benefits mentioned above.

Sixth, 17.8% of the students strongly agree and 21.10% of them agree that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom has a number of disadvantages such as bringing in a dependence on L1 among students. Moreover, it brings in L1 interference to L2 use and L1 minimizes the use and exposure to L2. Thus, there is no benefit from using L1 in learning English and L1 impedes the acquisition of L2. The use of L1 decreases communication and interaction between teachers and students and wastes the time of students and teachers. The use of L1 decreases students' motivation and decreases student's confidence. As for teachers, 23.68% of the teachers strongly agree and 31.70% of them agree that the use of L1 in EFL classroom may lead to the disadvantages listed above.

Seventh, L1 can be used in situations like explaining difficult words and phrases; explaining ideas and concepts; exemplification; giving further elaborations; responding to questions asked by students and giving feedback to students about their performances. This study shows that (3.86 %) of the teachers suggest that L1 can always be used in these situations, whereas (35.85 %) of them suggest that L1 can sometimes be used in these situations.

Eighth, the comparison between students who use and do not use LI in class shows that there is no statistically significant difference between them in terms of achievement in English grammar. On the other hand, Stapa and Abdul Majid (2006) argue that the use of the first language helps students to generate ideas before writing in the second language and "they recommend the use of L1 for L2 writing as it can trigger background knowledge among the learners" (Stapa and Abdul Majid, 2006, 11). This leads us to the conclusion that we are in need of experimental studies to identify in which language skill the use of L1 is most effective.

Finally, the use of L1 in the EFL classroom has benefits and drawbacks. Whether to use or not to use L1 in the EFL classroom has been hotly debated, and since this debate seems to be endless, it is a good idea for teachers "to search for an ideal level of L1 use in each individual class – maybe changing its use as the class progresses in level or changes in other ways." (Case, 2008).

Furthermore, L1 can be used as an effective teaching aid in the EFL
classroom. L1 should be used when needed and it should not be overused. We can use it with beginners or with students who are very weak in English. Also, we can use L1 to give instructions, to explain an activity or to give feedback to students about their performance. But we have to keep in mind that our main objective is to teach the target language; therefore we should maximize the use of L2 in the EFL classroom as much as we can. This can be achieved by using simple L2 and if students can express themselves in English, they should not use L1. In addition, as the course progresses, the amount of L1 use should decrease.

References:


Dear Student,

The attached questionnaire has a number of questions related to your opinion regarding the use of L1 (Arabic) in learning L2 (English). Please read the questions carefully before you write down your answers.

Thanks

I- Personal Information:
- Name (optional): ..............................................................
- College: ..............................................................

II- General Information about the Use of L1
1- How often do you use Arabic in your English classroom?
   - Always
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Never

2- Do you think it is useful to use Arabic in the English classroom?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

3- Do you think it is preferable that teachers of English should know the learner's mother tongue?
   - Yes ☐
   - No ☐

III- Purposes of Using L1 by Students
4- For what purposes do students use Arabic in English classroom? You can give more than one answer. Please rate them on the basis of their frequency, where A=always, S= sometimes, R= rarely, and N= never.
IV- Advantages of Using L1

5- In your opinion, what are the advantages of using L1 in learning English? Read the following statements and put (✓) mark next each statement in the column that expresses your opinion. Where SA= strongly agree, A= agree, NS = not sure, and D = disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The use of L1 gives input to students with more clarity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The use of L1 facilitates learning for our students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The use of L1 leaves a good impression about the effectiveness of the teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The use of L1 allows students to relate what they already know to the learning of L2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. I benefit from using L1 in learning English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. The use of L1 facilitates communication and interaction between teacher and students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. The use of L1 helps teachers to use time effectively.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. The use of L1 increases student's motivation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. The use of L1 increases student's confidence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. The use of L1 decreases student's anxiety.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V- Disadvantages of Using L1

6- In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using L1 in learning English? Read the following statements and put (✓) mark next each statement in the column that expresses your opinion. Where SA= strongly agree, A= agree, NS = not sure, and D = disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The use of L1 brings in a dependence on L1 among students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The use of L1 brings in L1 interference to L2 use.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The use of L1 minimizes the use and exposure to L2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. I do not benefit from using L1 in learning English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. The use of L1 impedes the acquisition of L2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. The use of L1 decreases communication and interaction between teacher and students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. The use of L1 wastes the time of students and teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. The use of L1 decreases student's motivation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. The use of L1 decreases student's confidence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix (2)

Dear Colleague,

The attached questionnaire has a number of questions related to your opinion regarding the use of L1 (Arabic) in learning L2 (English). Please read these questions carefully before you write down your answers, and keep in mind that the results of this questionnaire will be used only for research purposes.

Thank you for your cooperation

I-Personal Information:
- Name (optional): ..............................................................
- Qualifications: .............................................................

- Experience in Teaching:
  1- 5 years
  6-10 years
  More than 10 years

II- General Information about the Use of L1

1- Are you a native speaker of Arabic?
   Yes      No
   - If your answer is "no", please go to question (3).

2- How often do you use Arabic in your English classroom?

   Always
   Sometimes
   Rarely
   Never

3- Do you think it is useful to use Arabic in the English classroom?
   Yes      No
4- Do you think it is preferable that teachers of English should know the learner's mother tongue?

Yes   ○       No       ○

III- Situations Where L1 is Used

5- In what situations do you use or do you suggest the use of Arabic in the English classroom? You can give more than one answer. Please rate them on the basis of their frequencies, where A=always, S= sometimes, R= rarely, and N= never.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. For explaining difficult words and phrases.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. For explaining ideas and concepts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. For exemplification.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. For further elaborations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. For wit and humor in the classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. For responding to every question asked by students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. For giving feedback to students about their performances.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV- Purposes of Using L1 by Students

6- For what purposes do students use Arabic in the English classroom? You can give more than one answer. Please rate them on the basis of their frequency, where A=always, S= sometimes, R= rarely, and N= never.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. For making every casual query to fellow-students and teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. For some special/difficult query to the teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. For discussing an activity with his partner in the group.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### V- Advantages of Using L1

7- In your opinion, what are the advantages of using L1 in learning English? Read the following statements and put (✓) mark next to each statement in the column that expresses your opinion. Where SA= strongly agree, A= agree, NS = not sure, and D = disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The use of L1 gives input to students with more clarity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The use of L1 facilitates learning for our students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The use of L1 leaves a good impression about the effectiveness of the teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The use of L1 allows students to relate what they already know to the learning of L2.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Most students benefit from using L1 in learning English.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. The use of L1 serves to validate different learning preferences and styles.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>g. The use of L1 facilitates communication and interaction between teacher and students.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>h. The use of L1 helps teachers to use time effectively.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>i. The use of L1 increases students' motivation.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>j. The use of L1 increases students' confidence.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. The use of L1 decreases students' anxiety.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI- Disadvantages of Using L1

8- In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of using L1 in learning English? Read the following statements and put (√) mark next to each statement in the column that expresses your opinion. Where SA= strongly agree, A= agree, NS = not sure, and D = disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>NS</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The use of L1 brings in a dependence on L1 among students.</td>
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<td>b. The use of L1 brings in L1 interference to L2 use.</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. The use of L1 minimizes the use and exposure to L2.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Most students do not benefit from using L1 in learning English.</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. The use of L1 impedes the acquisition of L2.</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. The use of L1 decreases communication and interaction between teacher and students.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>g. The use of L1 wastes the time of students and teachers.</td>
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<td>h. The use of L1 decreases students' motivation.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. The use of L1 decreases students' confidence.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Abstract:

The objective of this study was to examine the role of interference, prominence and the theory of distinctive features in detecting mis-pronunciations of consonants and their drawbacks at the lexical level. Female Arab learners of English incorrectly pronounced certain consonants; the errors led not only to defects in spelling but also to meanings of words. The results illustrated that a number of consonants constituted areas of difficulty. The sources of those errors were either intralingual or interlingual. The consonants pronounced incorrectly by the maximum number of learners were regarded the most prominent of all; however, the consonants pronounced wrongly by the least number of learners were counted as the least prominent and so on. The results also illustrated that any change in the correct pronunciation of any consonant meant a change of its distinctive features which led to an error in spelling and meaning of the word.

Keywords:

interference, prominence, distinctive features, consonants, errors, learners.
دور فرضيات التدخل والتفوق، ونظرية السمات المميزة في كشف أخطاء نطق الصوامات: دراسة حالة متعلقات لغة الإنجليزية

ملخص

استهدفت هذه الدراسة تفحص دور فرضية التدخل والتفوق ونظرية السمات المميزة في اكتشاف الأخطاء الصوامات وسلبياتها في اللغة الإنجليزية على مستوى الكلمة. اتضح أن هناك مجموعة من الطالبات العرب اقترنن أخطاء في نطق بعض صوامات اللغة الإنجليزية والذي أدى ليس فقط إلى إفساد نطق الكلمات وإنما أيضا معانيها. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن بعض الصوامات الثلاثي نطقها خطاً تخصص فيها هذه الدراسة وبين الباحث أن مصادر تلك الأخطاء إما بسبب تأثير اللغة الأم على تعلم اللغة الأجنبية أو بسبب عدم معرفة الطالبات بأصوات اللغة الأجنبية. كما اعتبر الباحث أن الصوت الصامت الذي نطق خطأ من قبل العدد الأكبر من الطالبات هو الأقل تفوقاً والذي نطق خطأ من قبل العدد القليل من الطالبات هو الأكثر تفوقاً. أي أن هناك أصوات تتفوق على أخرى بسبب عامل تكرار الخطأ. وكما أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أيضاً أن أي تغير في نطق الصامات الصحيح يعني تغييراً في سينه المميزة وهذا يقود بالتالي إلى أخطاء في نطق ومعاني الكلمات المستعملة.

مفتاح الكلمات:

تدخل، تفوق، سمات مميزة، صوامات، أخطاء، متعلقات.
Introduction

Phonology and phonetics are two homogeneous rivers that pour in to one side of the sea. In other words, if phonology is concerned with the abstract segments, phonetics is concerned with the actual physical articulation of such segments. A number of studies have been made in phonology in this regard with the purpose of making use of the concepts and analytical techniques of the matter to explain various facts about the articulation of segments of all languages all over the world. Thus, one might call phonetics as “applied phonology” (c.f. Rouch, 2000, p. 128). To study the physical attributes of segments, phoneticians proposed various distinctive features in an attempt to identify phonemes in the proper manner. This kind of research raises a number of difficulties and interesting theoretical problems in both phonology and phonetics in theoretical linguistics.

In the theoretical literature, the theory of distinctive features was propagated by Jakobson et al (1951) and Jakobson and Halle (1956) in which a number of phonetic parallels were properly discussed on an acoustic background; thus, they proposed the cavity features of (i) gravity, (ii) compactness and (iii) diffuseness to describe the primary strictures of all segments.

McCawley (1967) created a phonological mechanism called “a feature-interpretation component” in which the feature “flat” was used to explain any segment which was a part of any description. There would be different components for any language that utilized the opposition of “flatness”.

Chomsky and Halle (1968) argued that the phonetic analysis was carried out from a generative perspective, which radically modified interpretations of phonetic features. The phoneticians’ task is not only to identify and classify the elements in a given corpus but also to devise a system of rules that explain the phonetic changes that might take place. They argued that the phonological components explicated the relationship between the surface of a sentence and the patterns of speech sounds organized in a syntagmatic relation in a language. The systematic use of sound segments encodes meaning in any spoken human language in a physical manner. It describes
the way sounds function within a given language or across languages to encode meaning. The abstract unit in phonology is called a phoneme which is defined as the smallest sound that indicates differences in meaning. The various pronunciations of a phoneme are called the allophones of the same phoneme. The articulated allophones are either in free variation or in complementary distribution. They are in free variation if the choice between the different allophones is based on the speakers’ choice; whereas, allophones are in complementary distribution because where one stop consonant occurs, the other does not. A phoneme is also defined as a bundle of features in the process of articulation. It may lose, gain or change some of its primary or secondary original features in this process.

Schane (1973) followed the generative approach and argued that no two segments may have identical specifications for all features. Minimally, two different segments must be opposed in value for at least one feature. He mentioned a number of distinctive features for consonants such as, consonantal, sonorant, continuant, delayed release, strident, nasal, lateral, anterior and coronal.

Lass (1985) mentioned that the Jacobson’s approach was based on a relatively small set of distinctive features utilized by all languages. The features were primarily acoustic rather than articulatory. Thus, any phoneme was discussed in terms of binary oppositions, where each segment was specified by ‘plus’ or ‘minus’ for a given feature.

Clark and Yallop (1995) illustrated that distinctive features were essential to discuss segments of any language. As there were no two languages having the same shape of phonemes, the features were language specific. They proposed the features of consonantal/non-consonantal, compact/diffuse, tense/lax, voiced/voiceless, nasal/oral, discontinuous/continuant, strident/mellow, checked/unchecked, grave/cute, flat/plain and sharp/plain for all segments.

Rouch (2000) realized that the notion of distinctive features was given a lot of attention in his time. Therefore, phonemes were studied by a combination of different features. For example, the plosive [b] is different from [d] and [g] in place of articulation; however, the plosive [t] is different from [s], [z] and [n] in manner of articulation.

In the empirical relevant literature, Kharma and Hajjaj (1989) discovered that Arab learners were unable to differentiate between the consonants [tʃ] and [ʃ] in ‘chair’ and ‘share’, [v] and [f] in ‘fast’ and ‘vast’, [p] and [b] in ‘pin’ and ‘bin’.
Altaha (1995) applied a study to a sample of Saudi students who started learning English at the age of (13). He found that the participants had problems in articulating the consonants that occur in pairs such as in [v] and [f] in ‘van’ and ‘fan’ and [p] and [b] in ‘pat’, ‘bat’ and [f] and [v] in ‘chair’ and ‘share’.

Tushyeh (1996) found in his study that the Arab participants could not differentiate between [p] and [b] and [f] and [v] in minimal pair constructions.

Barros (2003) found that Arab learners faced difficulty in articulating the consonants [ŋ], [p], [v], [d], [l], [ɾ], [ʃ] and [r] whenever they occurred at the word level.

Binturki (2008) realized that the consonants [p], [v] and the alveolar approximate [ʃ] were difficult to be articulated by Saudi students.

Al- Saidat (2010) tried to analyze the English phonotactics of syllables in an attempt to find out the types of pronunciation difficulties made by a few Arab learners. Relevant to this study, we found that in the insertion of the vowel /I/ in the onset; thus, the Arab learners pronounced the words ‘splash’, and ‘spleen’ as [slblæʃ] and [slblIn] respectively; however, in the same environment in the coda position, the learners pronounced the word ‘asked’ as [a:skid]. Thus, /p/ and /t/ were problematic areas for the Arab learners.

In short, the above and other relevant theoretical views in this study will be referred to in an attempt to find other areas of difficulties that the sample of this study might encounter.

The Statement of the Problem

A change in the correct articulation of any English consonant damages not only the spelling but also the meaning of the lexical item due to a change in its distinctive features. Another aspect of the problem is that it is difficult to trace the source of errors whether they are intralingual or interlingual.

The Objectives and Questions of the Study

The objective of this study was to find which consonants constituted areas of difficulties for the Arab learners. It was an attempt to find the consonants that were more prominent than others and to trace their sources of difficulties. Also, we had to make use of the theory of distinctive features to account for the change of both spellings and meanings of words in which the errors took place. Therefore, the following questions were posited:
1- How could the researcher distinguish between prominent consonants that were made errors from those which were less prominent?

2- What was the source of error that enforce the participants to commit an error?

3- How did Chomsky and Halle’s (1968) theory of distinctive features account for the changes of spellings and meanings of the words in which the error occurred?

The Significance of the Study

The researcher intended to show the significance of the assumptions of interference and prominence and the theory of distinctive features in detecting consonants that form areas of difficulties for the Arab learners who study English as a foreign language in the southern part of Jordan. This study will shed the light on the change of meaning of words that succumb to the process of wrong articulation of consonants. The theory of distinctive features confirms that if a consonant is wrongly pronounced by learners, it is meant that there has to be a change in its original features. Therefore, each English learner has to be taught in advance features of segments in order to avoid committing errors.

The Methodology

The methods used were both instrumental and theoretical in this study.

The instrument

This study took place in the academic year 2007/2008. The researcher recorded the students’ readings on a computer which was equipped with a microphone and software for recording (Cowon Jet Audio). The process took place in a classroom environment with an invigilator.

The sample of the study

The study sample was randomly selected and consisted of 20 female students who were studying English at grade 9 at Taybeh Secondary School, Ma’an governate in Jordan. The participants’ names are listed in appendix (I).

Data collection

The participants were asked to read a list of lexical items to serve the purpose of the study. The words were written phonetically by using Roach’s (2000, p. ix-x) RP symbols in the target performance. The words used in this study are included in appendix (II).
Discussions and Results

Prominence, Interference and Statistical Analysis of Consonants

In order to understand the analysis of this section, the researcher tried to provide certain theoretical views that are very essential to give a full statistical description as well as to find the reasons behind the discrepancies between the consonants that were formed incorrectly. Thus, interlanguage and intralanguage were two significant terms that helped us to trace the source of errors since we dealt in this study with learners who learn English as a foreign language. There was enough evidence from many different grammarians devoted to studying cross-linguistic language influence to believe that there should be a distinction between the influence it has on learning different notions of the same language and the influence if has on the learning of a new language (as English in this study). The former was referred to as intralanguage influence, since the influence takes place within the same language itself; whereas the latter was called interlanguage influence, since it referred to the influence that one language had on another one. It was evident that this study paid full attention to the wrong articulation of consonants of English that took place in the learning process. Richard (1971 and 1997) argued that there could be an influence of the mother tongue on the learner’s language. The types of errors that happened in this environment were referred to as intralingual. Selinker (1972) and Calvo (2006) also suggested that interlingual errors show the influence of one language on another; however, intralingual errors were those that took place within the same language itself, i.e., either due to unawareness of the target language rules, or due to the influence of mother tongue on the learning process of a new language. To illustrate the significance of frequency of errors, the researcher also refers to the assumption of “prominence”. This assumption was made by a number of phoneticians to build up analyses on the observable properties of the flow of speech. This assumption illustrates that the major peak of prominence is represented by the nucleus of a syllable and that this nucleus is normally a vowel or a vowel like segment. Consonants will generally occur as the margins to the peaks i.e. they occur either as onsets or codas (c.f. Clark and Yallop, 1995, p. 60-61). The prominence assumption was not used in the same literal sense, i.e., to show which vowel was more prominent than the other in the same word; however, it was used to showing which consonant was more prominent than others in terms of the higher frequency it scored. Thus, we said that if a consonant scored 80% and another one scored 75%, the former was more prominent than the latter because of the number of participants who made errors with it was more than those participants who made
The Role of Interference, Prominence and Theory of Distinctive Features in Detecting

the latter. This section was restricted to discuss data that were relevant to answer question number 1: How did the researcher distinguish between prominent consonants that were made errors from those which were less prominent? And question number 2: What was the source of error that enforce the participants to commit an error? Table 1 below contains the segments that succumbed to change, the number of participants’ incorrect performances and their percentages, the number of participants’ correct performances utterances and their percentages, the learners’ actual RP performances, target RP performances and the correct spelling.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>No. of participants’ incorrect performances and percentage</th>
<th>No. of participants’ correct performances and percentage</th>
<th>Participants’ performances RP</th>
<th>Target RP</th>
<th>spelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>/ŋ/ - /g/</td>
<td>20, (100%)</td>
<td>0, (0%)</td>
<td>[faːmɪŋ], [bɪŋ], [slnɡəɾ], [klɪŋ]</td>
<td>[faːm ɪŋ], [bɪːŋ], [sɪŋə], [klɪŋ]</td>
<td>farming, being, singer, killing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>/θ / -/ð/</td>
<td>1, (5%)</td>
<td>19, (95%)</td>
<td>[taʊzəndz]</td>
<td>[θaʊzəndz]</td>
<td>thousands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>/s/- /k/</td>
<td>4, (20%)</td>
<td>16, (80%)</td>
<td>[brodʒju:klɪd]</td>
<td>[brɒdʒju:st]</td>
<td>produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>/ð/ - /d/</td>
<td>2, (10%)</td>
<td>18, (90%)</td>
<td>[səʊldə]</td>
<td>[səʊldə]</td>
<td>soldier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>/ð/ - /ɡ/</td>
<td>1, (5%)</td>
<td>19, (95%)</td>
<td>[laːɡ]</td>
<td>[laː ð]</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>/p/ - /b/</td>
<td>20, (100%)</td>
<td>0, (0%)</td>
<td>[dlvləblɪd], [bɪː bol], [bɛl]</td>
<td>[dlvləpt], [piːpl], [pɛl]</td>
<td>developed, people, play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>/t/- /d/</td>
<td>20, (100%)</td>
<td>0, (0%)</td>
<td>[brodʒju:slɪd], [stəblɪd]</td>
<td>[prɒdʒju:st], [stɒpt]</td>
<td>produced, stopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>/s/- /z/</td>
<td>6, (30%)</td>
<td>14, (70%)</td>
<td>[gruːbz]</td>
<td>[gruːpz]</td>
<td>groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>/v/- /f/</td>
<td>20, (100%)</td>
<td>0, (0%)</td>
<td>[ɔf]</td>
<td>[pɪv]</td>
<td>of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>/ð/- /θ/</td>
<td>20, (100%)</td>
<td>0, (0%)</td>
<td>[bɛlθ]</td>
<td>[bɛlə]</td>
<td>bathe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>/z/- /ʃ/</td>
<td>4, (20%)</td>
<td>16, (80%)</td>
<td>[dlslɛʃn], [bleʃə],</td>
<td>[dlsl ɛʃ], [bleʃə],</td>
<td>decision, pleasure,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>/ʃ/- /ʃ/</td>
<td>8, (40%)</td>
<td>12, (60%)</td>
<td>[sæʃ], [riːtʃ]</td>
<td>[sæʃ], [riːʃ]</td>
<td>such, reach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The table above illustrates that the velar nasal /ŋ/, in (1), was wrongly pronounced /g/ when it occurred at the coda position of the word ‘farming’ [fa:mɪŋ]. It was evident that the coda structure /ng/ is impermissible in English. It permits two sorts of consonant final clusters, one being a final consonant preceded by a pre-final consonant and the other a final consonant followed by a post-final one; the pre-final consonants form a small set: [m], [n], [l] and [s] as in ‘bump’ [b mp], ‘bent’ [bent], ‘bank’ [bæŋk], ‘belt’ [belt] and ‘ask’ [a:sk]. The post final consonants form a small set: [s], [z], [t], [d] and [θ] as in the examples ‘bets’ [bets], ‘beds’ [bedz], backed [bækt], ‘bagged’ [bægd] and eighth [eθθ] (c.f. Rouch, 2000, p. 73). Thus, the cluster /ng/ was not included in the lists provided. This intralingual error occurred because the learners were unaware of the English phonotactics rules; in other words, if /n/ and /g/ occurred next to each other, they has to be pronounced as /ŋ/ and [n] and k] as /ŋk/ (c.f. Richard, 1971, 1997 and Calvo, 2005, p. 239). It was clear that 20 participants pronounced /ŋ/ incorrectly and scored the frequency of (100%). This segment was found to be difficult to pronounce in Barros (2003). In (2), the fricative /θ/ was wrongly pronounced /t/ when it occurred in the onset of the word ‘thousands’ [ta zændz]; the error happened due to intralingual reasons because the learner was unaware of the phonotactics of [t] and [h] and was supposed to be pronounced /θ/ in English. It seemed that the students had a weak background of similar phonotactics such as /ch/ and /sh/ in English. Therefore, one learner scored (5%) whereas 19 participants pronounced it correctly and scored 95%. The occurrence of this kind of error was not found in the given relevant literature. In (3), the fricative /s/ was incorrectly pronounced /k/ in the word ‘produced’ [brodju:kId]; if the past morpheme occurred, the final coda set could be [st], [kt] and [pt] but not [kd] …etc. (c.f. Rouch, 2000, p. 75). (4) participants articulated it wrongly and scored 20% while (16) participants pronounced it correctly and scored 80%. The occurrence of this error was not also found in the relevant literature. The palato-alveolar affricate /ʤ/, in (4), was wrongly pronounced /d/ in the word ‘soldier’ [səldə]; the error happened because the learners were unaware of the phonotactics of /die/ which was supposed to be pronounced /ʤ/ instead of [d]. (2) participants pronounced /ʤ/ incorrectly and scored 10%; however, 18 participants pronounced it correctly and scored the percentage of (90%). This error proved to be an area of difficulty for the Arab learners of English in Barros (2003). However, the same phoneme /ʤ/, in (5), was pronounced /g/ in the word ‘large’ [la:ɡ] whenever this sound occurred in the coda set. The error happened because the learner was unable to realize that the
phonemic structure /ge/ must be pronounced /ʤ/ in English. The reason behind committing this error was intralingual since the learner was unaware of the internal English phonological rules. Only 1 participant committed this error and scored 5%; whereas, 19 participants pronounced it correctly and scored 95%. This type of error was found in Barros’s (2003) work. The plosive /p/, in (6), constituted a drastic problem in the process of articulation for all the participants in this study. It was clear that 20 learners committed that error and pronounced /p/ as /b/ in the words ‘developed’ [dIvIlobId], ‘people’ [bi:bol] and ‘play’ [bleI] at the lexical level. The source of the error was interlingual because the learners’ mother tongue (Arabic) does not have this particular phoneme and instead it has /b/. Thus, every /p/ for them is /b/ wherever it occurred in a word. All the participants committed that error and scored 100%. That error was explicated by different scholars in the literature, namely, Kharma and Hajjaj (1989), Altaha (1995), Tushyeh (1996), Barros (2003) and Binturki (2008). In (7), the plosive /t/ became /d/ in the coda position of the word ‘produced’ [брдju:Id]. It was evident that /t/ constituted a real problem to all participants who scored 100% of difficulty. The error happened because of intralingual reasons; the learners were unaware of the fact that if a voiceless fricative /s/ is followed by the past morpheme /ed/, the morphophoneme had to be pronounced /t/ but not /d/. Another reason of difficulty was that the learners did not realize that English consonants may assimilate each other. The former segment /s/ devoiced the latter /d/ in a partial progressive assimilation (c.f. Clark and Yallop, 1995, p. 88-90 and Schane, 1973, p. 68). That error was not found in the relevant literature. The fricative /s/, in (8), was wrongly pronounced /z/ in the final position of the word ‘groups’ [gru:bz]; if one pre final coda consonant was [b], then the plural morpheme had to be pronounced [z]. However, the error took place due to intralingual reasons; the learners could not make out if a voiceless bilabial stop [p] was followed by the plural morpheme /s/ had to be pronounced /s/ but not /z/ in that position. It was clear that 6 participants pronounced it wrongly and scored the percentage of 30%; however, 14 participants pronounced it correctly and scored 70%. That error was not also found in the relevant literature. The fricative /v/, in (9), was wrongly pronounced /f/ in the final position of the word ‘of’ [оф]. The source of error was interlingual because the learners’ mother tongue (Arabic) does not involve this kind of phoneme /v/ in its phonological system. Thus, every /v/ was pronounced /f/ anywhere. All 20 participants committed this error and scored 100%. That kind of error had already been discussed by Kharma and Hajjaj (1989), Altaha (1995), Tushyeh (1996), Barros (2003) and Binturki (2008) whenever it occurred either in minimal
pairs or at the lexical level. In (10), the fricative /ð/ was wrongly pronounced /z/ in the final position of the word ‘bathe’ [belθ]; the error was purely intralingual due to lack of awareness of the English syntactic rules. The word ‘bathe’ was a verb and /the/ was supposed to be said /ð/; however, if the noun ‘bath’ was used, /th/ had to be pronounced /Θ/. The specimen showed that all the participants, i.e., 20 pronounced it wrongly and scored 100%. That error was also highlighted by Barros (2003). The fricative /ŋ/, in (11), was wrongly pronounced /ʃ/ in the medial position of the words ‘decision’ [dlsɪvɪn] and ‘pleasure’ [pleɪsə]. There was no doubt that the source of error was intralingual since the learners could not realize that the phonotactics /sion/ had to be pronounced /z/ but not /ʃ/. (4) participants pronounced it incorrectly and scored 20% in contrast with 16 participants who spoke it wrongly and scored (80%). The error was not discussed in the relevant literature. In (12), the fricative /ʃ/ was pronounced /ʃ/ in the final position of the words ‘such’ [sʌʃ] and ‘reach’ [riʃ]; we confirmed that the source of that error was also intralingual because the participants were unable to see that the phonotactics /ch/ had to be pronounced /ʃ/ but not /ʃ/. 8 participants committed this error and scored 40%; however, 12 participants pronounced it incorrectly and scored 60%. The error was explicated by Kharma and Hajjaj (1989) and Altaha (1995) in the relevant literature.

In short, the consonants that scored the highest percentages in being an area of difficulty were regarded the most prominent consonants and those that scored less were regarded less prominent and so forth. For instance, the most prominent consonants in which errors occurred were /ŋ/ in (1), /p/ in (6), /v/ in (7), /v/ in (9) and /ð/ in (10). The consonant /ʃ/ in (12) was more prominent than the consonant /s/ in (8). Also, the consonant /θ/ in (4) was less prominent than /s/ in (3) and /z/ in (11). In conclusion, the consonants /θ/ in (2) and /ð/ in (5) were the least prominent. The difficulty of articulation was due to intralingual interference in (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12); however, (3, 4 and 5) took place due to interlingual reasons. Certain consonants constituted areas of difficulty and became common to the Arab learners as in (1), (4), (5), (6), (9) (10) and (12). The rest of consonants which were liable to be mispronounced and were not discussed in the relevant literature were (2, 3, 7, 8 and 11). In other words, as the Arab learners have weak background in English, almost every consonant was likely to be pronounced incorrectly.
Distinctive Features: Spelling and Meaning

Chomsky and Halle (1968) proposed that the articulated phonemes could be described in terms of features. The presence of a feature is marked by a plus sign [+] whereas the absence of a feature is marked by a minus sign [−]; these signs are placed on the left side of the feature; for example, the phoneme [n] has the phonetic feature of [+ nasal, + continuant, + anterior, + coronal, - vocalic] while [p] has the phonetic features of [- nasal, - continuant, + anterior, - coronal - voiced]. Features are defined on the basis of articulatory terms but not on acoustic basis as it was propagated by Jakobson et al (1951). The consonantal phonetic problems will be analyzed with reference to the theory of distinctive features that has (1) major class features, (2) cavity features, (3) manner of articulation features and (iv) source features (1968, p. 293-329). Major class features have the fundamental features of consonantal vs non-consonantal. The former is used to produce sounds with a major constriction at some point along the vocal tract. They involve liquid, nasal and non-nasal; however, the latter is used to highlight sounds without such a constriction; they include all vowels. In this type, there are the features of sonorant vs non-sonorant in which the former is used to describe sounds that allow spontaneous voicing; they involve glides, liquids and nasals whereas the latter feature is used to define sounds without spontaneous voicing; they are represented by fricative and affricate consonants. Cavity features are represented by coronal vs non-coronal. The former feature is used to describe sounds produced with the blade of the tongue raised from its neutral position. They involve dental, alveolar, palato-alveolar consonants; however, the latter feature is used to describe the sounds articulated with lips or with the body of the tongue in the neutral position. They are glide and uvula sounds. Secondly, cavity features involve the features of anterior vs non-anterior; the former is used to describe sounds that are produced with an obstruction located in front of the palato-alveolar region of the mouth. They include labial, dental and alveolar segments; however, the latter feature is used to describe sounds without such an obstruction. They are represented by palato-alveolar, retroflex, palatal, velar, uvular and pharyngeal sounds. Thirdly, this group involves the features of nasal vs non-nasal in which the former is used to describe sounds that are released through the nasal cavity while the latter is used to describe sounds that go through the oral cavity. Finally, this group has the features of lateral vs non-lateral in which the former is used to describe sounds that allow the air to flow from both sides of the tongue whereas the latter feature is made to describe the sounds that do not have this quality. Manner of articulation features are used to describe consonants.
with regard to the quality of air flow. Firstly, they have the features of continuant vs non-continuant in which the former is used to describe sounds that do not have constrictions in the vocal tract and the air can go out. This category includes nasal, liquid, glide and fricative sounds; however, the latter feature is used to describe sounds that have constrictions in the same area in which the air is blocked. It involves stop and affricate segments. Secondly, this group has the features of instantaneous release vs delayed release. The former feature is used to produce sounds with a complete closure of the tract but with short release; they engulf plosives; however, the latter feature is used to produce sounds with a complete closure of the tract but with delayed release; they involve affricate. The two features then are combined to describe the respective consonant classes. Stops are characterized as [+ instantaneous - delayed release] while affricates are [-continuant; + delayed release]. Source features include (i) voiced vs non-voiced; it is a fundamental feature characteristic of sounds in any language since it operates on the status of the glottis. If the glottis is open, there is a spontaneous vibration; however, if the glottis is a part, there is no voicing. (ii) strident vs non-strident features are used to describe the acoustic feature of a sound. Obstruent continuants are strident while affricates are not. In short, the researcher referred to the above theoretical views to account for the consonants that were difficult to be pronounced correctly by the learners of English in this study. It was important to notice that the results were confined to the sample, data, place and time of this study. In other words, the researcher cannot generalize them to be universal.

Relevant to the question of spelling and meaning, it was noticed that there were certain phonotactics constraints with regard to the rhyme (coda) that was violated by the learners in this study. Theoretically, in many accents of English /r/ does not occur as in ‘farm’ [fa:m] and ‘car’ [ka:]. Such accents that lack /r/ in rhymes were called non-rhotic accent; they included Australian English, New Zealand, RP, South African English, most of the accents of the North of England and the Southern and Eastern accents of the United States. However, rhotic accents including General American English (GA), the accents spoken in Scotland and some accents spoken in South West of England do not lack /r/ to be covert (c.f. Carr, 1999). Such views would be referred to in our analysis in an attempt to provide enough evidence to all possibilities of spelling and meaning of words in English. The analysis provided an answer to question number 3 which said: How did Chomsky and Halle (1968) theory of distinctive features account for the change of spelling and meaning of a word? Each segment was discussed with reference to a change of features before and after being used by the participants.
In (1), the velar nasal [ŋ] was incorrectly pronounced [g] in the words ‘farming’ [faːmlŋ], ‘being’ [blŋ], ‘singer’ [slŋgər] and ‘killing’ [klıllŋ]. The velum was raised up to block the airstream from going through the nasal cavity so that [g] was produced. The segment [ŋ] had the features of [+nasal, +sonorant, + continuant] while [g] had the features of [-continuant, -sonorant, - coronal, - anterior]; the given words were incorrect insofar as the spelling and meaning were concerned. In other words, neither Standard English nor rhotic and non-rhotic accents accept such words in English insofar as the pronunciation of [g] was concerned. In (2), the fricative [θ] was incorrectly pronounced [t] in the word ‘thousands’ [taʊzʊndz]. The former had the features of [+coronal, +anterior, -voice, +continuant]; however, the latter had the features of [+coronal, +anterior, -voice, -continuant]. As far as the spelling and the meaning of the word were concerned, it was obvious that the spelling was wrong because the phonotactics /th/ was supposed to be pronounced [θ] but not [t]. With regard to the meaning of the word [taʊzʊndz], it had no meaning either as per the two given accents or the Standard English. Likewise, the fricative [s], in (3), was wrongly pronounced [k] in the word ‘produced’ [brʊdju:kId]. The segment [s] was having the features of [+coronal, +anterior, -voice, +continuant] while [k] had the features of [-coronal, -anterior, -voice, -continuant]. The word ‘produced’ [brʊdju:kId] had lost both its meaning and spelling as well; this was due to the fact that there was no word that might allow the phonemes /b/ and /k/ to occur in such positions in English and its accents. In (4), the affricate [ʤ] was incorrectly pronounced [d] in the word ‘soldier’ [səʊldə]; thus, [ʤ] had the features [+delayed release, +coronal, -anterior]; however, [d] got the feature of [-delayed release, +coronal, +anterior]. Although the phoneme /r/ was changed to the schwa [ə] in the word ‘soldier’ [səʊldə] as in (Rouch, 2000, p. 115-117); still, the native speaker cannot make out the spelling and the meaning of the word ‘soldier’; this was because [ʤ] could never be replaced by [d] in that position. In (5), [ʤ] was incorrectly pronounced [g] in the word ‘large’ [laːɡ]. The former had the features of [+delayed release, +coronal, -anterior] whereas the latter got the features of [-delayed release, -coronal, -anterior]. Though it is possible in non-rhotic accent to omit /r/, the word [laːɡ] is still incorrect insofar as the spelling and meaning were concerned. This was because the vowel /e/ that occurred after /g/ could not be omitted in that environment. In (6), the stop [p] was wrongly pronounced [b] in the words ‘developed’ [dɪvIlʊbId], ‘people’ [bi:bʊl] and ‘play’ [bleɪ]. The segment /p/ was having
the features of [+anterior, -coronal, -nasal, -voiced]; however, /b/, got the features of [+anterior, -coronal, -nasal, +voiced]. The words ‘developed’ [dɪvləblɪd], ‘people’ [bi:blɪ] and ‘play’ [bleɪ] were incorrect in both spelling and meaning. It was due to the fact that /p/ and /b/ are two different phonemes and constitute minimal pairs in English. In other words, they can never occur in a free variation environment. In (7), the stop [t] was wrongly changed into [d] in the words ‘produced’ [brədʒu:ld] and ‘stupid’ [stʊblɪ]. The segment [t] had the features of [ +anterior, +coronal, -voice, -continuant]; however, [d] got the features of [+anterior, +coronal, -voice, -continuant]. The words ‘produced’ [brədʒu:ld] and ‘stupid’ [stʊblɪ] were wrong not only in spellings but also in meanings in both Standard English and its accents. In (8), the fricative [s] was incorrectly pronounced [z] in the word ‘groups’ [gruːbz]; the former had the features of [+coronal, +anterior, -voice, +continuant] whereas the latter got the features of [+coronal, +anterior, +voice, +continuant]. The word ‘groups’ [gruːbz] had lost both spelling and meaning. This was due to the fact that the phonemes [t] and [d] are two different phonemes in Standard English as well as rhotic and non-rhotic accents. In (9), the fricative [v] was incorrectly pronounced [f] in the word ‘of’ [ɒf]. The segment [f] had the features of [-coronal, +anterior, +voice, +continuant] while [v] got the features of [-coronal, +anterior, -voice, +continuant]. The spelling of the word ‘of’ [ɒf] was wrong as per Standard English and other accents as well; this was because the phoneme [o] in ‘of’ has a weak form of stress in ‘most of all’ and written [əv]; however, if it occurs in a final position in ‘someone I’ve heard of”, it must be written [ʊv] (c.f. Rouch, 2000, p. 117). As far as the meaning of [ɒf] is concerned, a native speaker cannot figure out its meaning because it is contrasted with ‘off’ [ɒf] in English. In (10), the fricative [ð] was wrongly pronounced [θ] in the word ‘bathe’ [beθ]; the former had got the features of [+coronal, +anterior, +voice, +continuant] but the latter segment got the features of [-coronal, +anterior, -voice, +continuant]. The word ‘bathe’ [beθ] was wrong in spelling and meaning in Standard English, rhotic and non-rhotic accents. This was due to the fact that [θ] can occur with the verb form ‘bathe’; however, [ð] can occur with the noun form ‘bath’. Thus, the error was syntactically motivated in that example. In (11), the fricative [ʃ] was wrongly pronounced [ʃ] in the words ‘decision’ [dɪʃən] and ‘pleasure’ [pleʃə]; the features [+coronal, -anterior, +voice, +continuant] belonged to the former; whereas, the features [+coronal, -anterior, -voice, +continuant] belonged to the latter. Due to wrong articulation of the words ‘decision’ [dɪʃən] and ‘pleasure’ [pleʃə], they lost their spelling and meaning. They
cannot be correct English words neither in Standard English nor in its accents. It was obvious that [ʒ] and [ð] are two different phonemes and each one belongs to a different manner of articulation; they cannot be substituted in those environments of the words. In (12), the affricate [ʧʃ] was incorrectly changed to [ʃ] in the words ‘such’ [sʌʃ] and ‘reach’ [riːʃ]. The former segment had the features of [ +coronal, -anterior, +delayed release, -continuant] while the latter got the features of [ +coronal, -anterior, -delayed release, +continuant]. The words in question neither had correct spelling nor meaning in Standard English and its accents.

In short, the theory of distinctive features proposed by Chomsky and Halle (1968) was helpful in a number of ways. Any change in the correct articulation of any consonant meant a change in the quality of features in that consonant. The change damaged not only the spelling but also the meaning of the word as it was evident in (1-12). Thus, the features had one to one relation with the correct spelling of the consonants. Another advantage of the theory was that it accounted not only for the place of articulation but also for the manner of articulation. This meant that there was no chance for the participants to produce wrong articulations. We conclude that although distinctive features are naturally acquired by the native speakers of English, such faults may not happen to that extent; however, for English learners, they were very difficult but they can be taught at early stages to avoid such faults to happen in the future.

Conclusion

It was evident that the consonants that were pronounced wrongly and scored the highest percentages were regarded the most prominent ones as against those that scored less than them were regarded less prominent and so forth. For instance, the most prominent consonants which were difficult to be pronounced correctly were: /ŋ/ in (1), /p/ in (6), /t/ in (7), /v/ in (9) and /ð/ in (10). Thus, the consonant /ʃ/ in (12) was more prominent than the consonant /s/ in (8). Also, the consonant /dz/ in (4) is less prominent than /s/ in (3) and /ʒ/ in (11). The consonants /θ/ in (2) and /ðz/ in (5) were the least prominent of all the occurrences in this study. It was evident that the source of errors were: (i) intralingual reasons which were in numbers (1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12); however, the errors that were committed due to interlingual reasons were in numbers (3, 4 and 5). It was also evident that certain consonants were difficult to be pronounced for most of Arab learners as in (1), (4), (5), (6) (9) and(10); however, the rest of consonants which were difficult were for the sample of this study were (2), (3), (7), (8) and
The Role of Interference, Prominence and Theory of Distinctive Features in Detecting (11). In other words, as Arab learners have a weak background in English, every consonant is liable to be pronounced incorrectly. The theory of distinctive features proposed by Chomsky and Halle (1968) was helpful in a number of ways. Any change in the correct articulation of any correct consonant meant a change in the quality of its features as well. The change not only damaged the spelling but also the meaning of the word as it was evident in the words (1-12). Thus, the features had one to one relation with the correct spelling of the consonant. Another advantage of the theory was that it accounted not only for the place of articulation but also for the manner of articulation. That fact meant that there was no chance to be given to the participants to produce wrong articulation. We concluded that distinctive features are to be taught at early stages to avoid such faults to happen in the future.

To sum up; the assumptions of interference and prominence and the theory of distinctive features were fit to be applied to that kind of study in analyzing errors of foreign learners. Interference assumption highlighted the source of error while prominence assumption highlighted the consonant which was more prominent in terms of difficulty. However, the theory of distinctive features made the analysis of consonants very clearly in the sense that each single change in the articulation of a consonant regardless of its position caused a defect to both spelling and meaning of the word whether in Standard English or in its relevant accents (i.e. rhotic and non-rhotic accents). Thus, if the participants were aware of such features before hand, no such errors would have been committed. The study was valid because the features were universal and yielded very precise results in dealing with articulatory errors as well as their meanings.

References:
(Unpublished MA dissertation), South Illinois University, Carbondale, USA.


Appendix I

List of participants’ names of the sample.
1- Alaa’ Majid
2- Alaa’ Suleiman
3- Amani Khlaifat
4- Aseel Saidat
5- Aseel Yousef
6- Athari Sabbah
7- Duha Salem
8- Hadeel Mohammad
9- Haneen Atallah
10- Haya Khlaifat
11- Heba Saleh
12- Issra’ Ali
13- Jumana Abdullah
14- Maram Salah
15- Maymoona Mohammad
16- Reem Rawadyeh
17- Samah Ibrahim
18- Sanaa’ Khlaifat
19- Turfa Khaleel
20- Yasmeen Khaleel
## Appendix II

### List of words as Performed by the Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learners’ performances</th>
<th>Target performances (RP)</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[fa:rmIng]</td>
<td>[fa:mln]</td>
<td>farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[blIng]</td>
<td>[bi:ln]</td>
<td>being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[slngar]</td>
<td>[sl ɪ]</td>
<td>singer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[klIng]</td>
<td>[klɪn]</td>
<td>killing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[taəzəndz]</td>
<td>[θəəzəndz]</td>
<td>thousands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[brədju:kid]</td>
<td>[prədu:st]</td>
<td>produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[so:ldər]</td>
<td>[səʊldə]</td>
<td>soldier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[la:rg]</td>
<td>[laː ʤ]</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[dlvIləbd]</td>
<td>[dlveləpt]</td>
<td>developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[biːol]</td>
<td>[piːpl]</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brodju:sid]</td>
<td>[prədu:st]</td>
<td>produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>[stəpt]</td>
<td>stopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>[gruːs]</td>
<td>groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[blels]</td>
<td>[pleIslz]</td>
<td>places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[bəwər]</td>
<td>[pəʊə]</td>
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The Role of Interference, Prominence and Theory of Distinctive Features in Detecting

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