ETUDES

Language Interference in Learning Arabic as a Second Language (L2) Descriptive and Analytical Study.

AMRAOUI Fouad
Doctorant à la Faculté des Sciences de l’Éducation, Université Mohammed V- Rabat

Abstract

This study focuses on different types of language interference for learners of Arabic as a second language (L2); more specifically, the variations of semantic interference. We will investigate each type and its manifestations by providing various examples from Arabic and English. By describing and analyzing the interference errors found in the student’s writings, we will indicate the impacts of interference in the learning process.

Keywords: First Language, Second Language, Language Interference, Non-Native Arabic Speakers.

Résumé :

Cette étude centre l’intérêt sur les différents types d’interférences linguistiques chez les apprenants de l’arabe comme langue seconde (L2) ; plus précisément, les variations des interférences au niveau sémantique. Nous avons étudié chaque type de ces interférences et ses manifestations à travers l’analyse de divers exemples en arabe et en anglais. Nous avons décrit et analysé les erreurs d'interférence qui apparaissent dans les écrits des élèves tout en soulignant l’impact de ces interférences sur le processus d’apprentissage.

Mots-clés : langue maternelle – langue seconde, interférence linguistique, locuteurs d'arabe non natifs.

Introduction

Multi-language teaching and learning has received growing attention during the last four decades\(^1\) from various research fields such as linguistics, didactics and psychology in its branches (linguistic psychology, cognitive psychology, educational psychology, developmental psychology, etc.) as well as education sciences, sociology, neuroscience, and many others, the teaching and learning of Arabic as a second language is also of great interest throughout multidisciplinary research.

This interest can be monitored through three main points:

\(^1\) I mean after the emergence of the cognitive school in 1970 at the expense of behavioral school
First: The burgeoning interest among researchers from the aforementioned fields of study, including linguists, scholars of didactics and language didactics, psychologists, and sociologists, has resulted in an abundance of quantitative and qualitative studies and dissertations carried out in the field of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. This interest is also reflected in the numerous scientific meetings realized, such as seminars and conferences, and in innovative electronic programs for teaching Arabic, such programs aim to describe and define the perspectives of the language, as well as attempt to unify efforts to institutionalize and organize the works on teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. (1)

Second: The increasing numbers of foreign students from different nationalities and linguistic provenances, involved in programs interested in teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers according to their needs and for reasons related to worship, economy, politics, or scientific knowledge. This enthusiasm is in parallel to the interest in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers in Arab countries, as is the case of foreign countries which started focusing on teaching Arabic in educational institutions at different levels, whether to Arab communities living abroad (2) or to the citizens of those countries who do not speak Arabic.

Third: The training of teachers of Arabic as a second language (3) and the opening of programs in various universities and faculties in order to provide an adequate offer to the increasing demand of students who want to learn the Arabic language.

Therefore, this research is entitled: "Language Interference in Learning Arabic as a Second Language (L2), Descriptive and Analytical Study " came to light amidst the growing interest teaching and learning Arabic, to complement the exciting efforts being made in this context. My purpose is to illustrate types of linguistic interference, especially those that affect the denotative meaning or the ability to distinguish between what is produced by the influence of L1 and what is the result of their inability to speak Arabic at the appropriate level. Relying on analytical, descriptive comparisons between Arabic and English (and sometimes French) this phenomenon was documented by counting the number of errors made in the written production of this group of learners.

A. The Research Problem

The learner of Arabic as L2 faces difficulties in understanding vocabulary, expressions, and concepts, regarding both meaning and use. These difficulties might be due to "language interference". This typically occurs when learners transfer features of L1 in learning L2 or tend to over-generalize elements and rules in L2 itself and make erroneous measurements in his/her written or spoken production in the target language (L2).

---

B. Research Questions

Thus, what is the relationship between semantic interference and learning languages? How do these interferences manifest in teaching Arabic as a second language (L2)? Is the direction of interference from (L1) to (L2) only? Or can it happen within L2 itself? What are the strategies used by the non-Arabic speaking learner? Then, what is the relation between these strategies and the interferences? What is the role of the difference between the contexts and the dimensions of the expressions in the changing of meaning between Arabic and the first languages of the learner? How do we distinguish between lexical meaning and cultural or social meaning?

C. Research Hypotheses

The research proceeds from two basic assumptions:
First hypothesis: Interferences made during the language learning of (L2) are the result of the influence of the learners’ native language.
Second hypothesis: Interferences made during the language learning of (L2) sometimes result from the second language itself and without interference from the mother tongue.

D. The importance of the research and its objectives

The goal of this research is to provide solutions and proposals for the teaching and learning of languages and cultures. These solutions involve the following parties:
1) Arabic learners who do not speak Arabic
2) Arabic language teachers who teach Arabic as a Second Language (AL2)
3) Education methodologists in teaching Arabic as a foreign language
4) Researchers in the field of teaching Arabic language in general

1. Arabic language learners
This research allows students to identify the types of linguistic interferences that occur, or that are expected to occur, and the resulting negative attitudes that affect the process of learning Arabic in order to overcome them. Identifying the problem is the first step in treatment and encouraging positive transitions to strengthen knowledge.

2. Teachers of the Arabic language
This research allows teachers to identify linguistic interferences, to be taken into consideration in the teaching activities provided.

3. Education methodologists
This research, through the suggestions contained therein, allows methodologists to develop new approaches to build functional methods in the field of teaching Arabic.

4. Researchers in the field of teaching Arabic
This research is intended to be a link between previous studies to which new findings will be added and future studies which will add to it things that were overlooked or were not at the core of its interest in the field of linguistic interference in teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers in particular and in teaching Arabic in general.
G. Research Methodology

This research is based on descriptive, analytical and statistical methodology in determining the type of linguistic interference of Arabic language learners of different nationalities who belong to different institutions which teach Arabic to non-Arabic speakers in Morocco. The goal is to determine their type, in terms of positive and negative, as well as to illustrate the effects of the influence on the level of linguistic semantics as direct\(^1\) and indirect\(^2\), arriving to explain the role of all the first languages of the learner (L1) or the effect of Arabic itself on the learning process of the latter (L2). This was based on the analysis of learners’ writing, with the aim of reaching new ways to build learning programs or methods based on linguistic interferences, in order to overcome them, and help non-Arabic speaking learners achieve their learning objectives, thus building a bridge between Arabic and their language.

E. Data Collection Procedures

1. Determining the research sample accurately
2. Collecting the writings, isolating them, and then classifying and analyzing them
3. Assigning to the learners - of the sample mentioned - written tasks in different areas
4. Counting the number of errors committed to obtain statistical data and tables, and then discussing the results in consideration of the hypothesis.

1. Status of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers

In the era of globalization in which we are living in today, the world is witnessing a revolution in all fields, in terms of communication and information transfer, along with an unprecedented explosion of technological knowledge, making the world one village, in which language is the key to controlling the mechanisms of progress and advancement and rapid access to information, as well as to obtain material and symbolic benefits\(^3\). Taking into consideration the status that the Arabic language has started to occur in various areas such as the economy, politics, science, etc., it is now not only French or English that are important in these fields, but Arabic too. This is evident in the enthusiasm of businessmen to learn Arabic and in the fields of politics, diplomacy and science, etc. However, learning Arabic, like other languages, does not come without. The normal conditions accompanying the second language learning process in general\(^4\) are not the same as the conditions under which develops the acquisition process (L1). There is no doubt that these different conditions will result in linguistic problems among foreign language learners. The

\(^1\) Resulting from the automatic transfer of semantic attributes from (L1) to (L2).
\(^2\) Resulting from a purely non-semantic linguistic transfer; that is semantic transport that results from a transfer to another level (lexicon, voice, exchange, installation). Semantic transport would thus be a total achievement.
\(^3\) Nadia Amiri (2012) from its origin in Arabic:
\(^4\) This is when the learner of the second language or languages is not a member of the community of the language or languages to be learned.
most prominent of these linguistic problems is what is known as language interference, that is, language interferences (positive and negative) from L1 to L2. (1)

1.1. Acquisition of First Language and Learning of Second Languages

It is clear that learning foreign language(s) is different from the acquisition of the first language or languages (L1) (2), so that it is rare that the learners of the second language or languages can reach the same language proficiency of child native speaker (3). "The child acquires his or her language based on a number of mental processes that are related to his or her cognitive development and are carried out effectively through the child's interaction with the linguistic material surrounding him” (4). A child is not as concerned with difficulties he faces as the learners of this language are. Children acquire language in a natural and spontaneous way, whereas (L2) learners make efforts, or engage in a reciprocal process, (5) mediating between their first language and the second language or languages. The native English-speaking learner, for example, identifies information, experiences, and skills acquired in English and tries to find or convey them in Arabic in order to learn. In other words, learning the first language takes place in natural conditions, while the second language is acquired in artificial and formal conditions within schools, institutions and institutes in most cases.

In addition, one of the important differences between acquiring the first language and learning the second language is that the process of acquiring the second language will be influenced by the previous languages learned. This effect is known as first language interference. First language interference is a complex phenomenon produced by the interaction between the learner's prior linguistic knowledge and experience (acquired in L1) and the subsequent language knowledge and experience (that he wishes to learn in L2) and in the same way the cognitive processes to acquire (L1) are not always the same cognitive processes used to learn L2.

It is true that there are also similarities between the acquisition of the first language and the learning of the second language, as they share the need for practice, imitation, repetition, understanding and remembering, and what it entails in terms of attempts, errors and reinforcement, etc. However, as we have already stated, their differences require a particular teaching method for each.

---


1.2. The concept of language learning strategies

It is difficult to produce a comprehensive definition of language learning strategies due to the abundance of definitions and different perspectives. Here, the most common definitions will be presented.

Oxford defines language learning strategies as "specific activities that language learners carry out in order to facilitate their learning and accelerate it, making it more enjoyable, effective, self-directed, and transferable to new life situations."

Richards and Schmidt define them as "the intended behaviors that learners use to help them learn, understand and remember new information." They are defined by Suwanarak as "specific and conscious actions of the learner to achieve the goal of learning the language, and they are related to the characteristics and techniques of learning and the level of their collection". The most famous definitions of learning strategies are those of O'Malley and Chamot which they define as "complex procedures applied by the learner to tasks, and hence can be portrayed as procedural knowledge that can be acquired during a stage Learning."

From the above definitions, it can be noted that language learning strategies are a set of techniques, procedures and measures produced by the learner himself, in order to help him learn the language and achieve the desired multilingual proficiency as quickly and efficiently as possible. This competence, is defined as a set of different knowledge and capacities that enable the pooling of the resources of the learners' register, which is a multi-lingual record, characterized by interdependence among its constituent parts. Thus, owing to the interdependence and complexity required by multilingual competence, the learner can reach such competencies only if he or she finds instruments and mechanisms to help him or her learn the language and try to understand these mechanisms or strategies, then verifying the methods of employment, so that he or she can keep them for use whenever they are confronted with similar learning situations, to add, reduce and adjust these strategies every time they faces the same learning situation, until they reach what I would call the Optimal Model of Strategy (OMS). The same is true for other strategies until they have an "agenda" of strategies, which they can employ according to their learning needs.

2. Relationship between First Language acquisition strategies and second language learning strategies

In this section, a comparison will be made between first language acquisition strategies and strategies to learn a second language. We will investigate whether L1 acquisition strategies are the same as those used in learning L2, or if they are completely different, or if some strategies

disappear with the development of the L2 awareness while others continue to work. We also examine the influence of this on learning L2 which is Arabic in our case.

If we acknowledge at the outset that the learning phase (L2) is more familiar with the learning strategies than the acquisition phase (L1) regardless of whether there is continuity or discontinuity between (L1) acquisition strategies and learning strategies (L2), because in both cases the multilingual learner will use more learning strategies than the monolingual learner-and if the relationship is a continuous relationship, the learner in the context of pluralism is aware of the strategies he acquired during the acquisition phase (L1), and then while learning (L2) recognizes other strategies that are contrary to those he acquired (L1).

This will happen also in the process of learning other new languages (L3) different from (L1) and (L2), and so on in an integrative and cumulative manner. Even if the relationship was discontinuous, or only partial, we observe that the grammar of languages was universal at the beginning, before having been made special by means of modes and parameters subsequently. As a result of the differences in languages, the native speaker and the foreign learner need to develop respective strategies to learn a language. This is what affirmed John Adolph Rondal, who developed the Chomsky's work and according to whom both acquisitions L1 and learning L2 has the same strategies, but the mechanisms of their activation are different.

Starting from and based on this, if the mechanisms of activation are different, and the strategies remain the same, the learner can use plenty of strategies that he acquired (L1) and modified, along with the mechanisms of activation that he learns (L2). Thus, the learner is more accustomed to employing learning strategies than when he was limited only to the acquisition only of the first language, without modified versions, and no activation mechanisms.

Therefore; the relationship, between acquisition strategies (L1) and learning strategies (L2) is a continuous relationship rather than a discontinuous one because the learner adds, deletes, and adjusts acquisition strategies (L1) in order to learn (L2). These additions, deletions, and adjustments vary according to the learners, and what each one of them wants to attain in the learning process (L2).

As for the impact of the relationship- which was confirmed to be continuous, enriching and still developing in the strategies adopted between L1 and L2, thus offering an abundance of strategies used in multi-language learning, compared with monolingual learning-the studies showed that "the number of languages known by the individual affects the pace of learning strategies, and the building of multilingual competence improves the emergence of metacognitive strategies that require thinking about language." With a deductive logic, we could say that the emergence of these metacognitive strategies, which help to think deeply about language, contributes to the understanding of language mechanisms. Thus, understanding the functioning of these linguistic

---

2 Jean Rondal (N.D) *le Développement du Langage Oral.* Laboratoire de Psycholinguistique. Université de Liège. B32. SART TILMAN. 4000 LIEGES. Belgique
mechanisms leads to the consciousness of the linguistic production and its control in such a way that allows good possession of language components and skills from within the target language, and typically a great consciousness of the way to follow. Cumulatively, this contributes to a high level of language proficiency.

3. Relationship of Learning Strategies with Linguistic Interferences in Learning Arabic as a Second Language

Accordingly, with the increased attention attributed to second and foreign language learning strategies, various studies have been conducted on the strategies for learning Arabic among non-native speakers. This topic revolves around a fundamental question: Is there a relationship between learning strategies and the types of interferences among learners of Arabic as a second language?

The relationship between acquisition strategies (L1) and learning strategies (L2) has previously been mentioned, stating that almost the same strategies are used, with deletion, addition and modification in response to the characteristics/parameters that distinguish one language from the other. In other words, the activation of the mechanisms for the operation of strategies varies in response to different languages, while these mechanisms of action are carried out in the same way because languages share principles, elements, structures and components. These two cases can be represented respectively in the following forms:

**Figure 1**: A graph showing the similarity between (L1) and (L2) and its relationship to language learning strategies.

![Activation of Learning Strategies in the Same Manner](image1)

**Figure 2**: A graph showing the difference between (L1) and (L2) and its relationship to language learning strategies.

![Activation Of learning Strategies in different manner](image2)
It is clear from the graphs above that the similarity of the linguistic elements in L1 and L2 led to the activation of learning strategies in the same way, while the difference of the linguistic elements between the two languages led to different strategies being employed.

Based on this, the closer the similarity between the Arabic language and the first languages of the learner, the more the same strategies were employed. This means saving efforts and time, increasing the motivation of the learner and increasing his desire to learn Arabic, thus resulting in high linguistic proficiency in this language. This may be the reason for not falling into the negative language interference \(^{(1)}\) or reducing heir incidence, because the learner pays more attention to what is produced in Arabic. The greater the divergence and difference between Arabic and those languages, the more different the strategies were, requiring from the learners not speaking Arabic more effort and more time. This can cause anxiety and frustration of the learner, thus preventing him from achieving the required level of proficiency in Arabic language.

4. Types of linguistic interference and some related terms and concepts

The concept of interference is related to a host of similar concepts and terms, such as intervention, transformation, transition, borrowing, etc., including what is more comprehensive than interference and what falls within it. It also includes what happens between the languages and within the same language and what is done in a conscious and unconscious way. Therefore, this section aims to shed light on these terms and concepts, and to identify the similarities and differences between them, so that the reader can distinguish them in order to clarify the purpose of this research.

4.1. Types of interference

Languages share a set of characteristics, and they differ in other characteristics that distinguish between them. This similarity and difference has an impact on multilingual teaching and learning. When a student begins to learn a second language other than his mother tongue, he moves a set of linguistic elements from L1 to L2. These movable elements can be the common characteristics between languages, positive interferences, or of different elements between languages, the transfer of which causes a negative interference.

We will explain this with examples between Arabic and English accompanied by illustrations.

4.1.1. Positive interference

Positive interference is the intervention that makes learning easy. It appears when L1 and L2 have similar forms, so the learner can transfer elements, structures, or meanings of the original language to the target one \(^{(2)}\). For example, French and English have some linguistic similarities

---

\(^{(1)}\) I mean here those that are due to the intervention of the language or the first languages of the learners, or (الأوار) resulting from excessive generalization and wrong measurement due to the inability to be able to perform the language in Arabic.

which helps learners to often communicate what they need. With only a few modifications in pronunciation or grammatical parameters. This may make the transition from L1 to L2 easy. The idea discussed here is: the effectiveness of positive interference requires a bilingual awareness of both L1 and L2. The diagram below shows this type of interference:

Figure 3: A diagram showing positive language interference.

It is also apparent from the figure (3) above that some similar linguistic elements move from (L1) in direction to (L2), in this case the positive interference helps the learner to obtain a good language proficiency in Arabic. The example below clarifies this:

1.a. This is a Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ل1</th>
<th>This is a book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ل2</td>
<td>لكتب</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The learner here transferred the meaning and the sides of the signal structure only (the reference device referred to) and then transferred it to Arabic.
4.1.2. Negative transfer

This type of transfer refers to the negative effect of the first language in learning the second. In this case; the learner transmits features and structures of his or her mother tongue and automatically employs them in the second language, without considering the specificities of the target language. This is the main reason for the negative interference that greatly disrupts the process of learning foreign languages. And if positive interference is an aid, Negative interference is a limiting factor in learning a new language due to the wide difference between L1 and L2. The figure below shows this type of transfer:

Note from the figure (4) that some different linguistic elements move from (L1) to (L2);which would characterize the linguistic output in (L2) with “Lahn” or false and unacceptable. This is because there are differences between the elements or characteristics of both L1 and L2.

Let’s take the above example: (1.a). Let the counterpart in Arabic act this time as in (1.c) 1.) "This is a book."

In this case the learner does not differentiate what is similar between the two languages and what is different. the learner uses the automatic strategy of transfer-all in all - from (1) to (2). This can be illustrated as follows:
The Arabic language does not accept such a structure (predicate / tool / reference). The learner in this case did not transfer the formula only, as in the previous example of positive transfer, but has automatically moved the sentence from L1 (English) to L2 (Arabic), without considering the differences between the two languages.

We conclude from the above that positive interference does not lead to the deviation of meaning from (L1) to (L2) as in (1a) and (1b). The learner based on what is similar in both L1 and L2 in order to facilitate and accelerate the process of learning the second language or languages. The negative interference leads to a deviation of the meaning between (L1) and (L2). The learner does the “all in all” transfer, which slows down and disrupts the process of learning L2 as in (1.c).

5. Semantic linguistic interference

This chapter will focus on the various types of language interference I have encountered in my students’ writing. The most common types of errors include phonological, morphological, spelling, and grammatical errors.

5.1. Phonological Interference

Phonological errors have two origins; one occurs when the learner takes phonological elements from his or her mother tongue and applies them to Arabic.

The other is when the student overgeneralizes sound patterns, taking what they already know about Arabic pronunciation and applying it inappropriately.

Here are some examples of common mistakes;

Students often mix up short and long vowels

a. Confusion between Fatha (ٌ) and Alif (ا), as in the case with "ربط" (to link) and "رابط" (to stay). Similarly, words such as "السَّرَّ" and "سَرَّ" and صرف, ضارب, and ضارب; صرف, ضارب, and ضارب.

b. Confusion between Kasrah (ـ) and Yaa (ي), as in "عيش" and "عَشِ". The first translates as secret, whereas the second means to go.

c. Confusion between Damma (ـ) and Waaw (و), as in "عَدِ" and "عدود". The first means to return, while the second refers to a stick.

As we saw, the phonological differences between the two languages are a cause for misunderstanding.

The table below demonstrates the frequency of each type of these errors.
Table 1: statistics in confusion between long and short vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of error</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Compound statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusing Fatha (ٍ) and Alif (َ)</td>
<td>%51.79</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>%40.04</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusing Kasra (ـ) and Ya (أ)</td>
<td>%49.20</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>%37.56</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusing Damma (ـ) and Waaw (و)</td>
<td>%46.97</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>%42.55</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>%49.30</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>%49.16</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 1: Comparison of the Frequency of Each Type of Vowel Error

5.2. Spelling Interference

The main example that we will give here is about the confusion between the letters that are spoken and not written, and the letters that are written and not spoken such as:

a. Putting the Tanwin (ٍ/ـ/َ) instead of Noun (ن) or vice versa such as in the case of:
   "مدرسة" instead of "كتاب" or "مدرس" instead of "كتاب"

b. Confusing Hamza form, which is dependent on its placement at the beginning, middle or end of the word. For example:
   "قرأ" instead of "قراء".

c. Confusion between Ta Maftouha"ت" and Ta Marbouta"ة". For example, "مدينة" instead of "مدينة".

d. Confusion between definite and indefinite, whether or not to at the article "Idaafa". For example, students may say "البيت الكبير" instead of "البيت الكبير" (the big house) instead of "البيت الكبير" (the house is big). The significance of the word changes from an attributive adjective to a predicative adjective.
Table 2: Spelling Error Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of error</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Compounded statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusing Hamza form</td>
<td>%44.93</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>%31.71</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion between Ta Maftouha &quot;ت&quot; and Ta Marbouta &quot;م&quot;</td>
<td>%51.68</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>%34.45</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting the Tanwin (ــ /ــ) instead of Noun (ن)</td>
<td>%44.57</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>%34.28</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confusion between definite and indefinite</td>
<td>%49.07</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>%31.22</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>%47.32</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>%33.02</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 2: Comparison of the Frequency of Each Type of Spelling Error

5.3. Morphological interference

Arabic Morphology is different than that of Western languages. It contains a combination of both systematic and unsystematic systems of conjugation, whereas it is almost exclusively systematic in foreign languages. So, it is evident that this difference may impact the learner’s output, leading to negative interference in Arabic as a second language (L2). And briefly here are some interferences that we found in students writing:

Students write "أعراروٌ" instead of "أعاذزج", or "طانثىٌ" instead of "طلاب", or "كثيش طلاب" instead of "كثيش يٍ انطلاب"

The table below presents statistics regarding the origins of morphological errors and their respective frequencies
Table 3: Statistics of the Origins of Morphological Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of error</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Compounded statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage %</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage %</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overgeneralization of Arabic rules</td>
<td>46.58%</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>54.16%</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of first language grammar to Arabic</td>
<td>44.37%</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>35.31%</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45.48%</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>34.73%</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4. Grammatical interference

Every language contains universal grammar, also known as principles, and language specific characteristics, called parameters. When learning Arabic, students are able to grasp universal principles. However, they struggle to master Arabic specific parameters, applying native language patterns incorrectly. Listed below are some common examples found in students’ writing:

Mistakes in agreement between numbers and nouns:
- أَتِسْخَال instead of أَتِسْخَال
- أَشْخَال كَشْج instead of أَشْخَال كَشْج

Mistakes in agreement between adjectives and nouns:
- اَتْسْخَال الطَّولُ instead of أَشْخَال الطَّولُ

Mistakes in agreement between the pronouns and its antecedent:
- خَشَخَهُ instead of أَخْشَخَهُ

Putting the "َىٌ" of dual and plural in the case of addition:
- مُزْرَتْ بِفَسْلُمْنَ أمَريْكا instead of مُزَرْتَ بِفَسْلُمْنَ أمَريْكا

Table 4: Statistics of Grammatical Errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of error</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Compounded statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes in agreement between adjectives and nouns</td>
<td>55.67%</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes in agreement between numbers and nouns</td>
<td>48.88%</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistakes in agreement between adjectives and nouns</td>
<td>53.28%</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting the &quot;َىٌ&quot; of dual and plural in the case of addition</td>
<td>50.24%</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
<td>849</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6. Syntactic Interference

Most common at the beginning of the Arabic learning process, Syntactic Interference is the type of error that occurs as students inappropriately apply the sentence structure of their native tongue in Arabic.

Therefore, we expect the English speaker learning Arabic to produce sentences such as:

*بَلَأِنَّى وَهُوَ يَشْيَظُ
Which is literally translated as, “I saw the student who succeeded”.

*فَيَوْمَ الْهَوْمِ
Which is literally translated as, “today is sunny”.

Influenced by the structure in English, "It’s sunny today ".

The table below presents the frequency of syntactic interference

*Table 5: Frequency of the Syntactic Error by Level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of error</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Compounded statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Structure Errors</td>
<td>%45.61</td>
<td>%35.96</td>
<td>%18.42</td>
<td>%100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>156</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>342</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.7. Cultural Interference

Communication depends on linguistic intuition, which includes knowledge of cultural and social norms that express themselves in language. As Arabic learners transfer their own cultural knowledge from their native tongue to Arabic, misunderstanding becomes a common theme. Idioms and metaphors have different meanings based on the cultural context; thus, literal translation is a root for misunderstanding.

For example:

This is heartwarming news. *هذا الخبر أُفتَح صدري*

But in Arabic culture we say

This news snowed my chest. *هذا الخبر أَلْتَح صدري*

The difference between diction based on heat (warming) or cold (snow) is a result of different feelings associated with certain weather. “Warm” in Arabic culture does not have the same positive association as it does in English, because where summer in Europe provides relief from harsh winters, summer in desert climates is an unpleasant experience. This is expressed in Shakespeare’s
writing: "Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?" In a European climate, this is a compliment. However, in the context of the Arab world, this is not a favorable comparison.

Similarly, animals and colors have different cultural associations from language to language. For example, in English, one could describe a sage individual as “wise as an owl”. On the other hand, in Arab culture, owls are interpreted as a negative omen.

Conclusion

In conclusion, errors that appear in second language learning are not always coming from the first language or language interference; they also come from other variables such as: the over generalization of some rules or linguistic elements of the second language itself; the number of languages that a learner is not familiar with (I mean here, whether or not L1 belongs to the same language tree as L2 or what we call inter-comprehension); knowledge of the second language learning strategies and their application; and the degree of need to learn Arabic. All are aspects that can negatively or positively affect the process of learning a second language.

Several factors are involved in the occurrence of linguistic interference such as: The nature of the linguistic task, Early use pressure, the sergeant’s weakness, Mastering for 1 and 2, Language competence, Limited exposure and The Position of the language.

Language interference is not always negative, but can be positive as well. Positive interference occurs when the learner is aware of the linguistic elements that are common both to the first and the target language (Arabic), while negative interference occurs when the learner automatically applies linguistic elements from his/her mother tongue to the process of learning Arabic.

Semantic interference can be the result of linguistic overlaps such as phonetics, spelling, grammar and synthesis, so making a mistake on one of these levels may change the meaning of the sentence the speaker is trying to communicate in their Arabic translation.

References:

In Arabic

- المنظمة العربية للتربية والثقافة والعلوم,(2013).الإطار العربي الموحد لقياس الكفاءة اللغوية في اللغة العربية للناطقين بغيرها.
- مشروع النهوض باللغة العربية للتوة نحو مجتمع المعرفة. تونس.
- محمد الخبز (2002) منهج تعلم اللغة العربية والثقافة المغربية لأبناء الجالية المغربية بالخارج. مجلة التدريس. العدد 01. ص. 75-86.
In English and French


