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Khalid Mohamed Ahmed

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ABSTRACT

In all hoopla, first language (FL) interference significantly plays an important role in second language acquisition. This current research explores the first language (Arabic) interference impact on Arab students studying English as a second language (ESL) during question structuring. Categories of produced error were noted and analyzed at different linguistic levels. A translation test includes ten interrogative sentences to be translated from Arabic into English is used to determine the learners' conducted errors during question formation. Also, a questionnaire consists of five questions was sent to Arab teachers who teach English as a second language to gain more insight. The study samples were randomly selected and were 12 teachers and 60 students who have been studying at a private college in the United Arab Emirates (Medical Lab, Business Management, and Academic writing skills Departments) (N=72, HES=60, LT=12). Results showed the deep and severe impact of Arabic as a first language on Arab learners during question formation English in all areas of grammar knowledge.

Keywords: first language. second language. impact. interference.

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In all hoopla, first language (FL) interference significantly plays an important role in second language acquisition. This current research explores the first language (Arabic) interference impact on Arab students studying English as a second language (ESL) during question structuring. Categories of produced error were noted and analyzed at different linguistic levels. A translation test includes ten interrogative sentences to be translated from Arabic into English is used to determine the learners' conducted errors during question formation. Also, a questionnaire consists of five questions was sent to Arab teachers who teach English as a second language to gain more insight. The study samples were randomly selected and were 12 teachers and 60 students who have been studying at a private college in the United Arab Emirates (Medical Lab, Business Management, and Academic writing skills Departments) (N=72, HES=60, LT=12). Results showed the deep and severe impact of Arabic as a first language on Arab learners during question formation English in all areas of grammar knowledge.

Keywords: first language. second language. impact. interference.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Scholars and researchers have considered first-language (FL) interference as significant and effective in second-language acquisition. First

language (FL) has been entitled: native language, mother tongue, and primary language (Sinha et al. 2009). Banerjee, Sinha, and Shastri (2009) report that children acquire their first language from the family and the surrounding community. Each native language has distinguished characteristics and structures that lead to the language being developed naturally. First-language native speakers are proficient in possessing language structure deep comprehension: connected cultural nuances, grammar, phonetics, morphology, pronunciation, phonology, syntax, and semantics.

Second language fluency and nativization are long-life learning journeys. A combination of aggregated elements helps learners in understanding the obstacles and solutions. New language acquisition becomes increasingly difficult as people age. Insufficient exposure to the target language has severe results, such as hindering excellence in a second language, slowing down academic progress, and limiting lexical and cultural knowledge. Furthermore, extrinsic and intrinsic motivations play prominent roles in target language acquisition.

The interference phenomenon is a normal language acquisition feature that can be addressed with exposure, practice, and knowledge of the precise distinctions between the two languages. Second language learners should be aware of potential hindrances and actively try to improve their native and target language proficiency.

Scholars have used a taxonomy of error analysis to record all the errors produced by Arab students who study English as ESL (James.1998). On the other hand, the taxonomy of inter-lingual errors

includes stylistic elements: phonological, flexo-semantic, grammatical, and morphological errors (Shehzadeh, Gheichi. 2011). Grammatical errors include possessive cases, concordance, irregular verbs, nouns, pronouns, reported speech, articles, word order, prepositions, and singular and plural.

Various contradictory studies have refuted how the first language interferes with the target language, thus causing acquisition difficulties. First-language interference is a phenomenon that makes it difficult for learners aspiring to master a second language. First-language interference is authentic and central to second-language acquisition (Ellis.1997).

The problem statement of this study is based on Arabic language interference which influences ESL Arab students' grammar knowledge during constructing questions in English. Collecting data will support the study topic with objectives and suggest appropriate recommendations (Christiansen & Chater, 2016, p.189).

The main research objective is to record and analyze the impact of Arabic language interference on ESL students during question formation. Both the translation test and questionnaire determine the committed errors and what are the factors that lead to these errors.

With the perspective of first-language interference and its impact on Arab students who study English as second language. Therefore, the current research questions are formed:

- Does Arabic language interference impact Arab students studying English as a second language during question formation?
- Does Arabic language interference impact ESL-Arab learners' grammatical knowledge?
- What are the standard errors among Arab students when they form questions in English?

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Since the Plato era, researchers have considered conceptual analysis a significant custom and philosophical technique. The conceptual analysis

supports the theoretical foundation of literature thoughts, certain concepts analysis, definitions, meanings, and contexts(Henderson and Horgan.2011). Literature review proposes important theories, such as contrastive analysis (CA), error analysis, and language transfer, to record and analyze errors during construction questions. In this study, the conceptual analysis is based on recording and analyzing students' committed errors.

The age of the term second language acquisition (SLA) is still relatively young in comparison to language learning. The English language has dominated the world as a lingua franca in multilingual nations over the past decades and giving second-language learning tremendous popularity in recent years. There is an inevitable necessity and significance in mastering and learning skills and systems. Multilingual pupils who later studied English found it challenging and misleading (Wright, W. E. 2010).

Researchers around the world and specifically in the Arab Region, have titled second language learning or the target language or language 2. The target language mastering which is not the learner's first language (L1), or native tongue is known as second language acquisition (SLA). The study of a second language is concerned with non-native speakers (NNS). Linguists, researchers, psychologists, and educationalists pay second language great attention.

In the Arab Region and the world over the past few decades, English has been known as English as a Second Language (ESL), Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Foreign Language (EFL), English as an Additional Language (EAL). Practically, the term ESL refers to the utilization of English as a target language. Collective titles describe the aspects of ESL that are taught.

During these decades, English has dominated the world as a lingua franca in multilingual countries. Multilanguage students who study English later find it difficult and misnomer (Wright, W. E. 2010). English language dominates all fields of life in the whole world today. There is an inevitable

necessity and significance to mastering and learning its skills and systems.

Second language learners face many difficulties in learning English, which differ in their sources and levels. The Arab students struggle with their English language skills and systems during all educational cycles and the difficulty level results from language structures and first-language interferences. Acquisition of a second language requires heroic effort in terms of the structure and basics of every learning faculty. Students should isolate their first language (FL) structures from the second language if they aspire to language fluency. Second language acquisition occurs when interactive meaning and natural communication are available in the second language, and learners are aware of the conveyed and understood messages (Steven Krashen, .1987).

The word “grammar” is derived from the Greek word *grammatikḗ téchnē*, which refers to the art of letters (Harper, Douglas. 2013). Grammar is defined by linguists and grammarians as a system constructed by constraints that margin how words, phrases, and sentences can be ordered together by speakers or writers. The term grammar can also be used to describe the study of a subject area that covers syntax, morphology, and phonology, as and the frequently added fields of phonetics, semantics, and pragmatics. Grammar is a cognitive information system that includes language production occurrences (O'Grady, William, Dobrovolsky, Michael, Katamba, and Francis, .1996). Grammar can point to linguistic conduct committed by a cohort of writers and speakers, which requires plenty of divergences (Holmes, Janet, .2001). Grammar refers to the spelling and punctuation conventions that are used in language writing.

Whether language mastering and learning grammar knowledge are implicit or explicit, it is important to attain acquisition (Ur, P, .2006). Grammar function is structuring correct and fluent language and plays a pioneering and effective role in the communication process through correctly structured words, phrases, and sentences. Communicative and interactive competence attaining requires professional

grammar knowledge and other skills (NCLRC, 2017; Zhang, 2009); (Gradman. 1973); (Richards et al.1973); (Oldin,1989); (Robert Lado,1975); (Chomsky,2010); (Jon Zamboni,2018); (Bowles & Stanseld, 2008) (NCLRC, 2017; Zhang, 2009).

Poor grammar reflects the inability to communicate effectively and actively and lose social positions. Incorrect grammar knowledge and use are the results of some personal contextual credibility and lack of proficiency. The term “control”, and proper grammar power are used in everyday life “Glarng errors in spellings and punctuation are judged before the content of the work” (Praise and Meenakshi, .2014).

2.1 Grammar Teaching Approaches

The task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach involves completing specific language activities. Tasks are integrated and grammar learning happens when students study grammar. Objectives are to achieve the task goal, integrate grammar rules, and develop learners’ capabilities to express meanings and communicate purely inside the classroom (Skehan, Peter, .2003). Practicing these tasks involves achieving language fluency, acquisition, production, and communicative competency.

The deductive approach is one of the most common teaching approaches that explicitly presenting grammatical rules for learners through various educational materials; PowerPoint slides, lectures, textbooks, explanations, and worksheet instructions. Later, learners use and apply through activities, drills, exercises, and activities. Concentration is on application and memorization; however, meaningful language use opportunities may be missed.

Inductive Approach or grammatical inference (de la Higuera, Colin, .2010). The approach inspires and emboldens learners’ ability to infer grammar rules in authentic and situational language examples. Students figure out the rules from language examples and analysis, supporting the students’ critical thinking capabilities, problem-solving principles, and grammar rules. The advantages of this approach are supporting

the problem-solving code, focus, and grammar rules broad insight.

The previous approaches and methods focused on teaching core grammar and grammatical competence (Bax, S. 2003). The communicative approach aims to use language for communication and emphasizes language adaptation in meaningful contexts (Savignon and Sandra. 1997). Engaging learners in authentic communicative activities, such as discussions, role-play, and information-gap tasks, where they apply grammar structures naturally while focusing on conveying meaning.

The origins of the grammar-Translation Method return to teaching both Latin and Greek. Learners study grammar rules for the sake of translating sentences from the second language into the first language and vice versa. Grammar is presented explicitly for students. Advanced learners, in some cases, are required to translate complete texts. Grammar-Translation Method focuses on exposing and immersing students in written literature texts translation and developing students' mentality and intellectuality. Zhou. G. and Niu, X. (2015) criticize this approach because of its shortcomings. Ineffective communicative skills and limited oral proficiency may inflict this approach.

The cognitive method of teaching grammar focuses on the mental procedures involved in language acquisition. The approach emphasises comprehending the underlying cognitive processes, including rule formulation, pattern recognition, and problem-solving. Exercises that encourage students' critical thinking and metacognitive knowledge of grammar are included in this method.

2.2 Contrastive Analysis Theory (Charles Fries, 1945)

Before the Contrastive Analysis Theory which was founded by Charles Fries in 1945, there were many inspections about the role of the first language and its impact on second language acquisition by linguists such as Harold Palmer and Henry Sweet. The book "The Principles of Language" discussed that a few refugee

youngsters from Belgium moved to England and studied English as a target language as they lived in England (Palmer, 1921). Most of them did not have any impact on interference from their first language.

The previous notion was accepted by behaviorism scholars, such as Van Patten and Williams, who assimilated learning a language as any conducted behavior. Charles Fries developed the contrastive analysis (CA) theory in the 1940s. If we need to save language materials, similarities and differences between the native and target languages should be presented explicitly (Khansir and Tabande, 2014). The contrastive analysis theory has inspired debates in most foreign languages (Sridhar, 1975).

One of the biggest supporters and proponents of contrastive analysis was Roberto Lado. Lado discussed in his book "Linguistics Across Cultures, 1975" a plethora of languages contrastive analysis sounds systems, grammar, and vocabulary items. Lado's discussions covered the learners' differences comparisons, and anticipated difficulties inflicted on learners' first and second languages (Myles, 2010).

The key basis of the contrastive analysis theory is that interference from the learner's mother tongue causes errors in target language acquisition. Meaningfully, learning the second language (L2) will be easier for learners if there are more comparable structures to their first language. The learner will have hard time with target language acquisition if there are more diverges.

Criticism faced contrastive analysis because some errors were predictable (Gradman, 1973). Hamp (1968) suggests that the causes of errors are possible; however, there is no reality or possibility to predict all errors occurring and the causes of occurrences. Furthermore, James (1980) claims that language surface structures already exist in the two languages during similarity comparisons.

2.2.1 Errors Analysis Theory (S. Pit Corder, 1960)

The drawbacks inflicted by the contrastive analysis led Error Analysis Theory to be founded and shift from focusing on the native language's

impacts on second language acquisition to the occurred error analysis to support learners. Errors analysis means the study of second and foreign language learners' committed errors (Richards et al, .1973). Error analysis means observing, analyzing, and classifying the second language grammar rules, which are followed by learners-operated system revelation (Brown,. 1980).

2.2.1.2 Omission

Learners leave out some linguistic features when he says: where do you live? rather Where do you live?

2.2.2.3 Addition

Use words that are repeated without necessity. For example, How many siblings, brothers, and sisters do you have?

2.2.2.4 Selection

Learners use poor grammar or morphemes, on saying: I eaten my dinner rather I ate my dinner.

2.2.2.5 Ordering

The learner disorders the correct words in a sentence, such as He last night played instead of, He played last night.

2.2.3.1 Sources of Errors

2.2.3.1.1 Interlingual Error (Interference)

Interlingual errors are induced by first language transfer. Errors analysis consider the error indicators that the learner was internalizing and researching the new language structure.

2.2.3.1.2 Intralingual Errors

Cook (2008) considers that the first language supports learners when the second language components are similar. The interlanguage error is reported as an impermanent grammar that second-language learners learn. The first language plays the most important role that deprives the second-language learners of understanding it. Second-language learners transfer their learning

system to an autonomous system outside the school borders.

2.2.3.1.3 Overgeneralization

Ellis (1997) claims that learners overgeneralize because they perceive learning as simple. An example, such as the past tense form of "ed" can be used with irregular verbs like "eaten" instead of "ate."

2.3 Language Transfer Theory

Language transfer has many definitions, such as the similarities and differences that result in the influence between the first and second languages. Language transfer refers to the conducted error which occurs because the target improperly the previous language taught similarities and differences (Oldin,. 1989). Language transfer refers to "the use of the native language (or other languages) data on the acquisition of an L2 (or an additional language) (Gass, .1979). Gass limits the term "transfer" in this context to only positive transfers.

Language transfer occurs through language acquisition (Jarvis, Scott, 1966.2008). Learners intend to distribute and transfer their first language forms, meanings, and culture to the target language practically during their trials to produce this language and receptively when they attempt to comprehend the language used by the native speakers (Robert Lado, .1975). The main function of language transfer is to examine the rooted interference caused by the first language and highlight the impact of first language interference. The necessity of examining the cognitive mechanisms involved in target language acquisition is to clarify how the learner's current linguistic knowledge affects second language learning (Odlin, .1989).

2.3.1 Positive Transfer

Ellis (2008) claims positive transfer happens when learners use their first language knowledge to learn second language-specific patterns. Learning process involves similarities between the two languages. Understanding the target language depends on knowledge of the first language, and

the learner will find it easy because of interrelated similarities. Positive transfer means using the structures of the first language automatically to produce a second language if these structures are similar and this results in correct utterance (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, .1982). Moreover, Ellis (2008) considered that the similarities between the two languages reduce the number of errors. The deception may inflict similarities to the “false cognate.”

2.3.2 Negative Transfer

Osgood (1949) defines negative transfer as “the effect of a specifiable interpolated activity upon the retention of previously learned activity.” This type of transfer is called interference or retroactive transfer. The function is to create errors and problems for learners of the second language. Differences between languages are strict and block learning process procedures. Confusion between Arabic and English is due to this transfer.

2.4 The Universal Grammar Theory (Chomsky, .2010)

Chomsky (2010) claims that the human brain includes innates of biological components of language capabilities. All humans have an innate linguistic competence, which facilitates and directs language acquisition and learning. All learners have a set of stabilized grammatical structures and systems languages convenient to all languages. Interference from the first language may cause deviations from the target language's question formation patterns.

2.4.1 The Innate Postulate Access

Chomsky (2010) considers that language learners have a path to global principles that direct language learning and acquisition. Engagement, exposure to the second language's grammatical structures and principles and explicit instructions can aid Arab learners who study English as a second language during question formation in English, such as the inversion of the subject and auxiliary verb in yes/no questions.

2.4.2 Parameter Settings

Languages have certain and various parameters which identify the grammar faculties in every language. Parameter settings need to be modified by Arab learners when learning English. They should know that the English question is structured from Wh-word, helping or auxiliary verb, subject or pronoun, verb, and complement of the sentence, in contrast, Arabic questions typically rely on particles or intonation. Arab learners should identify and be aware of the structural differences and similarities between Arabic and English languages. They can isolate and separate the grammatical structures of every language alone. The contrasts paid attention aid to settling and stabilizing the English question formation new pattern.

2.4.3 Transfer of Knowledge

There are huge similarities and differences exist between both Arabic and English. The Arab teachers who teach English as a second language can depend on students' background and knowledge of Arabic grammar when they teach English question formation.

2.4.4 Ample Input and Practice Support

Arab learners should be engaged, exposed, and involved in practice question formation sufficiently and satisfactorily, which enables them to master this part of the English grammar structure. Students can practise speaking and writing skills which include asking questions. English Teachers can support learners with worksheets, classroom life situations, and interactive activities which internalize the correct question formation.

2.4.5 Individualized instruction

Learners' levels are characterized by strengths and weaknesses. Chomsky's Theory claims that learners are born with an internal grammar system that helps in language acquisition. Tailoring and selecting proper instructions for every learner enables teachers to succeed in eliminating the common and specific constraints

and hardships involving question formation when learning English as a second language.

2.5 Related Studies

Naser A Alkhafeel and Alansary Elkhoully (2000) conducted a study investigating the impact of the Arabic language in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Research questions revolved around the most common issues with Arab learners as a direct teaching method and suggested solutions for Arabs who learn English. Results showed most Arab teachers used the Arabic language as a medium to teach students English because the students had difficulties in understanding. English teachers use their mother tongue in some faucets to lead their learners to understand some issues. There are some issues with English grammar because of the similarities between Arabic and English.

Sadoon Salih (2019) has a study, “The Influence of the First Language (Arabic) on Learning English as a Second Language”, which explores the first language impact on English as a second language. Participants were 163 students from the Basic Education College. Researcher applied a translation test with 20 questions and included verbal sentences, nominal, adjective, passive, and verb to be. Results showed high errors in passive voice, in addition to verbs before the subject and verb to be.

Jean Pierre Ribeiro (2021) assumes the interference of Arabic prepositions in English and how they occur in the study “The Interference of Arabic Prepositions in Emirati English.” 20 participants who completed public schools and universities were randomly selected to represent the control group. Researcher used gender and education level as variables. Participants were asked to translate 20 sentences from Arabic to English, fill in 30 gaps with prepositions, and apply musical intelligence. Findings showed that Emirates and Arab students had difficulties in using the correct prepositions.

Haytham Bakri (2023) reports and analyzes the definite and indefinite English articles as common errors committed by Arab students in “Definite and Indefinite Article Misuse Among Saudi

Students Learning English as a Second Language”. Thirty Saudi ESL students were randomly selected to examine their knowledge of definite and indefinite articles in English. Students were supported with 28 simple Arabic sentences to be translated into English within 30 minutes. Errors included the misuse of the definite article “the” omission of the indefinite article “a,” and the least omission of “an.” The results showed that Arabic interference had a significant impact on English learners. Most errors occurred because of the native and interlingual language.

Muneera Muftah researched in 2023, “Error Analysis in Second Language Acquisition (SLA): Types and Frequencies of Grammatical Errors of Simple Present and Past Tense in the Elicited Written Production Task of Arab EFL Undergraduate Learners”. The study objective is to detail the grammatical mistake types and frequency in the present tense, past tense, and agreement made by Arab EFL learners in their evoked writing production task (EWPT). Participants were 67 Arab EFL undergraduates who were selected randomly and divided into three skill categories. EWPT had 46 test items and two passages, which served as tools for gathering data. Results revealed two primary types of grammatical errors: errors of omission (EO) and malformation errors (EM and incorrect use of inflectional morphemes).

III. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology section offers the study credibility and yields reliable scientific results. It provides a thorough plan that aids in keeping researchers on the course, facilitating a simple, efficient, and manageable approach. A reader can comprehend the strategy and procedures utilized to arrive at results by understanding the researcher's methodology. The methodology section supports the ideal research framework, test, ethics, difficulties encountered in the research and solutions, and how data are collected. Researcher boasts research findings from using comprehensive methods to achieve research objectives.

The researcher thoroughly uses a quantitative method to analyze and contest the impact of Arabic language interference on Arab students who study English as a second language (ESL). The quantitative approach improves the researcher's knowledge (Traci Williams, .2021). Selecting the quantitative approach because it aids in the analysis, exploration, and identification processes. Social scientists and communication researchers employ quantitative research to watch and observe how unique phenomena emerge since they are interested in researching people. Quantitative analysis leads to knowledge of a cohort of people, known as the sample population (Allen, .2017).

The study closely examined and focused on students' responses to the translation test and interview and the teachers' answers to the questionnaire questions. Every effort was done to keep the variables under control while gathering data. Responses were collected from the students' translation tests to understand the effect of first-language interference on second-language acquisition.

The current study included 78 participants (N=78: teachers =12, Higher Education Students=60). Higher education students attending XY private college and studying various majors, such as Business Management, Medical Lab, Multimedia, and Mass Communication. Perquisites to join the college in the United Arab Emirates state that students must get an English language proficiency certificate before enrolling or registering. Students can join and study a few specific general courses before studying the core modules. University students must get a score of 5.5 in IELTS or 71 in TOEFL IBT, or 1250 in EMSAT. Participants are Arab learners who have studied English as a second language, and most of the courses were taught in English in the United Arab Emirates. English teachers are Arabs who teach English as an ESL in the United Arab Emirates Schools. Participants were from different countries: Yamen, Jordan, Morrocco, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Sudan, Iraq, and the UAE. Involving large sample size in the research enables the researcher to have more data, identify

average values, and avoid errors properly (Jon Zamboni,2018).

An experimental study was conducted by randomly selecting 60 Arab ESL students. A translation test that included ten interrogative Arabic sentences to be translated into English was given to students. The main function of a test is to identify the research hypotheses without utilizing language levels' huge differences (Cohen,. 2014).

Translation test and questionnaire responses were the main sources for data collection. The two sources added more insight and depth into the impact of Arabic language interference on Arab learners who study English as a second language during question formation.

A translation test was used as the main instrument to achieve the current research objectives. Ten interrogative sentences were translated from Arabic into English. The test lasted for 45 min and responses represent the main data of this study.

On the other hand, Julie Clements (2023) states that using questionnaires in research provides core, rare, basic, and direct data, reaching a huge number of participants under control, fast, and in-depth responses. Researcher conducted the questionnaire online with the ESL teachers and lecturers. What characterizes the questionnaire is the researcher can get linguistic production and content (Dörnyei, Z.,2003).

The researcher attempted to collect data quantitatively through translation tests and online questionnaires. A translation test consisting of ten interrogative sentences was delivered to participants to translate it into English. Translation test in research refers to the only difference between the test's translated target language and the source English translations; however, the test content or targeted constructions remain the same (Bowles & Stansfield, 2008).

The online questionnaire has five questions about the impact of Arabic language interference on Arab students who study English as a second language during question formation and their

grammar learning and knowledge. Questionnaire records teachers' analysis of the most common errors that result from Arabic language interference, factors that lead Arab students to commit errors in question formation in English, and finally, the teachers' recommendations.

The researcher exerted heroic efforts to lessen and eliminate the current study limitations by designing a translation test and sending the questionnaire to teachers and university lecturers. A lot of students are studying at this college, but the researcher only focused on Arab learners who study English as a second language. Students are not accustomed to this kind of task, so they bombarded the researcher with questions. Teachers and lecturers were very busy during the final academic year exams; however, the researcher communicated with them using WhatsApp.

Maxwell (1996) claims that researchers should consider the confidentiality of students and institutions. An email was sent to students and to the Heads of Departments in the college to obtain administrative approval for conducting the translation test and questionnaire. The researcher believed that all participants had a detailed understanding of their contributions.

Bann S, Davis IM, Moorthy K, et al. (2005) claim that adopting reliability in research supports the utilized assessment methods with the opportunity to evaluate and provide the researcher with more experience and consistency. Feasibility refers to study implementation and intervention, and researchers can conduct their experiments in identified authentic settings (Frey, B.2009). The researcher is teaching at the college, so he respects all parties: college administrations, parents, students, and colleagues and he will preserve the accreditation and accuracy of data.

At a non-specific college and school in the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi, where the study was conducted, the researcher teaches ESL. As a result, it was simple and available to acquire access to students, ESL colleagues' contacts, and academic records. Fully utilized time and effort were saved possibly while conducting the study.

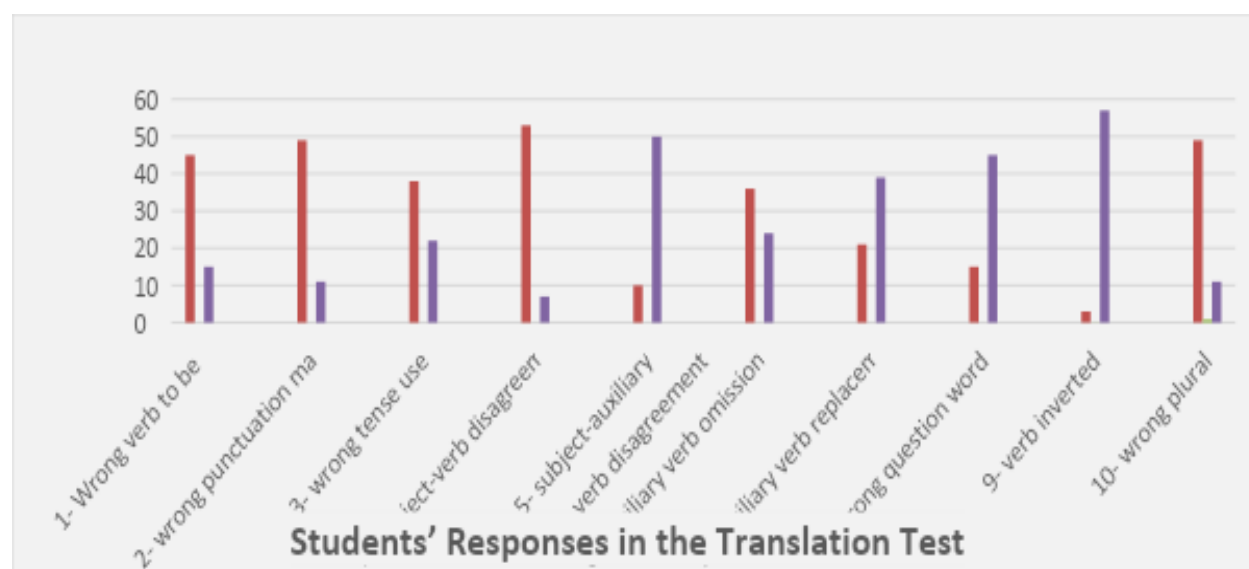
IV. FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative methods were used for data collection and analysis. Findings were framed based on the main sources of information: translation tests and interviews. During the translation test responses investigation, the researcher focused only on the participants' complete answers. Students were asked to translate ten interrogative sentences from Arabic into English. Results reflected the impact of Arabic language interference on the English language during question formation. Specific grammatical aspects for which the impact was clear and this empowered the non-refuse of hypotheses.

The current research records and analyzes the committed errors that result from Arabic language interference with Arab learners studying English as a second language during question formation. Participants concentrated on committed grammatical errors. Errors categories were classified as follows: wrong verb to be, bad punctuation marks, bad tense use, subject-verb and subject-auxiliary verb disagreement, auxiliary verb omission and replacement, bad question word, verb inverted, and wrong plural. Data were collected and analyzed statistically to achieve the research objectives based on responses from the translation test and the questionnaire.

Table 1: Students' Responses in the Translation Test

Area	Sample	Recorded Errors		Correct Answers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1- Wrong verb to be	60	45	75%	15	25%
2- Wrong punctuation marks	60	49	81.66%	11	18.33%
3- Wrong tense use	60	38	63.33%	22	36.66%
4- Subject-verb disagreement	60	53	88.33%	7	11.66%
5- Subject-auxiliary verb disagreement	60	10	16.6%	50	83.33%
6- Auxiliary verb omission	60	36	60%	24	40%
7- Auxiliary verb replacement	60	21	35%	39	65%
8- Wrong question word	60	15	25%	45	75%
9- Verb inverted	60	3	5%	57	95%
10- Wrong plural	60	49	81.66%	11	18.33%
Total		53.16		46.84	



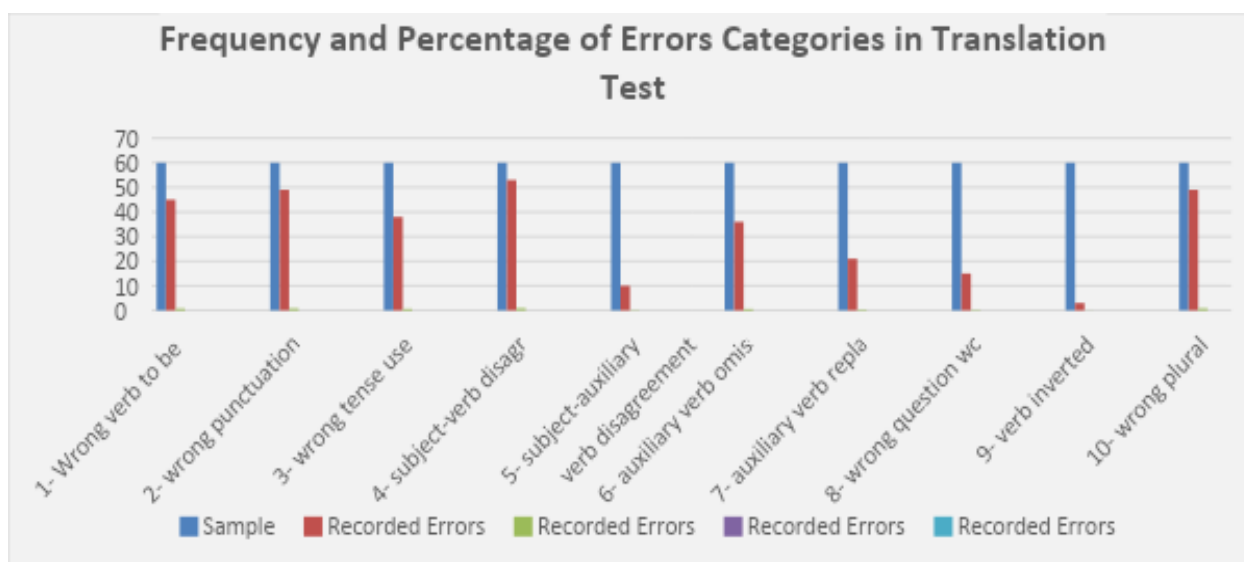
Graph 1: Recorded Responses from Participants in the translation test

Table 1 and Graph 1 illustrate that the total percentage of errors committed by the students surpasses that of correct answers in most areas. There were 53 recorded errors compared to 46.84 correct answers. Recorded errors exhibit a slightly higher percentage than the right answers.

Findings support the first hypothesis, suggesting that interference from the student's first language (Arabic) influences Arab students studying English as a second language when it comes to question formation.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Errors Categories in Translation Test

Number	Area type	Frequency	Percentage
1-	wrong verb to be	45	75%
2-	wrong punctuation marks	49	81.66%
3-	wrong tense use	38	63.33%
4-	subject-verb disagreement	53	88.33%
5-	subject-auxiliary verb disagreement	10	16.6%
6-	auxiliary verb omission	36	60%
7-	auxiliary verb replacement	21	35%
8-	wrong question word	15	25%
9	verb inverted	3	5%
10	wrong plural	49	81.66%
		3.19	88%



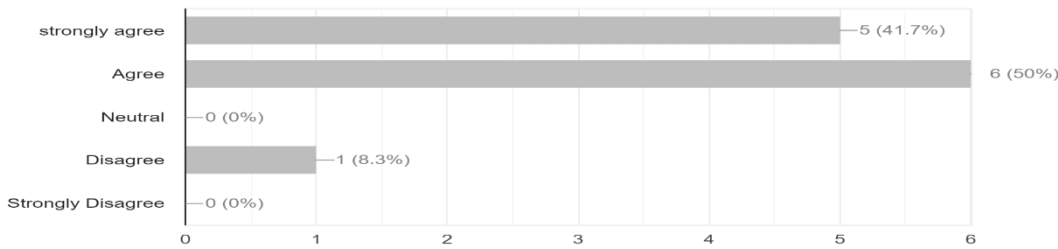
Graph 2: Errors Categories Percentage in Translation Test

Table 2 and Graph 2 present the distribution of committed errors: subject-verb disagreement exhibited the highest percentage at 88.33%, in comparison, bad punctuation marks and wrong plural shared the same rate at 81.66%. The incorrect usage of the verb "to have" reached 75%, and improper tense use accounted for 63.33% of the errors. Auxiliary verb omission accounted for 60% of the mistakes. Remaining errors were below the 50% mark, with extra verb replacement at 35%, wrong question word at 25%, subject-auxiliary verb disagreement at 16.6%, and

the lowest percentage recorded at 5% for verb inversion.

The researcher tries to get more data from the English teachers and lecturers teaching English as a second language. Five questions formed the questionnaire.

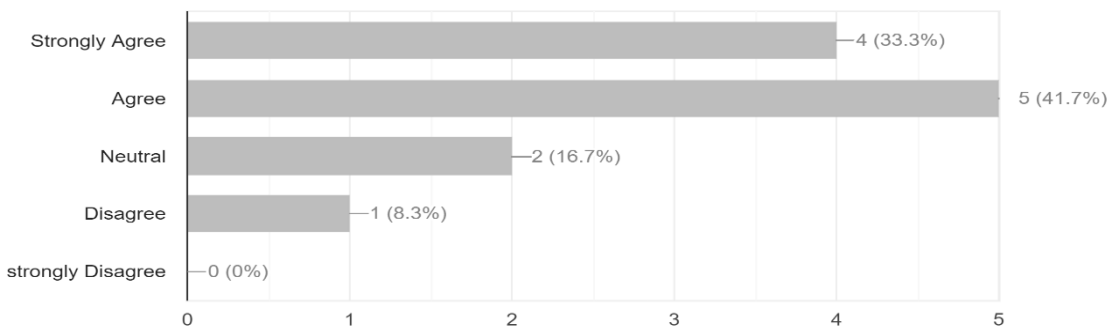
1- Do you think that Arabic language interference has any impact on the Arab students who study English as a second language during question formation ?
0 / 12 correct responses



Graph 3: Arabic Language Interference Impact on Arab Students Who Study English as (ESL)

Graph 3 depicts the participants' responses regarding the impact of Arabic language interference on Arab students studying English as a second language during question formation. 50% of the participants agree, while 41.7% strongly agree with this notion. 8.3% of the participants disagree with the statement.

2- Do you think that Arabic language interference has an impact on the Arab learners who study English as a second language ESL students' grammar learning and knowledge?
0 / 12 correct responses

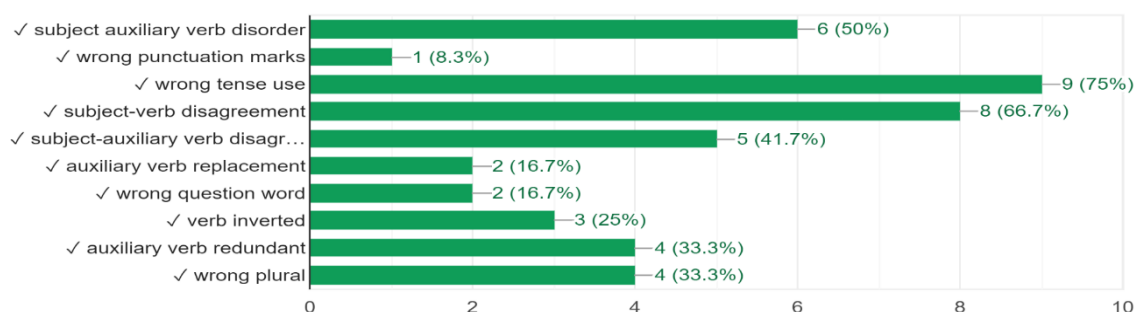


Graph 4: Arabic Language Interference Impact on Arab Students' Grammar Knowledge

Graph 4 illustrates the responses of the participants regarding the impact of Arabic language interference. 41.7% of the participants agree, while 33.3% strongly agree with the presence of such an impact. 8.3% of the participants disagreed, and 16.7% remained neutral.

3- What do you think are the most common errors that result from Arabic language interference with ESL ?

1 / 12 correct responses



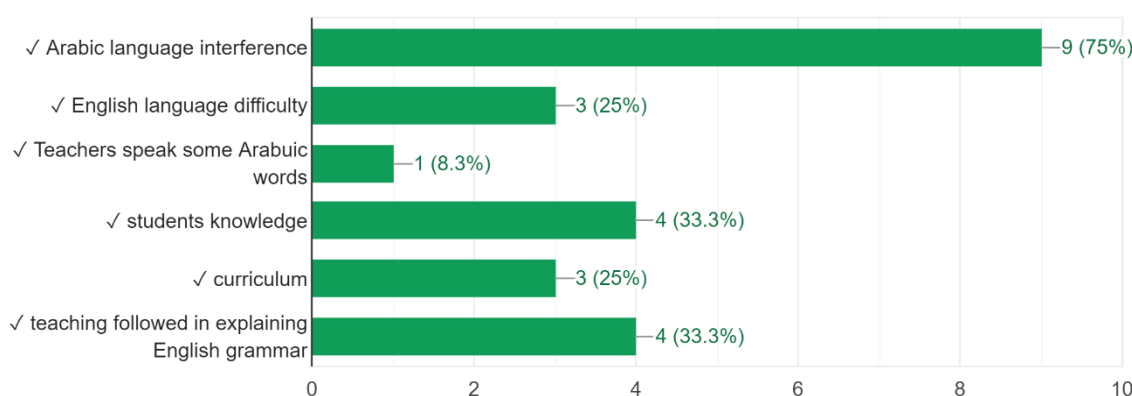
Graph 5: The Most Common Errors with the Arab Students

Graph 5 presents the distribution of errors, with wrong tense being the most prevalent at 75%. Subject-verb disagreement follows closely at 66.7%, while subject-auxiliary verb disorder

accounts for 50% of the errors. Subject-auxiliary verb disagreement is observed at 41.7%, and both auxiliary verb redundancy and wrong plural occur at a rate of 33.3%.

4- Which of these factors lead the Arab students to commit errors in question formation in English ?

1 / 12 correct responses



Graph 6: The Most Common Factors Responsible for the Arab Students' Errors

Graph 6 illustrates the main factors responsible for errors among ESL Arab learners. Results indicated that the Arabic language is the primary cause accounting for the highest error rate at 75%. Both students' knowledge and teaching grammar methods contribute equally, each representing 33.3% of the errors. The difficulty of the English language and curriculum caused 25% of the mistakes, while the use of Arabic words by Arab

teachers during English classes is reported at 8.3%.

V. DISCUSSION

Arabic and English languages are different in origins and structures, so Arabic students struggle to structure the right questions in English. Arabic language has an agreement between the verb and

the subject gender and number. When the subject is singular and masculine, the verb will be in the singular particular male form. When the issue is singular, special must take a singular verb in English.

Arabic: The farmers works in the garden. الفلاحون يعملون في الحديقة

English: The farmers work in the garden.

Researchers consider punctuation as a language orthographic area. English language has many aspects of punctuation marks: commas, full stops, colons, semi-colons, question marks, exclamation marks, etc. Arabic language doesn't have capitalization which leads Arab learners to forget capitalization at the beginning of sentences and with the proper nouns. Sofer and Raimes (2002) declare that the Arabic language doesn't have an upper and lower case.

Arabic: where do you live? أين تعيش

English: Where do you live?

The vowel system in Arabic is different from English. English has five vowels: (a, e, i, o, u), and in specific cases, (h and y) are pronounced as vowels. Arabic language has three short vowels: (a, u, i), and three long vowels. Arab learners commit errors when they change from singular with y to plural nouns.

Arabic: Do you have any hobbes?

English: Do you have any hobbies?

The interference of the verb to be is misused in Arabic and English. Verb to be in Arabic means (كان- kāna) and is used to express different situations and contexts. In English, it is used in many situations and contexts and this results in errors with Arab students.

Arabic: I am having 25 years.

English: I am 25 years old.

Arabic and English have huge differences in tenses, which leads Arab learners to commit errors while studying English. Arabic language includes two tenses:

- The perfect tense, which refers to the past.
- The Imperfect tense includes future simple tense, present simple tense, and non-past tense. (Ali, 2007; Aoun, Benmamoun, and Chueiri, .2010). However, the English language has various types of tenses and this leads Arab students to commit errors when they form questions.

Arabic: Where are you coming from?

English: Where do you come from?

There is no auxiliary verb in Arabic, so Arabic learners commit errors when they form sentences in English. Arabic sentence depends on the context and verb conjugation to convey the message. Question formation requires an auxiliary verb after the Wh-Word to form the question. In English, the auxiliary verb "do" is imperative, crucial, and expresses the present simple. Omission of verb result in Arab learners committing errors when they form questions.

Arabic: what are you working: ماذا تعمل

English: What do you do?

VI. SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

Lecturers' and teachers' responses from the questionnaire suggest the current recommendations to eradicate Arabic language interference impact on Arab students who study English as a second language:

- Since Arab learners commit errors in every area of this study, teachers, education policymakers, and curriculum designers should support learners with sufficient knowledge and teaching methods that enable students to avoid error commitment.
- Teachers should support students with question words, explaining the different use of each Wh-Word, and urge students to practice forming questions.
- Teachers should teach students to use inversion: students can form questions by inverting the subject and auxiliary verbs. Instead of saying, "You are going," you ask "Are you going?"

- Teachers should empower students with tasks by searching for question formation exercises in various sources. Exercises often provide structured practice and gradually help them improve their skills.
- Learners should use question starters and start sentences with question words or auxiliary verbs to form questions more easily.
- Students should be engaged in conversation through practice speaking with native English speakers or language partners who can provide feedback on their question formation.
- Students should be immersed in regular conversations, which will help in becoming more comfortable and fluent in asking questions.
- Students should improve their language skills.
- Teachers should present question formation implicitly to learners to master it and teach the rule and give more examples and students' practice.
- Teachers can use learning by playing interactive games, watching videos, role-playing, and reordering the words to make questions using flash cards.
- Teachers should explain the tense and the sentence formation well before the question formation.

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APPENDICES

Dear participant: The current questions require translation to the English language to analyze the interference and impact of the Arabic language as a first language on English second language learners. So, we are very appreciative of your participation. All information here will be secret.

Q1: Translate the current questions from Arabic to English:

1- ما اسمك؟

.....

2- ما هي وظيفتك؟

.....

3- أين تعيش؟

.....

4- ما هي وظيفة والدك؟

.....

5- كم عدد اخوتك واخواتك؟

.....

6- ما هي هواياتك المفضلة؟

.....

7- ماذا تتمنى ان تكون في المستقبل؟

.....

8- هل تحب اللغة العربية؟

.....

9- لماذا تتعلم الانجليزية؟

.....

10- متي تأتي الي

المدرسة

.....

Dear participant: The current questions require translation to the English language to analyze the interference and impact of the Arabic language as a first language on English second language learners. So, we are very appreciative of your participation. All information here will be secret.

Q1: Translate the current questions from Arabic to English:

- 1- ما اسمك؟
what your name?
- 2- ما هي وظيفتك؟
what your job?
- 3- أين تعيش؟
where you live
- 4- ما هي وظيفة والدك؟
what your father job?
- 5- كم عدد اخوتك واخواتك؟
how many siblings?
- 6- ما هي هواياتك المفضلة؟
what your hobby?
- 7- ماذا تتمنى ان تكون في المستقبل؟
what you hope to be in future?
- 8- هل تحب اللغة العربية؟
you love the Arabic language?
- 9- لماذا تتعلم الانجليزية؟
you learn the English?
- 10- متى تأتي الى المدرسة؟
at what time you go to the school?

Dear participant: The current questions require translation to the English language to analyze the interference and impact of the Arabic language as a first language on English second language learners. So, we are very appreciative of your participation. All information here will be secret.

Q1: Translate the current questions from Arabic to English:

- 1- ما اسمك؟
what is your name?
- 2- ما هي وظيفتك؟
what is your job?
- 3- أين تعيش؟
where are you living?
- 4- ما هي وظيفة والدك؟
what is your parent's job?
- 5- كم عدد اخوتك واخواتك؟
how many siblings do you have?
- 6- ما هي هواياتك المفضلة؟
what is your favorite hobby?
- 7- ماذا تتمنى ان تكون في المستقبل؟
what do you wish to become in the future?
- 8- هل تحب اللغة العربية؟
do you love the Arabic language?
- 9- لماذا تتعلم الانجليزية؟
why do learn English?
- 10- متى تأتي الى المدرسة؟
when you will come to the school?

Dear participant: The current questions require translation to the English language to analyze the interference and impact of the Arabic language as a first language on English second language learners. So, we are very appreciative of your participation. All information here will be secret.

Q1: Translate the current questions from Arabic to English:

- 1- ما اسمك؟
What is your name
- 2- ما هي وظيفتك؟
What is your job
- 3- أين تعيش؟
Where do you live
- 4- ما هي وظيفة والدك؟
What is your dad job
- 5- كم عدد اخوتك واخواتك؟
How many brothers and sisters do you have
- 6- ما هي هواياتك المفضلة؟
What is your favorite hobbies
- 7- ماذا تتمنى ان تكون في المستقبل؟
What do you wish to be in the future
- 8- هل تحب اللغة العربية؟
Do you love Arabic
- 9- لماذا تتعلم الانجليزية؟
Why do you learn English
- 10- متى تاتي الي المدرسة
When do you come to school

1- Do you think that Arabic language interference has any impact on the Arab students who study English as a second language during question formation ? *

- ☐ strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

2- Do you think that Arabic language interference has an impact on the Arab learners who study English as a second language ESL students' grammar learning and knowledge? *

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ strongly Disagree

3- What do you think are the most common errors that result from Arabic language interference with ESL ?

- ☐ subject auxiliary verb disorder
- ☐ wrong punctuation marks
- ☐ wrong tense use
- ☐ subject-verb disagreement
- ☐ subject-auxiliary verb disagreement
- ☐ auxiliary verb replacement
- ☐ wrong question word
- ☐ verb inverted
- ☐ auxiliary verb redundant
- ☐ wrong plural

4- Which of these factors lead the Arab students to commit errors in question formation in English ? *

- ☐ Arabic language interference
- ☐ English language difficulty
- ☐ Teachers speak some Arabuic words
- ☐ students knowledge
- ☐ curriculum
- ☐ teaching followed in explaining English grammar

5- How can we deal with question formation difficulty in English language? *

Your answer

Submit

Clear form

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