Chapter One

Introduction

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This chapter will provide the theoretical framework of the study. It primarily focuses on the description of the statement of the study problem, the questions of the study and the hypotheses as well as the research methodology.

1.1 The Context of the Study

Saudi EFL learners encounter many problems in learning English. They learn English in their native country, where Arabic is the native language.

Strevens (1980:25) states that "In Saudi Arabia, EFL learners live in a country where English is not the medium of communication. English is not needed for survival or to be able to enter the job market, therefore learning occurs in a very low acquisition environment. English is used in this society except in a few businesses or organizations. Consequently, students are not motivated to learn English because they do not see the need for learning it; they mostly study English as a required subject in school or for the fun of speaking a second language. Likewise, Alfallaj (1998:16) indicates that in a society as conservative and closed as that of Saudi Arabia, it has been very difficult for people to accept the idea that a language other than Arabic can be taught to Muslims . People fear that teaching a foreign language might result in students adopting the culture and values of that language.

According to Jan (1984) the opponents of foreign languages instruction presented their concerns about the issue to King Abdul-Aziz. The King responded that the teaching of a foreign language would in fact help the spread of Islam and would help in the development of the country. He also added that

the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) permitted Muslims to learn the languages of other people.

Therefore, Saudi EFL students normally learn English through formal instruction, i.e. inside the classroom where the English Language teachers are native speakers of Arabic, i.e Saudis, Sudanese, Egyptians, Jordanians, etc. Therefore, students' opportunity to learn English in a natural atmosphere through direct interaction with native English speakers, is very limited. This is possible only when students encounter native English speakers who come to the country as pilgrims or expats. Most of the Saudi students come with poor English and low proficiency level when they enroll in universities. There have been a lot of complaints made about weakness in English of school graduates who join universities in various colleges. Actually the weakness of Saudi students in English has been attributed to various factors such as English language syllabuses, teaching methods, lack of interaction with native speakers, English language teachers' knowledge of English, the students' attitudes towards English and lack of motivation. Marckwardt (1965) argues that in the EFL context where teachers generally share the same culture and language of their students and have learned English outside of an English speaking country and may have a low level of English oral proficiency.

The poor performance of Saudi students in English courses suggests a lack of knowledge of the fundamentals of the language. They cannot write correctly, particularly when dealing with up-to-date topics. In this regard, Zafer (2002) maintains that the EFL textbooks contain issues which are irrelevant to the EFL program goals defined by the Ministry of Education. For example, you will find in one EFL textbook lots of dominant subjects related to the desert life, keeping livestock especially camels and stories of ancient Arabic heroes, which make

the EFL students very weak in using English in modern advanced technologies, hospitals, traveling situations, airports and the like.

Writing is a complex skill and even considered by many linguists as the most difficult of all the four skills (Corder & Allen,1974, p.177). It is difficult for both native and non- speakers. However, writing is a real problem to most of EFL learners such as the Saudi students. The source of difficulty arise from the fact that non-native speakers think on their own native language (Arabic) when they write in English. Since good knowledge of grammar is one of the basic requirements of effective writing, learners must acquire proper use of grammatical rules and structures. According to Tiricia Hedge (1995:8) : "Effective writing require a number of things among them, is the use of complex grammatical devices for focus and emphasis; and careful choice of grammatical patterns and sentence structures".

As mentioned above Saudi students in order to write effectively, they have to overcome all the difficulties facing them in writing grammatically accurate sentences.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The researcher's experience as a school teacher and a university lecturer of EFL in Saudi Arabia for more than ten years has kept him in close contact with EFL learners and users in KSA. As a result of this contact, the researcher has seen various types of grammatical errors made by Saudi students. Most of these errors are committed in writing tasks such as paragraphs, compositions, essays, letters, etc.

Most Arabic-speaking learners of English as well as other learners of English from different language backgrounds encounter real difficulties in learning English .Therefore, many studies are conducted in second and foreign language

leaning targeting errors made by EFL learners. The purpose of these studies is to present solutions that can assist in promoting English language learning. It is observed that learners' errors have gained the momentum in most of the recent studies in the field of second and foreign language learning. Learners' errors are influenced by many factors. Some of these include that most students do not pay enough attention to the accurate use of the different syntactic rules of the target language (i.e. English Language) during the learning process. Also some teachers do not emphasize the significance of the L2 syntactic rules when teaching them to their students. In addition to that the teaching materials employed in teaching grammar are not used efficiently. Littlewood(1984) states that EFL learners who venture to put their knowledge in practice often run into communication problems due to deficiencies in their linguistic repertoire. These actual observations have motivated the researcher to carry out an error analysis to investigate the common grammatical errors in writing made by Saudi university students to find out their causes and to suggest some solutions for them.

This study gains its importance because it appears to be one of the few studies as far as the researcher knows that investigates errors made by first grade Saudi tertiary students. It sheds light on the most dominant grammatical errors made by them. It is also an attempt to find out some plausible explanation to unveil the various causes and factors behind the students' errors in grammar.

The present research aims at analyzing and identifying the common grammatical errors and mistakes made by Saudi tertiary students in writing .It also tries to identify some possible causes and solutions for this study problem.

1.3. Research Questions

This study is set to answer the following questions:

1. What are the possible causes of grammatical errors made by Saudi university students?
2. What are the most common types of grammatical errors students make in writing?
3. What are the teachers' attitudes towards the grammatical errors made by students?
4. To what extent does the English language syllabus sufficiently cover the grammar component?

1.4. Research Hypotheses

1. Various causes such L1transfer could be behind grammatical errors made by students.
2. There are certain recurrent types of grammatical errors made by students in their writing activities.
3. Teachers' attitudes towards grammatical errors made by students are expected to be negative.
4. The Saudi English language syllabus does not sufficiently cover grammar.

1.5. The aims of the study

The present study aims at the following:

1. To investigate the possible causes of grammatical errors made by Saudi university students in composition writing .
2. To identify types of grammatical errors made by students in composition writing .

3. To investigate teachers attitudes towards grammatical errors made by students.
4. To recommend some possible solutions for the difficulties facing students in using grammar in writing.

1.6. The Significance of the Study

Many linguists and theorists who wrote in the field of error analysis have stressed the importance of learners' errors in language learning. Corder (1967) points out that errors are of great value in various ways. First to the teachers, they indicate to them how far the learners have progressed and what remains for them to learn. Second, they provide researchers with the evidence of how language is learned and what strategies learners use in learning the language. Third, errors are indispensable to the learners as a tool that they can use to discover language. Carter (1997:35) states that "knowing more about how grammar works is to understand more about how grammar is used and misused". In addition to that, this research is expected to provide an empirical evidence that learners' errors have a significant role in achieving grammatical accuracy. This study agrees with the new shift of emphasis and the growing interest in learners' errors as an indispensable learning device of learning. Its significance also lies in the fact that there are not many studies conducted in this field, especially in Saudi Arabia. This study can be of crucial value to EFL teachers, learners, researchers .It will also be of great value to syllabus designers and that is by revealing the problematic areas and assisting in designing remedial work focusing more attention on the trouble spots. This study also can be of great importance to psycholinguists who are concerned with the learning process and SLA/EFL .

The significance of the present study lies in that it is an attempt to find out solutions to some of the problems which face Saudi students in particular and

EFL learners in general in learning English grammar. It is hoped that the findings of this study will enhance students awareness of the important role of errors and the positive role they play in second language learning.

1.7. The Limits of the Study

This study will be limited to:

a. The study of grammatical errors in composition writing made by Jazan University first year students, who are not majoring in English.
b. The study examines various factors behind grammatical errors made by Jazan University first year students who are not majoring in English.

1.8. Research Methodology

The Descriptive Analytic Method will be adopted in conducting the study . The data of the study was collected from the writing production(composition) of the first year students of Jazan University in Saudi Arabia. For the tools that will be used for the data collection, a questionnaire will be administered to the English language teachers and a composition writing test will be given to the students. The results will be statistically analyzed.

The researcher has also provided the following:

1. Description of the subjects of the study. (i.e. First year Saudi university students not majoring in English language).
2. Description of the instruments employed in collecting the data for the study and the procedures that will be adopted.
3. The validity and reliability of the tools used in the study will be confirmed through referring to an English language expert jury and statistical formulae.

In the light of the results the study hypotheses will be either confirmed or rejected.

1.9. Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter a description of the theoretical framework has been provided with some focus on the definition of the research problem and methodology. In the next chapter some relevant literature will be critically reviewed.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews and discusses some relevant literature written on first and second language acquisition. It also tries to display some theories and factors related to first and second language acquisition. In addition, some other basic concepts that may have certain bearing on the present study have been discussed in details; namely, contrastive analysis, interlanguage, error analysis and some other related issues. Finally, this chapter is concluded with the review some relevant previous studies.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1. 1. First Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning

Language acquisition is one of the most spectacular aspects of human knowledge. It is an impressive field, which has gained the attention of linguists for many years. Language acquisition and second language learning have been dealt with as two different things due to their controversial differences in terms of age and environment. Linguists separate between first language acquisition and second language learning in that the first prompts from natural and unconscious language use and in most cases leads to conversational fluency; while second language learning refers to the conscious knowledge of language that occurs through formal instruction but does not necessarily lead to conversational fluency of language. Fillmore (1989:311) states that this definition seems too inflexible because some components of language use are at first conscious and then become unconscious or automatic through practice. However, Brown (1994: 48)

indicates that both learning and acquisition are necessary for communicative competence particularly at higher skill levels. For these reasons, it can be argued that a learning acquisition continuum is more rigorous than any description of how language abilities are promoted.

Linguists did not agree on a specific definition of 'acquisition' and 'learning' .Some writers differentiate between these two terms e.g (Krashen ,1975; Yule,1986 and Bley-Vroman, 1989). Other writers use them interchangeably, (e.g., Dulay et al,1982; Ellis, 1986 and Hatch,1978). Most linguists agree that acquisition of native language (NL) is much easier than acquisition of second language(SLA). Krashen (1985: 1) states that adult second language learners have at their disposal two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in a second language acquisition , which is a " subconscious process identical in all important ways to the process children utilize in acquiring their first language" and learning which is a " conscious process that results in knowing about language".

Ritchie (1978) uses the terms ' acquisition' and 'acquirer' rather than 'learning' and 'learner' as covering terms for both acquisition and learning. Ritchie states that an account of the capacity for language use " requires more than an account of the user's grammar and behavioral strategies".

Mclaughlin (1987:20) argues that acquisition comes about through meaningful interaction in a natural communication setting whereby speakers are not concerned with the form. On the other hand, Dulay et al(1982) use the terms 'acquisition' and 'learning' interchangeably. Likewise, Hatch(1978) doesn't distinguish between language acquisition and learning.

The field of second language learning research received considerable impetus in 1967with Corder's influential paper " The Significance of Learners' Errors".

Errors in which he suggested that in spite of the differences that may be found , the process of first language acquisition and second language acquisition may very well be the same. He states that " given the motivation , it is inevitable that a human being will learn a second language if he is exposed to the language data".

During the early 1970s second language acquisition research has expanded , and similarities in first and second language learner production data as well as proposals that account for differences began to appear. Corder's suggestion has been advocated by some recent studies in second language acquisition which have attempted to find similarities between first and second language acquisition, e.g., Dulay and Burt(1973; 1974a &b). Hatch(1974), a leading researcher in children's second language acquisition suggests that if we believe that language learning is ruled and governed and that language acquisition is the development of the rules of the language , then there must be some similarities in strategies to acquire these rules.

Schumann(1978:34) considers SLA as one aspect of acculturation, and the degree to which a learner acculturates to the TL group will control the degree to which he acquires the second language.

2.1.1.1 Language Acquisition Approaches

Children acquire their first language naturally without receiving any specific teaching. In the pre-school period in particular, children's acquisition of language happens unconsciously due to boundless exposure from their parents and elder brothers and sisters. Teaching at this stage considered abnormal whereas parental role is more affective any attempts made by parents try to help their young children to speak the language will be supportive. Candlin and Mercer (2001: 254) argue that childern in the pre-school period do

not need any teaching methodology. They think that children's acquisition of their first language, happens naturally because it's an inevitable. However, linguists did not agree on how first language is acquired. There are three main theoretical trends to first language acquisition imminent – behaviourism, innatism and the interactionist position - are summarized in the paragraphs below:

Behaviourism

Behaviourists believe that language acquisition is a matter of habit formation. According to them habits are formed through the repeated associations between the stimulus and the response, which were supported by reinforcements. Ingram (1989: 58), states that language acquisition is the result of imitation, practice, habit formation and appropriate feedback. In their first attempts to speak, children imitate the sounds and patterns they hear around them and receive positive reinforcement for doing so. These imitations are not random. Unlike a parrot, children's imitation is often selective and based on what they are currently learning. Ingram's behaviorist views of language learning agree with the psycholinguistic views to some extent particularly in adopting stimulus response theory in language learning. They assume that children learn language by listening to adults and then they form their own language which may not be as correct as the adults' language. Papalia et al (1985) stated that " Children hear their parents speak, they copy them and are reinforced for this behavior, thus they learn the language. Also, Skinner (1957) indicates that language behavior can be studied through observation of external factors like frequency, imitation, and reinforcement. According to this trend , the recurrence of utterances used and heard by the child will positively influence language development. Imitation of adults has been considered as initial step in language acquisition. According to Clark (1977:298) reinforcement, is defined as the reward, appraisal or punishment element . Children are rewarded when they make

utterances that similar to the adults utterances and would be punished and corrected whenever their utterances vary from the adults' structures. Thus, the views of this approach of language learning paved the way to the appearance of contrastive analysis.

Innatism:

The innatist approach is one of the most prominent mentalist approaches in language learning. It appeared in the early sixties influenced by Noam Chomsky's theory of language acquisition. It holds the view that language acquisition is not a matter of habit formation as the behaviorists claim, but it is a product of rule formation. According to Chomsky(1981: 71) humans are thought to possess certain innate predisposition to induce the rules of the target language from the input to which they are exposed. Once they acquire these rules , learners will be able to create and comprehend novel utterances". He argues that children are born with natural language aptitudes even before going to school. They possess an innate special ability that allow them to know the rules of a language formation using the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) which he also calls the Universal Grammar or the 'black box'. He claims that the environment acts to stimulate the LAD.

However this approach is not opposed only by its opponents but it was also criticized by its own supporters. Piaget (1953) indicates that since it neglects the social side of language acquisition, which depends on exposure and interaction. Children who are born with a hearing defect or kept isolated for any reason are unlikely to develop their language system in the same way as those who are surrounded by language.

The Interactionist Position

It is a social interaction theory .It was founded by Vygotsky (1978).He is a psychologist and social constructivist. He believes that social interaction is the key to language learning because it enables learners to use the language through social interaction. Vygotsky and his supporters opposed the behaviorist views of language learning and acquisition which is based on the stimulus response theory. It reflects the strong effect of the environment and the learner's language development. In this regard, Vygotsky assumes that physical interaction with the language environment is crucially vital for the learner to attain real language acquisition. He thinks that having just innate language aptitudes without real social interaction will hinder language and for this reason children who are deprived from direct physical interaction encounter huge difficulties in language learning and acquisition.

In the 1960s, research in the field of first language learning and acquisition was tremendously influenced by the study of second language acquisition both at the theoretical , practical ,and empirical levels. At the theoretical level, researchers in first language acquisition have been working with new ideas about language and language learning process . Concepts such as imitation and habit-formation to some extent have been replaced by notions which emphasize the child's own creativity in constructing his knowledge of the language.

At the practical level, first language researchers have developed new methods for collecting and analyzing children's speech. These methods together with others, have been used in the field of second language learning , to gather data and accumulate evidence about the sequences and processes that are involved.

In emphasizing the importance of adequate knowledge of the first language for studying a second language. Littlewood(1984) states that "our increased knowledge of first language acquisition has served as backcloth for perceiving and understanding new facts about second language learning"(p.4). In addition, many researchers see their long term goal is to produce a single theory of language acquisition , which might account for first and second language learning within one framework.

2.1.2 Factors Affecting First and Second Language Acquisition

There are many factors that have influential impact in second language learning. This section will discuss some of the most prominent and widely investigated ones.

2.1.2.1 Age

It has been largely observed that children learn second language more easily and more proficiently than adults. After settling in another language community, children seem to be very efficient in picking up the new language, whereas their parents often seem to experience great difficulty in acquiring the same level of L2 proficiency as their children. This largely observed phenomenon has led Lenneberg (1967) to suggest that there is an optimal age , or a critical period for L2 learning, since there appear to be definite changes in the ability to acquire language after the early teens.

Van Els 1984:104)stated that there are two conceptions for second language learning. First, children are better language learners than adults. Second, there's special "knack" or 'talent' for second language learning, which is not possessed by every individual at the same level. In line with this, Bertkua (1974)

maintains that in adulthood, the learner rarely achieves native –like fluency in a second language. Likewise, Yule (1985:151) states that even in ideal acquisition situations, very few adults seem to reach native-like proficiency in using second language.

In this vein, Penfield (1964) indicates that the young child's brain is uniquely well adapted for language learning and that there is an 'optimum age' during which multiple languages may be learned proficiently, with a little effort. Penfield places this multiple age for language learning with in the first decade of life. Scovel (1969:252) takes the view that it is impossible for adults to master a language without a foreign accent and suggests that it would be futile for teachers to try to rid students of their foreign accents.

Schumann (1975) links the notion of a critical period with effective changes that occur in the learner at the onset of puberty. It is argued that children have a greater ' emphatic' capacity, the capacity of putting oneself in someone else's shoes , than adults; and that children have not yet developed inhibitions about their self-identity, and so they are not afraid to sound ridiculous and they are prepared to take risks when experimenting with their TL knowledge. Dulay and Burt (1978)argued that young children are not affected in their L2 learning by negative attitudes toward speakers of that language and generally children have strong integrative motivation to learn the language. This means that they approach the task of learning with a low 'socio-affective filter' (9).

On the other hand, Krashen (1985) indicates that older acquirers progress more quickly in the early stages because they obtain more comprehensible input than younger learners. He thinks that the input to the older learners is more comprehensible because their knowledge of the world makes it more meaningful than to the younger learners.

In the light of this background, the researcher concludes that language learning and acquisition is much easier for learners before puberty period than to older ones.

2.1.2.2 Socio-psychological Environment

Researches written on second language acquisition and learning have stressed the great role played by social and psychological factors in the process of language learning. It shows the significant influence of the learner's feelings, motives, needs, and mood on language learning . However not all of these feelings are supportive, and some of them have negative impact on language learning. Brown (1994: 51) state that:

"Very young children are totally egocentric. The world revolves about them, and they see all events as focusing on themselves. As children grow older, they become aware of themselves, more self-conscious as they seek to both define and understand their self-identity. Therefore they develop inhibitions about this self-identity, fearing to expose too much self-doubt"

Ehrman (1996) indicates that psychological factors influence language input particularly in the classroom depending on the learner's state of mind or disposition, the affective filter limits what is noticed and what is acquired. A learner may put the filter up when stressed, or unmotivated, and let the filter down when relaxed and motivated. This hypothesis shows why some learners given the same instructional opportunities may be successful while others may not. Everyone uses many ways to defend himself but sometimes these defense mechanisms become dysfunctional in the face of language anxiety, language ego, and motivation, as will be seen below:

Anxiety

Anxiety is one of the most effective psychological factors in Language learning. It refers to lack of confidence when communicating in a new language and it ranks high among the factors influencing formal language learning. According to Ehrman (1996: 92) there are two kinds of anxiety: Situational anxiety, that appears in response to a particular situation such as giving speech in front of a crowd, and 'trait anxiety' which is represented by fear from the future. Psychologists agree that the condition of anxiety declines as the learner restores his confidence in using the language (1999: 6). One of the most common negative impacts of anxiety on language learning is that some learners are reluctant to take part in the class activities.

language Ego

Language ego is known as the fear of committing errors in language learning. According to Brown (1994: 70) language ego is one of the most fatal barriers of language learning. He states that:

At puberty, these inhibitions are heightened in the trauma of undergoing critical physical, cognitive and emotional changes. Their egos are affected not only by how they understand themselves, but also on how they reach out beyond themselves, how they relate to others socially, and how they use the communicative process to bring on affective equilibrium.

Ehrman (1999:69) points out that the degree to which individuals tend to compartmentalize their experience, which affects receptivity to outside influences such as new languages and cultures. Learners, like others, try to build sets of defenses to protect their ego. In classrooms, students' learning preferences depend on how thick or thin their ego boundaries are. Students with thin ego boundaries enjoy content-based learning where the focus is on

what is being said more than how it is said. Many of them prefer non-linear approaches to learning and enjoy unexpected learning events. Students with thick ego boundaries, on the other hand, prefer a clearly structured curriculum and display some discomfort with role-playing and similar suspensions of everyday.

Motivation

Motivation is considered as one of the most influential factors in any language learning process. According to Woolfolk (1998:372) motivation is an internal state that arouses, directs and maintains behavior"

There are two types of motivation: Integrative motivation which is represented by the learner's interest to learn the target language and to know its culture. Gardener and Masgoret (2003:126) define integrative motivation as openness. In the same vein , Ellis (1997) indicates that learners learn target language in order to fulfill the desire to mix up in the people and culture of the target language. The second type is called instrumental motivation which refers to the learner's aim is to learn the target language to get a job or to travel, etc. It is also called the intrinsic motivation. Ehrman (1996:138) states that intrinsic motivation (instrumental) is powerful and likely to lead to deep learning. An intrinsically motivated learner will take every opportunity to satisfy the motivation-driven needs to expand and deepen knowledge, whereas an exclusively extrinsically motivated learner is vulnerable to a kind of disaffection. Ellis (1997: 75) points out that there are at least four different types of motivation often experienced when learning a new language. The first is 'instrumental motivation', which, for example, helps to pass an exam or getting a better job. The second is 'integrative motivation', which helps people who are interested in the people and culture represented by the target

language group to be more integrated in the society. The third is 'resultative motivation' when motivation is the result of learning. Learners may become more or less motivated (frustrated) according to the degree of success they achieve. The last type is 'intrinsic motivation' when learners find the learning tasks they are asked to do intrinsically motivating. Hence, motivation can arise and decline according to their interest in learning activities.

Social Factors

The linguistic environment and the social situation play a very crucial role in language learning and acquisition. Researchers have come to recognize that language occurs in a social context. It involves natural (informal) situation and the classroom (formal) situation.

According to Krashen(1976) formal and informal linguistic environments refer to “classroom instruction” and “outside the classroom exposure” to the target language. He states that formal second language instruction is ineffective, and that living in the second language environment contributes more to L2 proficiency than formal language instruction and that exposure to L2 is more consistent and meaningful.

Likewise, Steinberg (1993:210) points out that a natural situation for a second language learning “is the one where second language is experienced in a situation that is similar to that in which the native language is learned”. This means that language is experienced in conjunction with the objects, situations and events of everyday life. It is not taught in a classroom. Elaborating on this, he also indicates that: “In the natural situation, language is but one aspect of life, an aspect which accompanies other life events. In the classroom, however, language itself becomes that prime aspect of life around which all else

revolves". This indicates that the language experienced by the learners in the classroom is planned. It also indicates that the classroom is an artificially constructed situation for language learning and the teacher is the main source of language for the learners.

Emphasizing the language environment and exposure to language, Davies (1980:97) points out that evidence from first and second language acquisition language studies suggests that the learner acquires language according to an inner structural pattern, and is best served by a rich language environment which allows him to speak when he is ready to do so" .

Fathman and Precup (1983) studied the strategies used by second language learners both children and adults in formal and informal settings found that informal learners used a greater variety of communication strategies and rarely relied on first language transfer , while instructed learners were more concerned with the form and engaged in more monitoring than other learners.

As far as the language environment is concerned, Davies (1980) states that evidence from first and second language acquisition studies suggests that the learner acquires language according to an inner structural pattern and is best served by a rich environment .

Research studies have also shown that, there is a direct relationship between the learner's attitudes and the learner's motivation. Gardener's (1985) in his socio – educational model which was designed to study the role of social factors in second language learning. He interrelated four aspects of second language learning: Social and cultural milieu (beliefs about language and culture), individual learner differences (motivation and language aptitude), the setting (formal or informal), and learning outcomes.

So far we have discussed some of the main factors which significantly affect learning a second language in different ways. In the following section the influence of mother tongue in language learning will be discussed.

2.1.2.3 Interference

During the 1940s and through the 1960s , there was strong assumption that most of the difficulties facing second language learner were imposed by his /her first language . Fries in his forward to Lado's (1957)Linguistics Across Cultures states that: " The basic problems of foreign language learning arise not out any essential difficulty in the features of the new language themselves but primarily out of the special set created by the first language habits".

Research studies have shown that knowledge of one's native language helps and facilitates the learning of a second language. Corder(1992:29) states that previous knowledge and skills are intimately involved in the acquisition of the new knowledge and skills". Codrer points out that " the mother tongue plays an important role in the acquisition of second language at the start of learning, in the process of learning and in the use of the target language. In the same vein , Rubin(1975:47) stresses that it has been observed that a person learns his second or third language " more easier than his first language just because he has had practice in attending the important formal features of a language".

In learning one's first language , some scholars suggested that meaning comprehension is prior to structure acquisition. Macnamara(1972) argues that an infant starts to learn his first language until he can understand what is said without hearing the utterance. As far as second language learning is concerned ,the learner already has a known structure which can be used to sort out some of the message. In this, Bley –Vorman (1989:51) points out that " A great deal about language universals is implicit in a single language precisely because

these are universals". These universals about the language are available to the foreign language learner by observing the characteristics of the native language , and by making the very assumption that the foreign language is not an utterly different sort of thing from the native language.

Since errors are so easy to be observed and are good indicators of a person's level of L2 knowledge, there have been many studies done on errors. There is some confusion in interpreting the causes of errors. In this vein, Steinberg (1993:256) points out that " only a minority of errors can be attributed to the interference". She related most of the learners errors to the application of first language strategies. "These strategies are applied when relevant L2 is not yet known or incompletely learned".

Controversies over the role played by first language in second language acquisition have resulted from the vague and varying uses of the terms 'interference' and 'transfer' . Dulay et al (1982:96), states that: the present research results suggests that the crucial impact that first language has on second language acquisition " may be with the accent, and not with the grammar or the syntax ".

On the other hand , Krashen (1981:7) argues that some empirical data for a position first held by Newmark (1966) show that 'interference' is not the first language " getting in the way" of second language skills. Rather it is the result of the performer "falling back" on old knowledge when he/she has not yet acquired enough of the second language.

Several recent studies point out that the hypothesis that 'the learner falls back' on the first language when he/she has not acquired aspects of the L2 is inadequate to account for all of the data. Wode(1978) points out that first

language influenced errors may only occur at certain stages in the development of language learning .

Interference has been used to refer to two distinct linguistic phenomena , one that is essentially psychological and another that is essentially sociolinguistic. To Dulay et al (1982:98), the psychological use of the term interference " refers to the influence of old habits when new ones are being learned", whereas the sociolinguistic use of interference "refers to language interactions ,such as linguistic borrowing and language switching, that occur when a two - language communities are in contact".

2.1.3 Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive analysis as a new approach in second language learning has appeared in 1950s and 1960s. I t appeared as a product of the behaviorist views of second language learning. It attempts to predict areas of difficulty and none difficulty learners would encounter by comparing the linguistic system of the learner's native language and that of the target language. Supporters of this approach assumed that the features of the target language that were similar to the native language of the learner ,would be easy to acquire, and those features of the TL which differ from those of the NL of the learner would be difficult to acquire (Lado,1957).

Contrastive analysis as an influential language learning trend was developed by the efforts of Robert Lado in 1957. The central idea of this approach revolves around the significant role of the native language on second language learning. It was built on the hypothesis that if the structure of target language is similar to that of the native language, this will ease the process of second language learning, however if the structures of the two languages are divergent, then second language learning will be more complicated.(Beebe,

1988; Spolsky, 1989).

Lado(1957) defines contrastive analysis as " The comparison of any two languages and cultures to discover and describe the problems that the speaker of one language will have in learning the other". According to Spolsky (1989: 117) contrastive analysis is the comparison of the structures of two languages and the mapping of points of differences; these differences are the chief source of difficulty for the language learner, and they can form the basis for the preparation of language texts and tests, and for the correction of students' learning language. Fisiak (1981:1) defines contrastive linguistics as "a sub discipline of linguistics concerned with the comparison of two or more languages or subsystems of languages in order to determine both the differences and similarities between them".

Fries (1945:9) states that "The most effective materials are those that are based upon scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with parallel description of the native language of the learner".

Emphasizing the importance of employing first language knowledge in studying second language , Littlewood(1984:4) states that " our increased knowledge of first language acquisition has served as a backcloth for perceiving and understanding new facts about second language learning. knowledge of the mother tongue affects the learning of the second language, and these are the areas where interference can be predictable. Whitman (1970) notes that CA involves five different procedures :

1. Description: The teacher, using the tools of formal grammar, explicitly describes the two languages in question.

2. Selection: It reflects the conscious and unconscious assumptions of the investigator concerning the nature of linguistic contrast, interference, errors and so forth.
3. Procedures: Which is the CA itself, i.e. the mapping of one system on to the other?
4. Prediction of errors and difficulties on the basis of the first three procedures.
5. Verification: It is to find out if the predictions are true in reality or not.

Nevertheless, this claim is only appealing to those who have attempted to learn or teach a foreign language .In line with this, Lado, in Littlewood (1984:17) maintains that :

"Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him and those elements that are different will be difficult."

Therefore, the notion that linguistic similarities and differences between target language and the native language could be used to facilitate second language learning led to the appearance of contrastive analysis hypotheses.

2.1.3.1 Contrastive Analysis Hypotheses

The conviction that linguistic differences can be used to predict learning difficulty produced the notion of the contrastive analysis hypothesis(CAH). Lado (1957), influenced by Fries (1945) and Haugen(1953), laid the foundation of contrastive analysis hypothesis. Lado states " We can predict and describe the patterns that which cause difficulty in learning and those that will not cause difficulty , by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language and the culture of the learner (Lado,1957:9).

In the introduction of his influential book ' Linguistics Across Cultures', which laid the basis of CAH, Lado (1957:2) relates the learning difficulties to the differences between the target language and the native language. In this regard he states:

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the target language and culture both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture , and respectively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practiced by the natives.

Wardhaugh (1970) views contrastive analysis hypotheses as consisting of two versions, a strong version and a weak version. The strong form states that all errors can be predicted by identifying the differences between the target language and the learner's first language. This version indicates that the prime cause of difficulty and errors in foreign language learning is the interference of the learner's mother tongue. The weak form of the hypothesis claimed only to be diagnostic. CA can be used to identify which errors are the result of the interference .Thus, according to the weak hypothesis, contrastive analysis needs to work hand in hand with error analysis. First, actual errors must be identified by analyzing a corpus of the learners' language. Then contrastive analysis can be used to establish which errors in the corpus can be attributed to differences between first and second language.

Larsen(1991:53) points out that " where two languages were similar , positive transfer would occur; where they are different , negative transfer or interference , would result".

Contrastive analysis distinguishes between two types of transfer: positive and negative transfer.

2.1.3.2 Transfer

According to Brown (1987:81) " transfer is a general term describes the carryover of previous performance or knowledge to subsequent learning". He distinguished between two types of transfer positive and negative transfer in that positive transfer occurs" when the prior knowledge benefits the learning task . That is , when a previous item is correctly applied to the present subject matter". On the other hand, negative transfer occurs" when the previous performance disrupts the performance on a second task". He assigned the term 'interference' to negative transfer.

Behaviorist psychologists, who first defined "transfer" technically used it to refer to a process described as the automatic, uncontrolled and unconscious use of past learned behaviors in the attempt to produce new responses. Transfer has also been used by educational psychologists and educators to describe the use of the past knowledge and experience in new situations. Transfer is also used to refer to a characteristic of the learners' performance.

Thus , from the behaviorist perspective , when the first language habits are helpful to acquire second language habits, this called positive transfer , whereas when the first language impedes second language learner from learning the new habits , then it is regarded as negative transfer. Chamot (1990:108) points out that the focus in recent research has been on positive transfer. Learners may activate first language knowledge in either language without retaining specific rules in memory , and may do so for purposes for either communication or learning.

In a number of papers Zobl (1980) views transfer and developmental influences not as two opposing processes, but rather as interacting ones. He argues that the effect of the native language can be manifested in prolonging or delay in

structuring of interlanguage rule or the number of rule traversed on the path from acquisition of one form to another.

Selinker(1991) classifies transfer under a slightly broader topic of "Cross linguistic influence". In the same vein, Kaplan(1966) suggests that first language "thought patterns" in rhetoric may play a crucial transfer role in second language discourse production. On the other hand, Mohle and Ropach (1988) argues that the emergence of procedural transfer especially in high demand task situations when, for instance, automatized syntactic of frames , are transferred from L1 but filled with L2 declarative non-automatized knowledge.

Moreover, Blum and Levenston (1978) refer to the creative transfer' in the context of lexical simplification as the process in which a language learner attributes to a lexical item of the target language all the functions – referential and conceptual meaning, connotation, collectability, register restriction of its assumed first language translation equivalent. In this regard , Kumaravadivelu (1988:316) points out that transfer is not a mechanical process , but it is a creative one in that learners do not blindly transfer a L1 lexical item into L2 discourse , but it requires morphological derivations and syntactical transformations.

Furthermore, Killerman(1983:117) states that "transferability is not in itself a predictor of performance , but is one of the determinants of whether L1 structure will be treated as language specific (not transferable to a given L2). Or language neutral (that is, transferable to a given L2). To Romaine (1988:210) , transfer seems to be more in evidence in the earlier than later stages of acquisition when a learner has more target language to rely on.

From all these the it can be concluded that transfer is mainly refers to the influence of the first language on the learning and formation of the second language.

Transfer and overgeneralization are viewed by many linguists(e.g. Littlewood, 1984; Brown, 1987) as manifestation of one principle of learning , i.e. the interaction of previously learned material with a present learning event. Therefore, to them, they are not distinct processes.

In over- generalization, the learner uses his /her previous knowledge of the second language , whereas, in the case of transfer , the learner uses his/her previous native language experience as a means of organizing second language data. Brown (1987:82) stresses the facilitating effects of the mother tongue, and points out that " the native language of a second language learner is often positively transferred , in this case the learner benefits from the facilitating effect of the first language". According to Brown (1987) "interference and overgeneralization are the negative counterparts of the facilitating processes of transfer and generalization". He considers generalization as the negative transfer of previously learned second language material to a present second language context.

Moreover, Littlewood (1984:30) points out that many apparent instances of overgeneralization or transfer may likewise be the result of an immediate communication strategy than of an underlying system, i.e. in order to cope with a communication problem , the learner may have consciously recourse to mother tongue system (transfer) or use second language items which he knows are not completely appropriate (overgeneralization).

Since most of the studies stressed the importance of language transfer as a significant factor in SLA, it should be taken into account if an adequate description of language learning is to be achieved.

In the 1970s, contrastive analysis as a tool to investigate the process of SLA came under fire from many linguists and began to lose its popularity, mainly because of its theoretical assumptions which were behavioristic in nature. They began to doubt its ability to solve second learning problems. Studies have shown that learners' errors do not just occur due to mother tongue influence. Odlin (1989) argues that difficulties in learning a second language do not always result from the differences of the two languages. He added that "because of its weaknesses, contrastive analysis can be useful only to explain why such specific errors appear". Likewise, Beeb (1988) indicates that many research findings proved that sometimes similarities cause more difficulties in learning a second language than differences".

Nickel (1986) argues that the notion that contrastive analysis is sufficient and that it should take priority over any other approaches of language learning".

In the same vein, Carol (1967:4) doubts the reality of the interference. He thinks it is a question of lack of learning rather than just interference from the first language stating that: I have been assuming that positive and negative transfer Phenomena in second language learning are reality. We could in fact, ask the question whether transfer phenomena are not simply artifacts of particularly training methods, or rather the absence of suitable training methods. Many examples of interference seem to be the result of what we may call un guided imitative behavior, or untutored responding in terms of prior learning. Likewise, Schacter and Cele-Murcia (1977,p.445) states that:

In view of such criticism of both the pedagogical value and the theoretical justification of CA, it is not surprising that the proponents of the CA hypothesis are dwindling rapidly and

that the theory behind it has lost its prestige and popularity. Nor is it surprising that a new and different approach should be so well received.

In this case, the newly elaborated methodological tool . EA, follows closely the psycholinguistic search for an alternative to the behaviorist's habit- formation theory language acquisition process as described by Chomsky (1965). This alternative involves viewing the learner as one who interacts, actively with the new language , developing new hypothesis about the structure of the language he is learning as well as modifying and discarding earlier formed ones".

Wardhaugh (cited in Schumann Stenon, 1974) says "A decade or so ago , CA was still a fairly new and exciting idea apparently holding a great promise for teaching and curriculum construction. Now the CA hypothesis has not proved to be workable , at least not in the strong version in which it was originally expressed . In its weak version, it has proved to be helpful and undoubtedly will continue to be so as linguistic theory develops. However, the hypothesis probably will have less influence on L2 teaching and on course construction in the next decade than it apparently has had in the last decade."

In general, CA took the position that the difficulties of the foreign language learner could be predicted from the study of the differences between the mother tongue and the target language .Language learning was considered as an acquisition of a set of habits. Learners errors in the TL were seen as mother tongue habits interfering with the habits to be acquired in the TL. However, opposition of these behavioristic perspective of second language learning led to the emerge of error analysis as a more inclusive approach.

2.1.3.4 Some differences between Arabic and English languages

Smith Bernard (1987) in his comparative study between Arabic and English languages states that Arabic is based on three consonant-root. He indicates that all verbs, nouns, adjectives, particles , etc. are formed by putting these

three root consonants into fixed vowel patterns sometimes modified by simple prefixes and suffixes. He points out that there is no verb in the present tense in Arabic and that the copula forms (am, is, are) are not expressed clearly. The copula verb 'be' is therefore commonly omitted in English by Arabic speakers particularly in using the present progressive verb forms. Examples:

1. The Arabic sentence begins with a verb whereas the English sentence begins with a noun.
2. English is written from left to right whereas Arabic is written from right to left.
3. There's no distinction between upper and lower case in Arabic which is found English.

Sentence Structure and Word Order:

4. Under the influence of the *Qur'an*, writers in Arabic aim at rhythmical balance and coordination, with the split between subject and predicate occurring midway in a sentence.

5. Arabic favors coordination over subordination; sentences often begin with *and* or so

6. In English the word order is S-V-O: the subject precedes the verb.

E.g. Our team will win the match.

In Arabic the word structure is V-S-O: the verb precedes the subject.

e.g. Hoped our team win the match.

7. Arabic uses *that* clause where English uses infinitive. E.g. I want that you stay.

Nouns and Pronoun

8. Personal pronouns are often added to verbs in Arabic: My father he

lives in California. In English they are not.

9. Relative pronoun makes no human/nonhuman distinction, and pronoun object is retained in a restrictive relative clause in Arabic. e.g. Here is the student which you met here last week.

10. Singular noun is used after a numeral above ten in Arabic: e.g. He has eleven cousins.

Verbs

11. No equivalent of the auxiliary "*do" in Arabic*:
e.g. You have a brother ?

12. No verb *be* in present tense: e.g. They going to the movies. Where the post office?

13. In English there are modal verbs which are not found in Arabic.

14.No gerund or infinitive forms in Arabic which is found in English.

15. The perception of tense in Arabic is different from that in English.

16. Past perfect is formed with *be*: e.g. They were eat.

17. Reported speech retains tense of original: e.g. She said she is leaving.

18. The simple present tense in Arabic covers the meanings of the simple and progressive in English: She working now. E.g. She working every day.

Adjectives and Adverbs

19. Adjectives follow nouns in Arabic: e.g. a book interesting long.

Articles

20.No indefinite article in Arabic:
e.g. He is student.

The definite article is used before the days of the week, some months, some place names, and in many idiomatic expressions: e.g. He went to the Peru. He

is still in the bed.

Similarly, Goron(1992:21) points out that there are no phrasal and prepositional verbs(e.g. put off , get along with) in Arabic therefore this one of the main sources of errors made Arabic speaking learners. Likewise, Nasr(1963) observes that the English indefinite articles ' a/an, the' have no equivalent in Arabic except 'the' which is used to corresponds to 'al'. The use of 'a, an' in English causes real difficulties to Arabic speaking learners of English. Thus, Smith Bernard states that there is no indefinite article in Arabic and that the definite article 'the' has a range of use in Arabic different from that in English. He adds that the indefinite article causes most of errors made by Arab learners .They are commonly omitted with singular and plural countable nouns in Arabic as in the following examples :

a. This is a book.→ This is book →This book
b. He was a soldier. →He was soldier →He soldier

When the English indefinite article presented it tends to be used wherever the definite article is not used.

c. These are books→ These are a books
d. I want rice → I want a rice

He further points out that there is a definite article in Arabic which takes the form of a prefix (al). It used in English to refer back to indefinite nouns previously mentioned and also for unique references (the sun, the moon, the sea,…etc). Therefore the main reason behind the problems learners face in using is the interference from the mother language tongue which is Arabic. Also most of the errors of word order and articles arise from interference.

e.g. This book the teacher./ ha:za kita:bul malim/

Goron (1992:19) listed some of the cases in which articles are omitted in English are : in bed, at dawn, on Tuesday whereas in Arabic they take definite article as in " al sarir, al fajr, ..etc.

The researcher shares the same views in that most of these observations are seen in the performance of the Saudi learners. However, through exerting more efforts and using more efficient methods such difficulties can be overcome.

Generally, it can be concluded that these comparisons between Arabic and English languages could be of great value to our present study. They can be used to facilitate grammatical explanation as well as to show the linguistic differences between the two languages.

2.1.4. Interlanguage

Introducing the term 'interlanguage', Selinker (1972) theorizes that there is " a psychological latent in the brain". This psychological structure is activated when one attempts to learn a L2. Selinker , moreover, stated that in a given situation , the learner's utterances differ from those of a native speaker who attempts to convey the same meaning. This comparison reveals a separate linguistic system which can be observed when the utterances of the learner who attempts to produce a target language norm are studied .

To study the psychological processes involved, however, Selinker (1972) states that one should compare the learner's first language to two things: (1) utterances in the native language to convey the same message which is made by the learner , (2) utterances in the target language to convey the same message made by the native speaker of the language.

The intermediary system of the second language learners is given the name 'interlanguage' by Selinker. It is called "Idiosyncractic Dialect" by Corder and it is termed " The Approximative System" by Nemser.

2.1.4.1 Fossilization

Fossilization as a linguistic term was first used by Slinker (1971:215) as one of the chief characteristic of the interalnguage theory. He refers to it as a mechanism which is assumed to exist in the latent psychological structure. Selinker regards it as erroneous constructions, terms ,rules and subsystems which speakers of a particular native language will tend to keep in their interanguage relative to a particular target language, regardless of the age of the learner or the amount of explanation or instruction he/she receives in the TL. It is a latent in the brain that can be activated whenever the learner attempts to produce a sentence in the TL.

Bley Vorman(1989:46) states that foreign learners reach a certain stage of learning which is the stage of short success in which learners then 'stabilize'. In the same vein, Littlewood (1984: 34) indicates that a learner is expected to progress further through continuous learning , so that his IL moves closer and closer to the target language system and contains fewer and fewer errors. However, some errors will never disappear entirely, such errors are often described as fossilized, meaning that they have become permanent features of the learner's speech.

According to Selinker (1991:29) fossilization is a term used to "cover the complex phenomenon of the cessation of the interlanguage learning often far from the target language norms".

As for the sources of fossilization , Selinker (1971:30) points out that sources of fossilization may be related to restricted second language input or due to motivational factors.

Selinker(1972) also indicates that if the fossizable items, rules and subsystems which occur in interlanguage performance are the result of the NL , then they

are related the process of language transfer , but if they are the result of an identifiable approach by the learner to the material be learnt , then they are related to strategies of second language learning.(p.216).

2.1.4.2.The Approximative System

This term ‘ the approximative system’ was introduced by Nemser (1971) . He used it to distinguish the learner’s system from both his mother tongue and the target language. According to him ‘approximative’ it means that the learner progresses towards the target language with a developmental system in nature. The term “system” indicates that the learner uses a set of rules and therefore it is not random.

According to Nemser (1971) the importance of the study of the apprroximative system comes from that it can provide us with attested information or immediate utility in teaching, course designing, and on patterns of behavior pertaining to learning the principal structures of the target language. He indicates that materials which are based on contrastive analysis studies are not so effective, because they take into consideration only the learner’s mother tongue and the target language. He thinks if the learner’s learning behavior as revealed by the study of his approximative system is understood, we could be able to foresee the problems of a particular learner with respect to a particular target language.

The approximative system is affected by two types of interferences which are the internal interference that is related to the learner’s strategies operate on the input, and external interference which is dealing with the learner’s previous learning experience.

2.1.4.3 Idiosyncratic Dialect

Corder (1967) states that linguists should focus on the process of second language acquisition and the learning strategies adopted by l2 learners. Therefore, he wrote many articles about the nature of the learner's language. Corder believes that the learner has special language which he refers to as the learner's idiosyncratic dialect.

It is linguistically known that any two languages which share the same rules are dialects therefore Corder(1967) considers the learner's language as a dialect because it is a language and it has grammar rules which some of them are the same as the target language rules. He goes on to say that it is regular, systematic and meaningful.

Learners having this dialect enable them to try to change it and to put it in line with the standard dialect. As for the significance of the study of the learner's dialect, Corder (1971) maintains that it tells the teacher how far the learners have progressed towards the goal and what more they have to learn yet. He also indicates that if the learners utter a correct form, we cannot take it as a proof that " the learners have learned the systems which would generate that form in a native speaker, for they might just be repeating an utterance that they heard before. They may not have understood the system behind it. In such cases it cannot be said to be using the language.

In this respect, Snow (2001) uses the term ' language-like beahaviour' to refer to those utterances that are just repeated from the memory without a real understanding to the system behind them.

According to Corder(1971) learners utterances should be studied in their situational context , but it so often happens that the learners' utterances though well-formed superficially , but it does not express what the learners intend to

say. Therefore, he has divided them into four groups: Superficially well-formed and appropriate, superficially well-formed and inappropriate , superficially deviant and appropriate, and superficially deviant and inappropriate.

Corder (1971) adds that the child's language and the language of the aphasics are deviant, idiosyncratic dialects. Poetic language ' is deliberately deviant' and the language of the aphasics is 'pathologically deviant'. However, the dialects of the children and the learners are the result of the learning process. He argues that children and second language learners acquire their languages in a similar processes in which they form hypotheses about the nature of language and test them. Here we find that the task of the L2 learners is much easier, they only have to find how the system of the target language differs from the system of their mother tongue. In so doing they commit a lot of errors which genuinely reflect a remarkable impact of the mother tongue language.

In this regards, second language learners' errors that reflect the influence of their first language are referred to as interference errors. It implies that old habits are interfering with those which are yet to be acquired. Corder (1971), believes that possession of a language makes it easy for learners who want to learn a second language,, because they have already learnt how to use some strategies of language learning and they only need to figure out how the new language is different from their mother tongue. Thus, errors should not be regarded as signs of inhibition, but they are real evidences showing strategies adopted by learners in their attempts to learn a new language.

Moreover, conducting an analysis of the learners' language will assist in adjusting our syllabuses to match the learner's built-in syllabus. Nonetheless, analyzing the learner's dialect is not an easy mission because the learner's dialect is not stable and it is difficult to interpret due to its peculiarity.

Therefore, the study of the learner's errors will enable us to understand the learner's built-in syllabus which will allow us to prepare better learning conditions.

Stressing the importance of the role of the learner's error analysis in syllabus designing, Corder (1967) states that:

> *If this can be done, we may be able to allow the learner's innate Strategies to dedicate our practice and to determine our syllabus. We may learn to adapt our ourselves to his needs rather than impose upon him our preconceptions of how he ought to learn, what he ought to learn and when he ought to learn it.*

In line with this, Lado (1957) maintains that if all our syllabuses have any considerate foundations, they are often based upon impressionistic judgments and vaguely conceived theoretical principles.

From all this it can be concluded that learners' errors should be systematically studied and that our syllabuses should be formed in such a way that they are in line with the strategies used by the learners.

2.1.5. Error Analysis:

Before the 1960s, when the behavioristic point of view of language learning was prevailing, learners' errors were considered something undesirable and to be avoided. It is because of the behaviorist perspective ,which is based on the view that people learn by responding to external stimuli and receiving proper reinforcement . A proper habit is being formed by the reinforcement, hence learning takes place. Therefore, errors were seen as wrong response to the stimulus, which should be corrected immediately after they were made. Unless corrected immediately, the error becomes a habit and wrong behavior pattern will stick in the mind. However, this point of view of learning was eventually opposed by the well-known radically different perspective proposed by

Chomsky(1959) who wrote in his review of Skinner's 'Verbal Behavior', that human learning , especially LA, cannot be explained by simply start off with a " tabula rasa" state of mind. He believes that human beings must have a certain kind of an innate capacity which can guide them through a vast number of sentences generation possibilities and have a child acquire the grammar of that language until the age of five or six with almost no exception. He called this capacity "Universal Grammar" and claimed that it is this very human faculty that linguistics aims to peruse. This rationalistic view of language ability led many linguists to criticize the behavioristic language learning style and emphasize cognitive code learning approach.

2.1.5.1.Definition of Error Analysis

Error analysis was defined by Sharma (1981:21) as "a process based on the analysis of learners' errors with one clear objective , which is evolving suitable and effective teaching and learning strategy and remedial measures necessary in certain clearly marked out areas of the foreign language."

Reid (1993) defined error analysis as the study of learners' errors, providing the way to examine the learner language, being a part of language teaching, finding out whether errors were caused by L1 interference or developmental factors .

According to Corder (1982) the errors made by the second language learners are signs of how the language is processing in the learner's mind. The importance of Learner's errors appears in many ways. First, to the teacher they are very valuable because they can enable the teacher to know the learning status of the learner. Second, they show the researcher what language learning strategies do learners use. Third, they are regarded as a tool for the learner to

use in learning the language. It deals with how the learner tests his hypotheses about the nature of the language he/she is acquiring .

James (1998) states that error analysis is the study of linguistic ignorance which investigates "what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance". The fact that learners find ways how to cope with their ignorance makes a connection between EA and learner strategies, which we divide into learning strategies and communication strategies. (62)

Corder (1975) separates between Error Analysis and performance analysis' in many ways: performance analysis is the study of the whole performance data from individual learners, while the term error analysis refers to the study of erroneous utterances produced by groups of learners" (207)

According to Richards (1971:12) error analysis is dealing with the differences between the way people learning a language and the way adult native speakers of the language use it . He stresses that the language of the adult native speaker is the standard language , and that of the learner is a transitional stage , at times deviating from the norm. He thinks that errors made by second language learners are not by nature different from those committed by native children. He continues to state that errors in second language learning are as systematic as differences between children and adults in native language learning . Emphasizing this, he made a list of typical errors in verbal groups in English committed by second language learners. These are common errors made by learners with completely different tongues.

Building upon this we can say that errors made by native language learners are un systematic whereas, those made by second language learners are systematic and therefore they need to be investigated and studied.

Error analysis first began as taxonomies collecting and classifying errors made by second language learners. James (1998) indicates that at that time it was targeting causes of errors made by native speakers. By the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970 error analysis developed to become the most preferred to the extent that Cele-Muricia (1977: 70) called it "the darling of the 70s"

2.1.5.2 The Significance of the Learners Errors

Corder(1967:167) states that the errors are significant to the teacher in that "they tell him, if he undertakes a systematic analysis, how far towards the goal the learner has progressed and consequently what remains for him to teach". He also maintains that "the learner's errors give the teacher indications of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies and procedures the learner is using in learning the language". James (1998:1) maintains that errors made by learners are very valuable to the degree that they can be like a register that shows their current progress on the learned language.

Lengo (1995:20) states that errors play an important role in the study of language acquisition in general and examining second and foreign language learning in particular. Researchers are interested in errors because they are believed to contain valuable information on the strategies that people use to acquire a language . Errors are believed to be an indicator of the learners stages in their TL development. From the errors that learners commit, one can determine their level of mastery of the language systems . Again, Lengo, (ibid) explains that , the investigation of errors has a double purpose: it is diagnostic and prognostic . It is diagnostic , because it can tell us about the learner's development at a given point during the learning process and prognostic

because it can tell course organizers to reorient language learning materials on the learner's current problems.

Also Corder (1967) in his remarkable paper 'The significance of learners' errors' mentioned five major points regarding learner's error :

a. The procedures of second language learning are not different from those of the first language acquisition.

b. learners' errors reveal their inbuilt syllabus or what they have learned, and not what they have been taught.

c. Errors indicate that both learners of L1 and L2 have an independent language system – which is called 'transitional competence'.

d. There's a difference in meaning between an 'error' and a 'mistake' , therefore they should not be used interchangeably.

e. Errors are valuable to the teacher , the researcher , and the learner. They can tell the teacher what he or she should teach, and provide the researcher with the information about how the learning proceeds, and they enable the learners to test their hypotheses of language learning.

As already stated , an analysis of errors that have actually occurred can give more reliable results upon which remedial materials can be constructed. .Corder(1967), Wilkins (1968), Duskova (1969), Buteau (1970) and Richards (1971) have all emphasized the need of an 'error-based analysis'.

The researcher is also of the opinion that it is more fruitful to work on the known rather hypothesized errors in determining the main areas of difficultly in second language learning and in forming a proper remedial course on the basis of the findings of an error analysis. The teacher needs to make a remedial

composition , in order to point out the persistent and the most common errors. The investigator must isolate errors and determine their frequencies, i.e. what errors occur in greater frequency and consequently what errors play a greater role in the student's ability to manipulate grammatical elements to form sentences and what errors show some kind of development.

However, error analysis has been criticized from both theoretical and methodological point of view. Hobson, (1999) claims that errors are also often classified very subjectively and that analysts do not always know enough about the languages they are studying to notice subtle and important differences. Analysts do not always correctly identify L1 influence on the learner's language that may influence the source of the error.

2.1.5.3 Conductory of Error Analysis

According to Corder (1973) , error analysis is done in three successive stages. They are recognition of errors, description of errors , and explanation of errors.

A. Recognition of Errors

In order to recognize an error we need to know what is intended by the term "error". Corder (1973) uses the term "erroneous" to refer to utterances which are either superficially deviant or inappropriate in terms of the TL grammar. Also, Corder (1974) distinguishes between two types of errors: Errors of performance and errors of competence. The errors of performance are unsystematic and therefore they are not very serious because they can be corrected by the learners themselves. These errors include mistakes and lapses, they are mainly attributed to carelessness, lapses of memory, ill health and emotional state. As for the competence errors , they are persistent and have

serious consequences because they are systematic errors. These types of errors cannot be corrected by the learner himself.

B. Description of Errors

There are various categories for describing errors made by second language learners. Brown(1994) indicates that errors can be described as errors of addition, omission, substitution, and ordering. Since errors may differ in magnitude. They can cover all levels: phonemes, a morphemes, words, sentences and paragraphs. Therefore, errors are also divided into *global and local errors* . Brown (2000) states that Global errors can hinder communication and may prevent the message from being comprehended. Local errors , on the other hand, they do not affect comprehension of the message because they cause only a minor violation of one segment of a sentence that doesn't prevent the hearer from guessing the intended meaning of the message.

James (1998: 95-96) also states that the grammar used for describing the learner's language errors should be comprehensive, simple, self-explanatory, easily learnable and user-friendly. Therefore, he opposes scientific and pedagogic grammars and recommends descriptive grammar. According to him there are three main purposes of the description stage is to make the errors explicit, indispensable for counting errors, and make the basis for creating categories since it shows which errors are different or the same.

c. Explanation of Errors

There are various sources for the errors made by second language learners. However, there are two main views on this the first thinks that errors occur because of interference from the native language. The other, holds that the

processes adopted in acquiring a first and a second language are almost the same and that foreign language learners' errors are similar to those of first language acquisition. This trend is represented by the creative constructive theory. Besides these ,there is a third trend which relates learners errors to neither first language interference nor to second language developmental strategies. Corder (1967) maintains that learners develop inter-language grammar, idiosyncratic dialects or approximate systems, and that errors should not be just related to either the target or the mother tongue language.

The issue of relating errors to different sources have already been discussed. Although an error may be caused by interference, there are complications regarding whether the interference is phonological, syntactic or semantic. Error corrections can help in determining the type of interference, as to whether it is of phonological or syntactic origins.

According to the creative construction theory most of the errors made by second language learners are syntactic errors .It assumes that most of these errors are developmental. As for those errors which are caused by phonological interference, they are dealt with as less crucial ones by the theory.

D. Classification of Errors

Corder (1973) classifies errors in terms of the differences between the learners' utterances and the reconstructed versions. He classifies errors into four categories: omission of some required element, addition of some unnecessary or incorrect element, selection of an incorrect element and disordering of element. However, Corder himself is not satisfied by this classification. He states that this classification is not enough to describe learners' errors properly. Therefore, he adds the linguistic level of errors to the areas of morphology,

syntax, and lexicon. Classification is a controversial issue and that an error can be classified in many different ways. The following example will show this:

a. The train arrived at the station. There it remained for three hours.

b. The train arrived at the station and remained there for three hours.

c. The train arrived at the station . There remained for three hours.

In example c) there is structural error, that is marked by the omission of the subject which supposed to be 'it'. This error is corrected in (a). However, from transformational perspective a conjoined coherence omission rule is an erroneous, because 'it' is used in the wrong place in example (c). It is corrected and properly used in (b)

According to Lengo(1995:25) errors can be classified into four main categories: omission of a required element, addition of an unnecessary element, selection of a wrong element and disordering of an element.

1. Omission Errors

Omission refers to deletion of an item that supposed to be present in a well-formed utterance. Dulay et al. (1982): points out that there is an evidence that grammatical morphemes such as noun and verb inflections, articles and prepositions are deleted more often that content morphemes which carry the meaning (p.154). As in the example e.g. *His brother engineer.** Here two morphemes were omitted which are " *is"* and *"an"*.

Omission error refers to the omission of an item or a linguistic form made by the learner due to its complexity. Second language learners face real difficulties in using morphology, for instance, some learners do not use the third person singular pronoun morpheme . A student might say:

He email me regularly. Instead of saying : He emails me regularly. They ‘visit’ me yesterday. Instead of : They visited me yesterday.

The first example shows the omission of the present tense singular verb marker‘s’ and the omission of the inflection ‘-ed’ in the past tense as in the second sentence.

This shows that the second language learner has not mastered the present tense singular verb and the past tense inflection. In the use of articles learners may omit the definite and indefinite articles as in the examples:

2. Addition Errors

Additions refers to the addition of unnecessary item. The presence of an extra item that shouldn’t be used in a well formed utterance is categorized as addition. According to Dulay et al (1982) Addition is divided into three types: Double markings, as in : *Did he worked here?*, regularization, as in addition of the ‘s’to * *feets and adding ‘ed’ to* , “*builded”*, and simple addition, which contains the rest of additions (158).

This happens when the learner adds redundant elements, which are not needed. In syntax learners may use inadequate combinations , such as, in the miss use of articles.

In morphology some students overuse the third person singular morpheme ‘-s’ and the plural marker, as in:

You claims that instead of you claim that.

The teachers is coming, instead of the teachers are coming.

3. Selection Errors

Learners make errors in syntax, vocabulary, morphology and pronunciation because of the wrong selection of the structures, vocabulary items, morphemes and phonemes. In morphology a learner commits an error due to the selection of the wrong morpheme, as in the miss use of suffixes. For example, the use of ‘er’ instead of ‘ant’ as in:

The ‘inhibiters’ of the new house, instead of the inhabitants. Most of the errors that occur due to the wrong selection arise from first language interference. The learner replaces a familiar phoneme from the first language for a target language phoneme that is difficult to pronounce. In morphology an erroneous occurs in form of wrong selection of a morpheme. For example, a student may use ‘ism’ instead of ‘al’ as in the following:

He is a professionalism player. Instead of “He is a professional player”

Nevertheless, morphological errors caused by wrong selection are not as common as other errors. There are also errors caused by mother tongue interference. Such as incorrect selection of words as in lexical errors.

4. Ordering Errors

These errors occur in different ways .In pronunciation for instance, they happen in shifting the positions of phonemes. For example, a learner may say:

“Pormotion instead of promotion”

In morphology one of the most common disordering errors is in the wrong use of bound morphemes. e.g.

They are ‘descend’ downing. Instead of they are descending down.

Lengo(1995) states that the learner attaches the inflection ‘-ing’ as in:

"He is get upping now".

There are also lexical errors as in reversing elements in compound words , e.g. He is a 'man bank' instead of a bank man.

2.1.5.4Types of Errors

1. Competence and Performance Errors

According to Corder (1967:28) " it would be more valuable to treat errors of performance as 'mistakes' because they are not affecting the language learning process, and to use the term error for the systematic(competence) errors of the learner from which his knowledge of the language to date can be affected". In the same vein, Norrish (1983:8) maintains that a mistake is an infrequent deivation that occurs just in certain times and can be corrected by the learner himself. Richards et. al (1985:95) points out that the mistake is made by the learner when writing or spelling unintentionally due to fatigue, carelessness, etc.

Performance errors are non-systematic mistakes. They are minor deviations of the language and therefore they are not given much attention by error analysis, since they reveal nothing about the real status of the learner's language knowledge. They include the lapses and slips of the tongue and pen .The student commits these mistakes not because he doesn't know how to use the language, but because may be he is in a hurry under stress or careless. These mistakes are committed by both native speakers and second language learners and they do not show the level that reveals whether the learner has mastered the target language or not.

Competence errors , on the other hand, are serious mistakes because they are systematic. These types of errors are referred to as competence errors. They

reveal the extent of knowledge of the target language that was mastered by the learner. They also show the areas of weakness that need more reinforcement. As regarding correction, they are unlike performance errors , competence errors cannot be corrected by the learner alone and therefore they need more efforts from both the teacher and the learner.

2. Approximation Errors

Approximation is a sort of strategy which the learner adopts when using a lexical item that is not fitting enough to convey the intended meaning, but just shares some common semantic features, such as using "knife" for "breadknife", "stick" for "truncheon", and "The visiting minister met the president" for "The visiting minister had an audience with the president".

These are some of the most common errors committed by second language learners. They are classified as competence errors which occur due to native language interference .These types of errors are characterized by forms of language produced by L2 learners which is either identical or approximation of features of his first language. It is a deviation from the correct form of the mother tongue, and therefore it causes errors. Approximation errors have gained a considerable attention from linguists and researchers.

3. Overgeneralization

It is one of the most common errors caused by intralingual interference . It refers to the process in which the learner masters one form in the target language and then extends its application to contexts where it is inapplicable. E.g.We have sent them the ‘informations’ instead of the information.

The learner generates new structures by analogy which are different from the target language. The error in the example is due to the over application of the

rule of forming the plural. Also in the example: ‘ He sent me an information.’ The learner through using wrong analogy used “an” before “information”.

Scovel (2001) states that such errors occur when the learner learns a rule or pattern in the target language, and uses it in all contexts regardless of any exceptions. These types of errors clearly appear in a form of overusing and underusing certain learned structures which the learner using them in inadequately. They can be made when the learner makes one deviant structure in place of two regular structures. For example : He has so much relatives in this city. Instead of : He has so many relatives in this city.

No doubt, that errors are caused by various factors and the problem here is that these factors some of them are overlapping and sometimes do not belong to a clear-cut category. However, what is undisputable is that mother tongue interference and lack of linguistic knowledge are the most prominent factors affecting second language learning. The learners who make interlingual errors may be affected by their native language interference when writing in English and thinking in their first language. They have to enhance their grammatical knowledge as well as to understand the language system and rhetorical patterns (Hyland, 2003). As far as intralingual errors are concerned, the learners errors seem to be mainly caused by poor linguistic knowledge. It can be obvious that although interlingual and intralingual errors are the most influential factors which affect EFL student writing, it is quite important for second language teachers to know that these errors may be indicators of second language acquisition in processing.

4. Incorrect Association

This type of errors occurs when the learner confuses a linguistic form in the target language with another in the same language and consequently produces a

deviant form. The association between the correct and the incorrect form one may be phonological , semantic or grammatical. In other words the learner may incorrectly associate a feature of the language with the sound meaning or grammatical function of another , giving rise to phonological association, semantic association or grammatical association whatever the case maybe.

2.1.5.5 Sources of Errors

There are various sources for errors made by second language learners **.** However**,** identifying sources of errors can be, in fact, considered as a part of error classification. Brown(1980: 166) states that error analysis is a new way of investigating learners errors . It is more comprehensive than contrastive analysis since it studies not only mother tongue interference but all the possible sources and factors that can cause errors in second language learning. According to Brown (1980) the most recurrent sources of errors are interlingual transfer, intralingual transfer, the context of learning, and communication strategies used by learners. Likewise, James (1998) classifies errors according to their sources into four types and he added what he called induced errors.

Interlingual transfer which is also referred to as mother-tongue influence, causes errors that are mainly occur due to mother tongue interference. They are very common at the early stages of the target language based on the learners only previous knowledge of the first language system .Brown (1980: 173). indicates that when one is learning L3, L4 etc., transfer takes place from all the previously learnt languages but the degree of transfer is variable (1980: 173).

Intralingual transfer on the other hand**,** is one of the main sources of errors made by second language learners. They are considered as learning strategy errors. According to James (1980: 185) there are seven types of intralingual errors as learning-strategy based errors and lists 7 types of them:

i) False analogy: This refers to the learner mistakenly thinks that a new item behaves like another item already known to him or her. For example the learner already knows that *babies* is plural from *baby*, so he or she thinks that "*childs"* is plural of "*child"*.

Incorrect analysis indicates that the learner has formed an unfounded hypothesis in the L2 and is putting it in practice..

ii) Incomplete rule application: It occurs when the learner doesn't use all the rules necessary to apply in a particular situation. In fact, it is the converse of overgeneralization.

ii) Exploiting redundancy: This appears in the use of unnecessary morphology, and intelligent learners try to avoid those items which they find redundant to make their learning and communication easier. The opposite of exploiting redundancy is overelaboration which is usually observable in more advanced learners.

iv) Overlooking concurrence restrictions: It means that the learner doesn't know that certain words go together with certain complements, prepositions etc. An example given by James (1998: 186) is when the learner doesn't understand that the verb *to practice* is followed by gerund and not infinitive.

v) Hypercorrection: It refers to the learners over-monitoring their L2 output".

vi) Overgeneralization: It refers to use of one member of a set of forms also in situations when the other members must be used. This usually leads to overuse of one form and underuse of the others. Well known candidates for overgeneralization are pairs as other/another, much/many, some/any etc. (James 1998: 187) - the learner uses one of them instead of distinguishing between them and using each in the appropriate situation. Overgeneralization of language rules is also common, e.g. *Will he can speak to?* reflects that the learner overgeneralizes the use of auxiliary verbs in questions.

Other factors which also have influential effect on errors made by second

language learners include:

a. The Context of learning: It refers to the place where language is learnt, e.g. a classroom or a social situation, and also to the teacher and materials used in the lessons. All these factors can cause induced errors (Brown 1980: 174). Brown points out that, "students often make errors because of faulty explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook, or even because of a patent that was rotely memorized in a drill but not properly contextualized".

b. Communication strategies : These are used by the learners to get a message across to the hearer. They can include both verbal and non-verbal communication mechanisms. According to Brown (1980) communication strategies include:

I. Avoidance :It occurs when a learner tries to avoid some certain language items because he feels uncertain about them and prefers avoiding to making errors. There are several kinds of avoidance, e.g. syntactic, lexical, phonological or topic avoidance (Brown 1980: 178-179) maintains that the most common type of avoidance strategy is 'syntactic or lexical avoidance' within a semantic category. When a learner, for example, cannot say "I lost my way" he might avoid the use of way' and says "I lost my road" instead. "Phonological avoidance' is also common, as in the case of a learner of English who finds initial /I/ difficult to pronounce and wants to say "he is a liar" may choose to say" He does not speak the truth". A more direct type of avoidance is "topic avoidance", in which a whole topic of conversation is entirely avoided. To avoid the topic, a learner may change the subject, pretend not to understand, or simply not respond at all.

ii. Prefabricated patterns : These happen when the learners memorize phrases

or sentences, as in ‘tourist survival’ language or a pocket bilingual phrasebook, and the learner who memorizes them usually doesn't understand the components of the phrase (Brown 1980: 180).

iii. Cognitive and personality styles can also cause errors. For instance, Brown (1980: 180) suggests that “a person with high self-esteem may be willing to risk more errors, in the interest of communication, since he does not feel as threatened by committing errors as a person with low self-esteem”.

iv)Appeal to authority is a strategy when the learner, because of his uncertainty about some structure, directly asks a native speaker, a teacher or looks up the structure in a bilingual dictionary (Brown 1980: 180).

v)Language switch is applied by the learner when all the other strategies have failed to help him or her. So the learner uses his or her native language to get the message across, regardless of the fact that the hearer may not know the native language (Brown 1980: 181)

In conclusion, in the conceptual part of this chapter a number of issues have been reviewed. They include first and second language acquisition and some of the main approaches related to them. The section has also reviewed and discussed the concepts of contrastive analysis, interlanguage, error analysis and their relation to the topic of the study.

In the next section some of the previous studies conducted in the field of error analysis will be critically reviewed.

2.2.Review of previous Studies

This part reviews some of the previous studies written in the area of error analysis. A number of studies have been conducted to determine the role of error analysis in second and foreign language learning.

Karma and Hajjaj (1997) investigated grammatical errors made by Arabic learners of English.The study's hypothesis was that most of the Arab English learners face difficulties in using English articles properly. They relate to mother tongue interference. Arabic and English have different systems regarding the use of definite and indefinite articles. English follows a tripartite system in using definite and indefinite articles. In English there are three types of articles which are " a ,an and the" in addition to zero article. Arabic, on the other hand, follows a binary system in which there are only two articles "al" and " zero article. This explains why most Arab students do drop 'a and an' .Secondly, in Arabic the definite article is used with abstract nouns whereas in English it isn't used. Likewise , in English mass nouns are not used with articles while in Arabic they are used with an article such as " The water is in the fridge". Moreover, the generic meaning in Arabic is represented by using 'al' and the noun whether its singular or plural whereas in English the generic meaning is represented by using 'a' and 'an' with the singular, using the singular with 'the' and the plural with zero article. Therefore, most Arabic speakers use 'the' with some plurals as in " the cows are useful animals". In addition to that, Arabic uses the definite with each of the two nouns linked by 'and', whereas English uses it with the first noun that comes before the coordinator 'and' as in " The third and fourth rounds." . Moreover, in English the noun in the generic case can be the first or the second, whereas in Arabic it is the second element. In Arabic the first element does not take the definite article because the second element adds definiteness to the first. Therefore most

Arabic learners make errors in the genitive case by using the definite article only with the second element as in " These are suggestions of the group." .

I conclude by that teachers of Arabic speaking learners of English should be aware of the various factors behind errors made by Arab students. This will be beneficial for both teachers and students especially when teachers help their students to become aware of the main factors and sources of errors. The point I would like to add is that Arabic is a language that has so many dialects which should be taken into consideration because differences between dialects may lead to differences in the types of errors made learners.

Kambal (1980) conducted study in the most common errors in three types of free compositions written by first year Sudanese tertiary students. The study shows that the most frequent errors made by the students were made in :verb formation, tense, and subject – verb agreement. He studied errors in tense under five categories: tense sequence, tense substitution, tense marker omission, and confusion of the perfect tenses. As for the subject-verb agreement errors, the most common errors were in the wrong use of the third person singular marker and in the misuse of the verb to be.

Kim (2001) conducted another study in this respect., the purpose of his study was to analyze errors of college students' writing samples to examine L1 interference phenomenon. He pointed out that, "it is widely believed that Korean learners of English often show incorrect use of English expressions due to their L1 interference" (p. 159). He continued that, "despite such a prevalent belief, the sources of learners' errors and L1 interference were not clearly identified" (p. 160). In order to examine the sources and the nature of learners' errors, he collected 30 writing samples from college freshman students who were registered for TOEIC class. Most of the learners' errors

were in the areas of verbs (be + V for V, be omission, -s omission, incorrect use of present perfect), prepositions (incorrect use of prepositions, redundant prepositions), articles (omission of *a*, incorrect use of *a*, omission of *the*, *the* instead of zero), plural/singular agreement, adjectives, conjunctions (incorrect use of conjunctions, stranded/redundant conjunctions). Then, errors were classified into two categories of intralingual and interlingual. Finally, the results showed that most of the learners' errors were intralingual and only a few cases can be attributed to L1 interference, which support the assumption that L2 learners follow similar developmental patterns to those found in children's L1 acquisition. Thus, it may follow from what he found that learners' errors are not just deviant forms that should be corrected but they reflect creative process of seeking systematic rules of target language.

Khaoural (2002) conducted a research study to find out grammatical and lexical errors in English composition of English major students of Rajabhat Institute Nakhon Pathom. For grammatical aspects, the errors found were: tenses, prepositions, determiners and verbs. For syntactical aspects, errors found were: contraction form, incomplete sentence structure, compound sentences, word order and punctuation. For lexical aspects, errors found were: spelling, translating from Thai to English, overgeneralization of translating and using general lexical items. The findings showed that first three causes of errors were: the lack and incomplete application of restricted rules, L1 interference and false hypotheses. The results suggested that most of the students transferred their native language rule patterns into their English writings.

Attia (1990) conducted a study on errors made by Sudanese EFL learners in the use of prepositions. In his study Attia investigated three types of errors: omission, redundancy, and replacement errors. The study shows that more than

53% of the errors were replacement errors and 23.3% were omission errors and about the same percentage were redundancy errors. The prepositions that more frequently omitted are ‘of’, ‘to’, ‘in’, ‘for’, ‘at’, ‘up’ and ‘with’. It was observed that redundancy and omission errors were mostly committed in the context of prepositional verbs. According to the study these errors are caused by interlingual and intralingual factors.

Also it was observed that preposition replacements were the most frequent errors.

Rurakwit (2004) analyzed grammatical, syntactic and lexical errors and negative transfer from Thai to English writing made by Thammasart University students. The conceptual framework of negative transfer was based on that of Odlin (1989) and Ellis (1994). Data were collected from the student’s first draft English essays and quizzes during one semester. The findings showed that, for syntactic errors, it was found that in sentence fragments, errors occurred because of missing objects, verbs and subjects in the sentence. Word order errors appeared because of misplacement of adverbs and adjectives in the sentence with regard to types of error, it was also found that the first communication strategy most of the students used was transfer from their native language.

Margaret Sue (1974) conducted a study to examine samples of written tasks written by Arab students enrolled in intensive English course in Beirut University. The study was directed towards comparing types and frequency of errors in writing and identifying sources of errors, considering interlingual and intralingual interferences in the learning strategies adopted by Arab students. The subjects of this study were 22 Arabic speaking students enrolled in the first semester of a low intermediate intensive English course at the University

of Beirut.

The findings of the study were :The most frequent errors made by the students were the incorrect use of verbs, prepositions and articles, and the number of errors at the beginning of the term and at the end of the term were raked. It was observed that half of the errors are due to mother tongue interference and intralingual factors. Also it was found that interference from Arabic is the most prominent in the students' omission of the auxiliary and the copula, in preposition and article and in their repetition of subjects and verbs.

Al-Matrafi (2003) conducted study to investigate and identify causes and types of errors committed by Saudi university students in the use of articles. The subjects of his study were 100 students , they were chosen randomly from three Saudi universities. The study was based on the assumption that Saudi students face real problems in using English articles.

The results of the study revealed that indefinite articles cause no problem to the students only in a few conditions. It was observed that most of the students face a real difficulty in using with the definite article 'the'. The study has shown that a considerable number of the students face a real problem in dealing with the zero article structures.

Berry (1991) conducted a study on articles in an attempt to assist teachers who face problems in teaching articles. He first discussed whether the indefinite article 'a' and definite article 'the' should be taught , then he used a description , which may provide a relevant starting point for reappraisal . He examined existing pedagogic accounts and materials and found them largely demanding. He concluded his study with a set of exercises designed as an attempt to show how such considerations can be realized in teaching materials. He raised the question of whether articles should be taught or not. He provided three reasons

for the necessity of teaching the English articles. First, the articles are frequent in English. Second, many none- native speakers of English are concerned about accuracy with articles. Third, it is not justified that articles in English are redundant and have no effect on communication. The study also suggested materials in designing materials for the English articles based on: (1) Use of principled description account as a basis. (2) Concentrate on 'the' particularly its specific uses. (3) Emphasizing the value of articles, using contrastive information . (4) Make varied interesting activities.

Sharma (1998) conducted an error analysis study to investigate errors made by secondary school students in using articles and to study the level of difficulty in using varied types of articles. He used a questionnaire for collecting the data of the study. The findings of the study revealed that students face a real problem in how to differentiate between the words with consonants and the words with vowels. Therefore, they made 26.13% errors in the wrong use of indefinite articles , 15.53% in using indefinite article 'a' and 10.60% in using 'an'. It was also observed that 43.44 % of the errors were committed in the use definite article and zero articles. The study concluded that the errors committed by students in the use of indefinite article were the least frequent errors .On the other hand, the study found that the errors made in the use of zero article were the most frequent ones.

Srichai (2002) analyzed global and local errors in English writing made by first year Thai university students in Songkla University. The students were given a writing task using three pictures and vocabulary with Thai words translated as a research tool. For analyzing types and frequency of errors, Hendrickson's theory (1981) was used. The results revealed that errors in word order came into the third highest number of global syntactic errors. The

students made wrong word order of two nouns such as "He put the fishing-hook on the shoe."(the shoe…the fishing- hook), making the sentence's meaning unclear. It was probably because they transferred a Thai pattern into their English composition. Sometimes, in Thai, the positions of two nouns can be interchanged without changing the meaning of the sentence.

In a similar study, Akande (2003) studied the acquisition of the eight inflectional morphemes in English. The study aimed at finding out the occurrences as well as the misuse of these grammatical morphemes. The data used for the study was drawn from sixty Yoruba- speaking students of English who were selected from four secondary schools in Oke-Igbo, Ondo State of Nigeria. He used two types of elicitation technique: written English composition and a grammar exercise. The analysis of the compositions indicated that the subjects didn't understand the use of the English past participle, possessive inflection, past tense inflection and plural inflection properly. However, in the grammar exercise, the subjects "performed relatively well as none of them got below 10 out of the 25 questions…" (Akande 2003:323).

Al-kahtybeh (1992) conducted an error analysis study in which he analyzed grammatical errors in essays written by Jordanian tenth grade students. The sample of the study was made of 243 male and female students were chosen from eight schools in Irbid district in Jordan. The variables of the study were sex and grade. The study answered the following two questions:(a)-What types of syntactic errors are predominant in the essays written by tenth grade students? (b)-Are there any significant differences in the occurrence of the types of these syntactic error due to their sex?

The results of the study showed that the most common errors committed by

male students were tenses, auxiliary verbs and prepositions whereas the least frequent errors were pronouns and subject and verb agreement. The most common errors made by female students were tense, article and prepositions and the least frequent ones were subject - verb agreement errors. The researcher related the causes of these errors to: mother tongue interference, overgeneralization and ignorance of rules of usage. The researcher concluded his study by recommending that teachers of English should promote their teaching techniques and encourage their students to write more properly as well as evaluating tenth grade curriculum to find out the extent of its efficiency and appropriateness to students' needs and interests.

I think the focus on all of these studies is on comparing the structure of the native language and that of the second language to study the similarities and differences in the structures of the two languages . I think the common factor in of all these studies is the emphasis on mother tongue as the most influential factor on the target language learning . However , the study didn't mention other factors that may affect committing errors in the target language.

Mourtaga (2004) analyzed writing errors of Palestinian EFL learners majoring in English to find out the most common errors made by them. He collected his data by using two instruments: written composition to be done by students and a questionnaire to both students and teachers.

He found that his subjects made huge number of errors , the most frequent ones were : verbs, punctuation and articles whereas the least frequent were in conjunctions , adjectives and adverbs. The questionnaire result showed that though both students and the teachers were aware of most of the errors but they do not know which types of errors are more frequent. For gender it showed that male subjects made more errors than their female counterparts.

Mourtage's study is relevant to the present study since it handled a very important issue which is grammar errors. However, it is different from the present study on that the latter deals with errors in the sentence level made by both male and female students whereas the present study conducted on male students not majoring in English.

To conclude and based on what has been reviewed in most of the previous studies it is obvious that there are two opposite views toward the sources of errors committed by EFL learners. In most of these studies, it seems that researchers regarding sources of errors have divided them into two main categories: some researchers have considered intralingual causes as the main source of EFL learners' errors. Whereas others of a considerable large number related errors to mother interference factors. Both of these views have been supported by many researchers who advocated their claims with enough empirical evidence. However, the researcher claims that in addition to these two major sources of errors, there are other factors such as teaching , testing materials and techniques, type of language exposure available to the learner, transfer from a third or more languages known by the learner and dialects within the same language. It can also be concluded as the students' progress in the process of acquiring the basics of the target language, they make more developmental errors. Hence, there is always a growing need to analyze learners' errors to identify and discover the newly emerging errors.

In conclusion, this section has reviewed a number of previous studies conducted in the field of the present study which is analysis of grammatical errors made by second and foreign language learners. These studies have been thoroughly discussed and critically reviewed.

2.3.Summary of the Chapter

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part presented the conceptual framework of the study. It has reviewed the theoretical background and underlying views related to grammatical errors. In this part , the researcher has presented and discussed the different views of the linguists and writers regarding the concepts of first and second language acquisition, contrastive analysis, error analysis and interlanguage.

In the second part of this chapter, a number of the previous studies carried out in the field of error analysis have been critically reviewed. Out of his coverage for these studies, the researcher has noticed the following:

First, it is clearly obvious that the issue of error analysis has not been ignored by most of the researches and writers; on the contrary, it has been thoroughly emphasized and stressed. This shows the importance of error analysis as a tool that can be used in enhancing and raising learners' awareness of some grammatical errors and how to deal with them. Second, some of the studies have investigated the effect of sex (gender) whereas others focused on students' level. Some studies have shown mixed results and this is due to the difference in instruments, population and purposes of the studies.

As seen from the previous review of literature that although there were many studies conducted in the field of error analysis, still little research dealt with the investigation of grammatical errors made by Saudi EFL learners. The present study intends to contribute to this research area.

In the next chapter the methodology of the study will be described in details.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

The key objective of this chapter is to describe the general methodology of the present study and the steps followed in conducting the research tools. The study was conducted at Jazan University in Saudi Arabia. It aims at investigating the common grammatical errors made by Saudi students in writing.

The data of the study was obtained from the responses of the students for two tests and a questionnaire for teachers: The first test was writing (composition) and was meant to investigate students' grammatical errors in writing. The second one was a grammar test and was intended to investigate the students' errors in grammar in isolation. Finally, the third instrument was a questionnaire to find out English language teachers' views on grammatical errors made by students in writing.

In the present study, the researcher followed a mixed approach. He employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches in collecting the data. This is based on the objectives of the present study, which is to find out the number of errors made by the participants in their written work as well as to analyze the types of errors which appear in the collected data. This means that the data was analyzed by finding the frequency and the number of the occurrence of errors in the collected data. The researcher adopted the Analytical Descriptive Method in conducting this study. The quantitative data was analyzed through using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to test the variability of the scores of the respondents as shown in the results. Some of the questions were intended to investigate the impact of the subjects' native language on their understanding to the syntactical rules of the target language. Some of the questions were supplemented with contextual clues while others were not so as to examine the subjects real knowledge of grammar.

The grammar test which was a multiple choice, consisted of twelve items. In each question, there is one correct answer and three distracters.

This chapter provides a detailed description of the following:

- Population of the study

- Sample of the study

- Instrumentation

- Validity of the research tools

- Reliability

- Procedure of conducting research tools

3.1. Population of the study

The population of the present study consists of two groups:

a. The population of the students who are the main target of the study.

b. The population of English language teachers at the Saudi universities who carry out the task of teaching as well as evaluating and designing the English language syllabus.

The first population group consists of first year Saudi university students not majoring in English language enrolled in Jazan University Preparatory Year Program. The second population group consists of EFL teachers at Jazan University and some other Saudi universities.

3.1.1. The Students' Sample

The first population of the study was represented by a sample group made of 250 students at Jazan University. The subjects were first year male students not majoring in English language. The majority of them have the same cultural and language background, and Arabic is their native language. Most of them had studied English as a compulsory subject for seven years according to the curriculum of the Saudi Ministry of Education.

The research subjects were selected by using convenience sampling method which is based on easy availability and accessibility of the target subjects. The participants selected for the purpose of this study are between 19 and 20 years old. They live in an exclusive Arabic speaking community. They are homogeneous in terms of their linguistic, educational and socioeconomic background. They speak Arabic at home. Most of them didn't receive any

English instruction in any English speaking country which indicates their lack of any sort of English exposure.

3.1.2. The Sample of Teachers

The second population of the study was represented by English language teachers at Jazan University and some other Saudi universities (King Saud University, King Abdul Aziz University and Al-Baha University). The sample consists of 100 teachers. Most of them have been teaching English language at the Saudi universities for more than five years which indicates their high awareness of the status of English language teaching in Saudi Arabia and the nature of Saudi EFL learners. The table below shows the distribution of the teachers' qualification.

Table 3.1 Distribution of the sample of ELT teachers according to qualifications

Academic Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Accumulative Percent
Lecturer	76	76.0	76.0	76.0
Ass. Prof	16	16.0	16.0	92.0
Lang.Instructors	8	8.0	8.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.2 Distribution of the sample of ELT teachers according to teaching experience

No. of years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Accumulative Percent
Less than 5 years	12	12.0	12.0	12.0
6 to 10 years	37	37.0	37.0	49.0
More than 10 years	51	51.0	51.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

3.2. Instrumentation

3.2.1. The Writing (composition)Test

The writing test is the major instrument of this study because the students are the main target of study. Also, the analysis of their writing errors is the central objective of this study.

No special writing test was designed for the purpose of this study. However, the same participants' compositions were taken from their answers to the First Semester Final Test 2014-2015.

In the test, the students were asked to write about one of the following two topics: " A Situation in Which You Experienced Joy, Peace or Pleasurable Emotion" or "Your Best Friend". The composition should not be less than 80 words and should contain a main idea sentence, supporting and detail sentences and a conclusion.

The Grammar Test:

This test was mainly designed to investigate the subjects performance in an explicit, separate grammar test. The questions were prepared by the researcher himself to meet the purpose of the study and based on the curricula of the subjects of the study.

3.2.2. The Teachers' Questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire employed in this study was to gather the teachers' views about the most common grammatical errors made by students in writing and other issues directly related to the objectives of this study. The questionnaire was administered to a total of 100 ELT teachers in some Saudi universities. It is made of two parts: The first part contains the participants' personal information. The second part consists of sixteen statements investigating the teachers views related to the questions of the research.

A five point Likert scale was used to show the responses of the participants. On the scale, the statements were given five codes as shown below:

1= Strongly agree

2= Agree

3= Not sure

4= Disagree

5= Strongly disagree

The questionnaire was designed to measure the following variables:

Table 3.3 Variables measured by ELT teachers' questionnaire

Question	Variable Measured
Questions1,2,3,4	Various causes such L1transfer could be behind grammatical errors made by students.
Questions5,6,7,8	There are certain recurrent types of grammatical errors made by students in their writing activities.
Question 9,10,11,12	Teachers' negative attitudes towards grammatical errors made by students are expected to be negative.
Question 13,14,15,16	The Saudi English language syllabus does not sufficiently cover the grammar.

3.3.Validity of the research tools

The validity of an instrument is the degree to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Polit & Hungler 1993, p. 448).

To ensure the validity of the study tools, the method of trustee's validity was employed. The researcher consulted three ELT expert referees. He distributed copies of the grammar test and the EFL teachers' questionnaire to the experts to give their judgement, suggestions and recommendations about the research tools in terms of their clarity, relevance and suitability.

The trustees referred to, were all Ph.D. holders working at Saudi universities (see the appendix). In addition to their long experience in English language teaching, they were engaged in the supervision of ELT studies for post graduate degrees. Each one of them was given a copy of the grammar test and a copy of the teachers' questionnaire. The grammar test contains 15 items covering the different grammatical rules. They were intended to assess the students understanding of the grammatical structures and their uses.

As for the teachers' questionnaire, it consists of 16 items which were meant to measure EFL teachers' views regarding common grammatical errors made by students in writing in relation to the English language syllabus and teaching methodology.

The suggestions of the trustees about the construction and content of the test and the questionnaire were taken into consideration and incorporated in the final versions.

3.4. Reliability of the Study Tools

Reliability is the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures the attribute it is designed to measure (Polit and Hungler 1993, p. 445) .

3.4.1. Reliability of the Study Test

For the present study the researcher used a test- retest device to measure the reliability of the test. It was first conducted through selecting 15 students from the target population randomly. These students did not take part in the actual study. Then, it was administered once again with the same group of the students ten days later.

The results were processed using SPSS program and the scores of the subjects in the first test were correlated with those in the second test. The reliability coefficients of the subjects of the pilot sample were found 0.750 according to Pearson's correlation equation which proved that the test was reasonably reliable.

After considering all the validity and reliability coefficients of the subjects of the pilot sample, the grammar test was of an adequate validity and reliability and thus it would assist in obtaining acceptable statistical analysis.

3.5 Procedure

The researcher followed the steps below in implementing the study tools:

- Preparatory College at Jazan University was chosen for conducting the study. The students at this college were all first year students not majoring in English

language.

-The written production (compositions) were taken from the subjects' answers of the first semester's exam.

-Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the ELT teachers at Jazan University and other Saudi universities by hand and through emailing. Inquiries of some participants about items of the questionnaire were answered and clarified by the researcher. He also assured respondents that their information would be confidentially treated and would be used for the present study only.

3.6. Summary of the Chapter

The researcher in this chapter has described the methodology of the study and the tools and the procedures used in conducting this research.

In this chapter a full description of the population of the study and the selected sample was given. The study tools which consisted of two tests and a questionnaire: The first test was on writing (a composition), whereas the second one was a grammar test for first year Saudi university students not majoring in English language. The questionnaire was for ELT teachers working at Saudi universities.

This chapter also describes the procedures taken to ensure and judge the validity and reliability of the tools of the study.

The next chapter will provide the data analysis results and discussion.

Chapter Four

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Chapter Four

Data Analysis , Results and Discussion

This chapter deals with the data obtained from administering the writing and grammar tests as well as the ELT teachers questionnaire. The data was processed by the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Studies (SPSS) program. Some descriptive statistics such as the standard deviation and means were used to identify any significant differences of the independent variables in the study.

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section shows the analysis of the data obtained from the ELT teachers' questionnaire . The second section analyzes the data obtained from the writing (composition) test . As for the third section it provides an analysis of the grammar test.

4.1. The ELT Techers' Questionnaire

This section will attempt to analyze and discuss the statistical results obtained from the ELT teachers' questionnaire. The data was collected from the responses of a total of 100 teachers at Jazan university and some other Saudi universities. The questionnaire was intended to assess the ELT teachers' views regarding the subject matter of the study.

The following table shows the statistical description of all the responses of the questionnaire. The "mean", "median" values were calculated to show the differences between the answers.

Table (4.1) Differences among ELT teachers' questionnaire responses:

no	Item	median	mean	St. dv	minimum
1	Saudi university students' mother tongue interference (Arabic) is one of the main sources of grammatical errors.	1	1.61	.737	1
2	Saudi university students' motivation towards learning English language is..(1. very high 2. high 3. not sure 4.low 5. very low)	4	3.54	1.114	1
3	To what extent do you think Saudi university students are aware of that some English grammatical rules have no equivalent in Arabic. 1.very aware 2. Aware 3. Not sure 4. Not aware 5. Not at all	4	3.35	1.019	1
4	Saudi university learning environment negatively affects learning English language.	3	2.97	1.374	1
5	From your teaching experience, wrong use of tenses is one of the common grammatical errors	2	1.79	.856	1
6	From your teaching experience, misuse of subject-verb agreement rule is one of the common grammatical errors.	2	1.79	.782	1
7	From your teaching experience, omission of the third person singular marker is one of the common grammatical errors.	2	2.05	.880	1
8	From your teaching experience, miss use of prepositions is one of the common grammatical errors.	2	2.10	1.096	1
9	English language teachers' at Saudi universities attitudes towards students errors in English language are negative.	3	3.20	1.082	1
10	The teacher should correct every single error made by the student.	4	3.26	1.474	1
11	The teacher should correct only the major errors.	2	2.41	1.349	1
12	Poor teaching of English at Saudi universities is one of the main sources of grammatical errors.	4	3.28	1.443	1
13	Lack of learner-centered syllabus at Saudi universities negatively affects learning English language.	2	2.61	1.443	1
14	Grammar is not sufficiently covered in the Saudi English language syllabus.	4	3.35	1.250	1

15	The time allocated for teaching grammar at Saudi universities is not enough.	4	3.32	2.309	1
16	The English teaching syllabus at the Saudi universities does not sufficiently meet the students' needs.	3	3	1.443	1

P V = probability value St. dv = Standard Deviation DF = difference

As seen from table (4.2) above, the median for most of the statements, is 2 which is interpreted according to the Likert scale as agree. This indicates that most of the participants agreed to the questionnaire statements which confirms the research hypotheses. Also, The results generally show a moderate mean for most of the statements.

4.2.1. Discussion of the ELT Teachers' Questionnaire items:

The items of the questionnaire cover the domains below:

Domain(1) Causes of grammatical errors made by students in their composition writing .

This domain is measured by the following statesments:1,2,3 and 4.

Question 1. What are the possible causes of grammatical errors made by Saudi university students?

Statement 1: Mother tongue interference (Arabic) is one of the main causes of grammatical errors made by Saudi students.

The following tables show , in numbers and percentages, the respondents answers to the statements related to this domain.

Table (4.2) shows the frequency and percentage for the ELT teachers' responses to statement1

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	52	37	9	2	0
Percentage	52%	37%	9%	2%	0%

As shown in table (4.2) above that 52 of the total respondents strongly agree that mother tongue (Arabic) interference is one of the main causes of grammatical errors made by Saudi students. This number represents the majority of the respondents and the highest percentage of 52%. The same view is supported by another 37 respondents whereas the number of those who disagree is only 2 and 9 show uncertainty. The view that negative transfer from the mother tongue language is one of the main factors behind errors made by learners in grammar is relevant with the findings of many research studies. For instance, Beardsmore (1982:22) states that "Many of the difficulties a second language learner has with grammar are due to the interference of habits from the first language. The formal elements of the L1 are used within the context of the L2, resulting in errors in L2, as the structures of the two languages are different.".

Statement 2: Saudi university students' motivation towards learning English language is…. (1. very high 2. high 3. not sure 4.low 5. very low).

Table (4.3) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement 2

Options offered	Very high	High	Not sure	Low	Very low

No.	4	21	8	51	16
Percentage	4%	21%	8%	51%	16%

Table (4.3) above shows that 51 of the total respondents agree that Saudi university students' motivation towards learning English language is low. This number represents the majority of the respondents and a higher percentage of 51%. The same view is supported by another 16 respondents . The number of those who disagree with the view that Saudi students' motivation is low is 25 whereas 8 show uncertainty.

Statement 3: To what extent do you think Saudi university students are aware of that some English grammatical rules have no equivalent in Arabic.

1. very aware 2. Aware 3. Not sure 4. Not aware 5. Not at all aware

Table (4.4) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement 3

Options offered	Very aware	Aware	Not sure	Not aware	Not at all aware
No.	4	20	21	47	8
Percentage	4%	20%	21%	47%	8%

As seen from table (4.4) above that 47 of the total respondents agree that Saudi university students' are not aware of that some English grammatical rules have no equivalent in Arabic. This number represents the majority of the respondents and a percentage of 47%. The same view is supported by another 8 respondents . The number of those who disagree with the view that Saudi students' are not aware of that some English structures have no equivalent in Arabic is 24 whereas 21

respondents have shown uncertainty. This is in line with what stated by Ellis (2008), errors reflect gaps in a learner's knowledge ; they materialize since a learner is not aware of the correct rule or structure.".

Statement 4: **Saudi university learning environment negatively affects learning English language.**

Table (4.5) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement 1

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	18	25	13	28	16
Percentage	18%	25%	13%	28%	16%

As shown in table (4.5) above shows that 28 of the total respondents strongly disagree that Saudi university learning environment negatively affects learning English language. This number constitutes the majority of the respondents with the highest percentage of 28%. This percentage is supported by another 16 respondents . This view, however, is approved by the number of 18 respondents strongly agree that the Saudi environment negatively affects English learning. A number of 13 respondents show uncertainty.

To sum up domain (1) , it can be said that, in the light of the teachers' responses, most of the grammatical errors made by students in writing originate from the influence of negative transfer as one of the most effective factors in syntactical errors made by Saudi students besides other less influential factors. It could be claimed on the basis of these results, that the hypothesis that L1transfer could be behind grammatical errors made by Saudi university students, is confirmed.

Domain(2): Types of Grammatical Errors made by Saudi University Students

This domain is measured by the statesments:5,6,7 and 8 as shown below:

Question 2. What are the most common types of grammatical errors students make in composition writing?

Statement 5 : From your teaching experience, wrong use of tenses is one of the common grammatical errors .

Table (4.6) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement 5

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	41	45	10	2	2
Percentage	41%	45%	10%	2%	2%

It is obvious in table (4.6) above that 45 of the total respondents agree that **wrong** use of tenses is one of the common grammatical errors made by Saudi students in writing. This number represents the majority of the respondents as the highest percentage of 45%. The same view is supported by another 41 respondents whereas the number of those who disagree with this view is only 2.

Statement 6: From your teaching experience, misuse of subject-verb agreement rule is one of the common grammatical errors.

Table (4.7) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement 6

Options	Strongly	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly

offered	agree				disagree
No.	36	55	4	4	1
Percentage	36%	55%	4%	4%	1%

Table (4.7) above reveals that over 55 of the total respondents agree that misuse of subject-verb agreement rule is one of the common grammatical errors. This number represents the majority of the respondents as the highest percentage of 55%. The view is disapproved by 4 respondents and 4 as uncertain.

Statement 7: From your teaching experience, omission of the third person singular marker is one of the common grammatical errors.

Table (4.8) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement 7

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	24	57	11	6	2
Percentage	24%	57%	11%	6%	2%

Table (4.8) above reveals that over 57of the total respondents agree that **omission of the third person singular marker is one of the common grammatical errors.** This number represents the majority of the respondents as the highest percentage of 57%. A number of 8 show disagreement whereas 11 respondents recorded as uncertain.

Statement 8: **From your teaching experience, miss use of prepositions is one of the common grammatical errors.**

Table (4.9) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement 8

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	32	45	8	11	4
Percentage	32%	45%	8%	11%	4%

From table (4.9) above it is clear that the view that **miss use of prepositions is one of the common grammatical errors made by Saudi students** is widely approved by a majority of the respondents numbered over 32 respondents**.** This view , however, is disapproved by a percentage of 15% of the respondents. A number of 11 participants are uncertain.

The results of domain (2) clearly show that the majority of the ELT teachers agree that wrong use of tense, misuse of concord , prepositions, and omission of the 3rd person singular marker are the main types of syntactical errors made by students. These results confirm the second hypothesis of the study which states that there are certain recurrent types of grammatical errors made by Saudi students in their writing activities.

Domain (3): Teachers' attitudes towards grammatical errors made by students

This domain is measured by statements: 9,10,11 and 12 as shown below:

Question (3): What are the teachers' attitudes towards grammatical errors made by Saudi university students in writing?

Statement 9: **English language teachers' at Saudi universities attitudes towards students' errors in English language are negative.**

Table (4.10) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement 9

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	4	26	28	30	12
Percentage	4%	26%	28%	30%	12%

As noticed in table (4.10) that a majority of 42 respondents disagree with the view that English language teachers' at Saudi universities attitudes towards students' errors in English language are negative. This number constitutes a percentage of 42% of the total ELT teachers whereas 26% of the participants responded with agree and a considerable number of 28 were uncertain.

Statement 10: **The teacher should correct every single error made by the student.**

Table (4.11) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement10

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	19	18	4	36	23
Percentage	19%	18%	4%	36%	23%

Table (4.11)above indicates clearly that an overwhelming majority of 59 ELT teachers disagree with the view that **The teacher should correct every single error made by the student**. This number constitutes a percentage of 59% of

the total respondents .A number of 19 the participants strongly agree with the view and only 4 respondents shown uncertainty.

Statement 11: **The teacher should correct only the major errors.**

Table (4.12) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement11

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	30	36	8	15	11
Percentage	30%	36%	8%	15%	11%

As revealed in table (4.12) that a majority of 36 respondents agree with the view that **The teacher should correct only the major errors.** This number is supported by another 30 respondents .However, a number of 26 the participants agree with the view and only 8 responded with not sure.

Statement 12: **Poor teaching of English at Saudi universities is one of the main sources of grammatical errors.**

Table (4.13) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement12

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	17	18	9	32	24
Percentage	17%	18%	9%	32%	24%

Table (4.13) clearly demonstrates that a majority of 56 ELT teachers disagree with the view that **Poor teaching of English at Saudi universities is one of the main sources of grammatical errors.** However, a number of 35 respondents have shown approval to the view and another 9 as uncertain.

To conclude , it could be said , the results of this domain(3) show clearly that the majority of the ELT teachers' opposed the view that **Poor teaching of English at Saudi universities is one of the main sources of grammatical errors. Accordingly , it can be claimed , on the basis of these results, the third hypothesis which states that** teachers' attitudes towards grammatical errors made by students are expected to be negative is not confirmed.

Domain(4): The English language syllabus coverage of the grammar component

This domain is measured by the statements: 13,14,15 and 16 as shown below:

Question(4): To what extent does the English language syllabus sufficiently cover grammar component?

Statement 13: **Lack of learner-centered syllabus at Saudi universities negatively affects learning English language.**

Table (4.14) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement13

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	19	35	18	22	6
Percentage	19%	35%	18%	22%	6%

As seen in table (4.14) that a majority of 35 ELT teachers agree that **Lack of learner-centered syllabus at Saudi universities negatively affects learning English language.** This number is supported by another 19 respondents .However, a number of 28 participants disagree with this view and 18 responded with not sure.

Statement 14: **Grammar is not sufficiently covered in the Saudi English language syllabus.**

Table (4.15) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement14

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	21	24	17	31	7
Percentage	21%	24%	17%	31%	7%

Table (4.15) reveals that a majority of 45 respondents agree with the view that **Grammar is not sufficiently covered in the Saudi English language syllabus.** It also shows that 38 of the participants opposed the view and 17 respondents were uncertain.

Statement 15: **The time allocated for teaching grammar at Saudi universities is not enough.**

Table (4.16) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement15

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree

No.	13	27	10	34	16
Percentage	13%	27%	10%	34%	16%

Table (4.16) clearly shows that the majority of ELT teachers with a percentage of 50% oppose the view that **the time allocated for teaching grammar at Saudi universities is not enough.** It also demonstrates that 27 of the teachers agreed with the view whereas 10 respondents were uncertain.

Statement 16: **The English teaching syllabus at the Saudi universities does not sufficiently meet the students' needs.**

Table (4.17) Frequency and percentage for ELT teachers' responses to statement16

Options offered	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No.	18	28	11	22	21
Percentage	18%	28%	11%	22%	21%

As seen in table (4.17) that a majority of 46% of the ELT teachers agree that **The English teaching syllabus at the Saudi universities does not sufficiently meet the students' needs.** This view is not approved by a considerable number of 43 respondents and 11 respondents show uncertainty.

The results of this domain (4) in the light of the teachers' responses show that most of the ELT teachers agree the view that **The English language syllabus at the Saudi universities negatively affects learning English language. On the basis of these results, it could be said that the fourth hypothesis that** the

Saudi English language syllabus does not sufficiently cover the grammar component is confirmed.

It could be concluded that the results of the ELT teachers' questionnaire revealed that all of the study hypotheses were confirmed except the third one which was not confirmed.

4.2. The Composition Writing Test

In this section the results obtained from a composition writing test administered to the first year Saudi students not majoring in English language will be displayed and analyzed. The test aimed at assessing first year (Preparatory) Saudi university students not majoring in English language performance in a composition writing test. The test was intended to investigate the different grammatical errors that students made in their writing.

As mentioned before the researcher didn't design special composition writing test ,however, he used the written production of the subjects compositions from their answers to the First Semester's Final Exam 2014-2015 for conducting this study. The test was conducted in the preparatory college at Jazan university where English is not a major specialty to the students. All of the students are first year university students. The students' composition scores were listed. A word count was made and the grammatical errors were classified and tabulated . They included errors of wrong tense, subject and verb agreement(concord), prepositions, verb to be, pronouns , articles ,word order, possessives , adjectives, adverbs, passive, time clauses, and pluralization.

A total of approximately 2115 errors were counted in the writing composition of 250 students. Table (4.18) below, shows the frequency of the occurrence of each type of grammatical errors made by the subjects of this study. They are

listed starting with the most frequent types of errors. Percentages and ranks are also supplied.

Table (4.18): Frequency of occurrence , percentage and frequency rank of syntactical errors in the composition test.

Type of error	Frequency of occurrence	Percentage%	Frequency Rank
Wrong Tense	464	21.9%	1
Prepositions	345	16.3%	2
Articles	340	16%	3
Verb to be	268	12.7%	4
Subject verb agreement	224	10.6%	5
Pronouns	190	8.98%	6
Pluralization	76	3.6%	7
Adjectives	68	3.2%	8
Word order	63	2.97%	9
Adverbs	33	1.6%	10
Possessives	24	1.1%	11
Relative clauses	20	0,94%	12
Total	2115	100%	

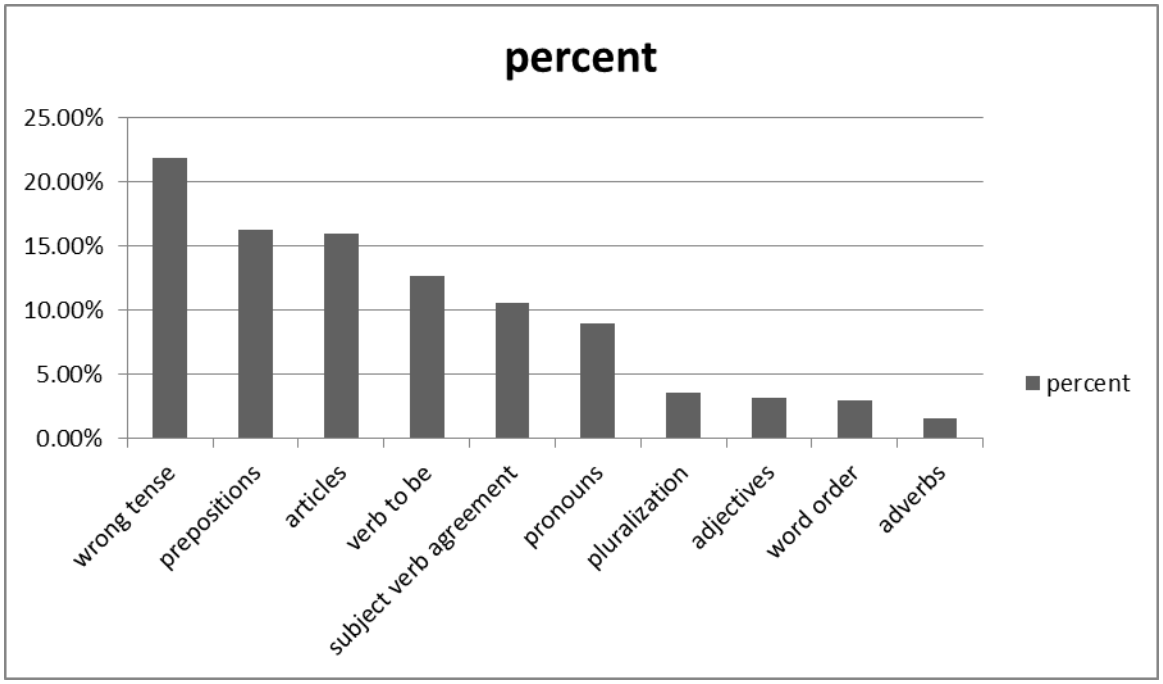
As can be seen in table (4.18) 12 types of syntactical errors have been made by the subjects of this study in their writing work (composition). These errors have been arranged in a descending order beginning with the most frequent error and ending with the least frequent one. It is clear from the table that the most frequently made error is " wrong tense" accounting for 21.9 percent of the total

number of errors. It is followed by "prepositions" accounting for 16.3 %, articles 16%, verb to be 12.7%, subject and verb agreement 10.6%, pronouns 8.98%, pluralization 3.6%, adjectives 3.2%, word order 3%, adverbs 1.6%, possessives 1.1% and clauses as the least frequently committed error accounting for 0.94% of the total number of errors. Examples of the types of errors were taken from the actual subjects' writing production will be given in the next section.

4.2.1. Types of Errors: Results and Discussion

This section gives an account of the most frequent errors found in this study. Nine types of errors were elicited as the most recurrent ones. Each type of errors will be discussed according to the way of its occurrence whether it's as an act of omission, substitution or redundancy . Examples on each type are also provided. These examples were taken from the subjects' writing extracts which comprise the data.

Figure (4.1) The Most Frequent Types of Errors



4.2.1.1. Wrong Tense

As seen in the table and figure above "wrong tense errors" are the most frequent ones. They are committed 464 times and accounting for 21.9 percent of the total number of errors identified in the corpus of this study. It is undisputable that detecting the use of wrong tense is a difficult task due to the restrictions of the English tense sequence .

The following are some of the most recurrent wrong tense examples:

A)Misuse of the simple Tense

- He opened his wallet and give me all his money. (erroneous)

He opened his wallet and gave me all his money. (correct)

-We didn't win the race because we are sick. (erroneous)

We didn't win the race because we were sick. (correct)

I couldn't see him, because the place is overcrowded. (incorrect)

I couldn't see him, because the place was overcrowded. (correct)

B. Incorrect formed Past Tense

- Barcelona wined the cup. (incorrect)

Barcelona won the cup. (correct)

He sended me an email a week ago. (incorrect)

He sent me an email a week ago. (correct)

C. Present perfect used instead of the past simple

- I have met him two years ago. (erroneous)

I met him two years ago. (correct)

In A) examples, different tenses are used in a co-ordinate predicate. The student instead of using the past tense he used “give” instead of “gave”. This may not arise from interference from the mother tongue language because in Arabic as well as in English the same tense should be used in a coordinate conjunction . In these errors , the students used two different tenses before and after the conjunction. This type of errors could be due to incomplete knowledge of the rule of using coordinate sentences.

In B) examples, the student added “ed” to the irregular verb “win” to form its past. This error is very common in this study as revealed through the analysis. This type of error might be due to overgeneralization. Some students misapply the general rule of forming the past by adding “ed” to the end of any verb to form its past. They lack the knowledge that the rule applies to regular verbs only.

In C) examples, the present perfect (have met) is mistakenly used instead of the past simple “met”. This type of error may be due to interference from the mother tongue, because the present perfect does not have equivalent in Arabic language .

4.2.1.2. Prepositions

Errors in the use of prepositions were ranked as the second after the wrong tense errors .They counted 345 errors which constitutes 16.3% of the total number of errors made by students in their written work in this study. These errors can be classified into three types:

Preposition redundancy errors, they occur when an unnecessary preposition is used. Preposition substitution errors which means the use of a wrong preposition. Omission errors which occur when a required preposition is omitted.

Table (4.19) below shows the distribution of prepositions errors per the total use found in the written work of the subjects:

Table (4.19): Distribution of preposition errors in writing

Type of error	**Frequency of occurrence**	**Percentage %**
Substitution	173	50%
Redundancy	102	29.6%
Omission	70	20.3%
Total	345	100%

As seen in table (4.19) above it is clear that the majority of preposition errors were due to substitution. They constitute 50% of the total number of the preposition errors . This indicates that most of the students used the wrong preposition. The table also reveal that 29.6% of the total number of the preposition errors were redundancy errors. As for the omission errors , they constitute 20.3% of the total number of the preposition errors.

Examples:

1. He wants me go with him. (erroneous)

He wants me to go with him. (correct)

2. Ali and I were watching the match in the ART channel. (erroneous)

Ali and I were watching the match on the ART channel. (correct)

3. In last semester his father bought him a new car. (erroneous)

Last semester his father bought him a new car. (correct)

In the first example, the preposition “to” was left out from where it should be used. This is an instance of omission of a preposition. This error can be due to negative interference. In Arabic language and particularly in colloquial Arabic , the verb ‘go’ does not require a preposition as in “rah

albeit".

In the second example, the prep "in" was wrongly used instead of "on". Therefore, this error can be classified as preposition substitution error. This error also could be caused by interference, because "on" can be translated into 'ala' in false analogue.

In the third example, prep "in" is use where it is not required. This type is classified as preposition redundancy error. In Arabic such structure requires the use of a preposition as in (fi alfasl almadi). Therefore, this type of error may arise from negative interference.

4.2.1.3. Articles

One of the most challenging structural elements to foreign language learners is the proper use of English articles. Cele Marucia (1999) states that the English article system a, an, the and zero article is quite difficult to acquire not only to foreign and second language learners but also for children learning language as their first language. They are a real source of difficulty especially for learners whose native languages do not have articles or do have articles-like morphemes which are used in ways that differ from English articles.

As seen in table (4.19) and graph 4.1, errors of the articles constitute 16% and a number of 340 of the total number of errors made by the students in this study. They include errors of redundancy, omission and substitution.

A. Redundancy of Articles

It is mean by article redundancy, that an article is used where it is not required. Errors of article redundancy include both definite and indefinite articles. The following are some of the examples of errors in the use of articles:

- The swimming is his best hobby. (incorrect)

- Swimming is his best hobby. (correct)
- We go to the tower of the Riyadh. (incorrect)
- We go to the tower of Riyadh. (correct)
- His best drink is the milk with coffee. (incorrect)
- His best drink is milk with coffee. (correct)

In the first example, the definite article “the” is used redundantly before the gerund “swimming”. This error could be due to negative transfer because in Arabic the gerund can be used with an article. The word “swimming” is translated into Arabic as “alsibaha”.

In the second example, the article “the” is not needed before the proper noun “Riyadh”. This error seem to arise from interference from the mother tongue language, because in Arabic the definite article can be used before some proper nouns. Therefore, the word “in Riyadh” is translated in Arabic into “fi alriyadh”.

In the third example, the definite article “the” is used before the uncountable noun “milk” which is not required. This error also could reflect the influence of negative interference from the mother tongue language which is Arabic. In Arabic, articles can be used with uncountable nouns .Thus “the milk” which is incorrect in English, is translated as “al-haleeb” which is correct in Arabic.

Omission of Articles:

Omission of an article means that an article is omitted from where it is required. This include both definite and indefinite articles. The examples below show some of the omission errors made by the students in their writing:

- We see lights of the minarets at night. (incorrect)
- We see the lights of the minarets at night. (correct)

- We enjoy looking at the stars in sky. (incorrect)
- We enjoy looking at the stars in the sky. (correct)
- Makkah is crowded city. (incorrect)
- Makkah is a crowded city. (correct)

In the first example, the article "the" is omitted before the plural noun "lights". This error can be attributed to negative transfer from the learners first language which is Arabic. The sentence "We see the lights of the city." can be translated into Arabic as " Nahnu nunthor ela adwha almadina.".

In the second sentence, the article "the" is not used before the unique noun "sky". This error does not arise from negative transfer because in Arabic as well as in English , articles are used before unique nouns. This error , therefore, may be due to misuse of rules.

In the third example, the indefinite article "a" is omitted before the adjective "crowded". The omission of the indefinite article in this sentence might be due to interference from the first language because in Arabic the indefinite article is not used before adjectives. Therefore, the sentence " Makkah is crowded city.", can be translated into Arabic as: "Makkah madinah mazdahimah".

Substitution of Articles:

Article substitution refers to that the definite article is used instead of an indefinite article or vice versa. The following are examples of articles substitution errors:

Abha is a worst city in winter. (incorrect)

Abha is the worst city in winter. (correct)

This example shows that the indefinite article "a" is wrongly used instead of the definite article "the" before the superlative adjective "worst". This error seems not to arise from interference. Therefore, this error can be regarded as performance error which may occur due to carelessness and therefore can be

corrected by the student himself.

4.2.1.4. Verb to be

As seen in table (4.19) and graph 4.1, errors of the verb to be constitute 12.7% and a number of 268 of the total number of errors made by students in this study.

Table (4.20) below shows the distribution of verb to be errors per the total use found in the written work of the subjects:

Table (4.20) Distribution of Verb to be Errors in Writing

Type of error	Frequency of occurrence	Percentage%
Omission	178	66.4%
Redundancy	90	33.6 %
Total	268	100%

As seen from table (20) that most of the "verb to be" errors were omission errors. They counted 66.4% of the total number of errors whereas the redundancy errors represented 33.6%. This means that a considerable number of students didn't use the verb to be where it's required to be used. The omission of the verb to be mostly occurred in structures such as :

- His father nice person. (incorrect)
- His father is a nice person. (correct)
- The buildings in his neighborhood beautiful. (incorrect)
- The buildings in his neighborhood are beautiful. (correct)

The omission of the verb to be in the above examples may be due to mother tongue interference because in Arabic there is no "verb to be" as in English language. For instance , " His father is a nice person." in Arabic is : 'aboho

shakhus latif.' The same is applied to the second example: "The buildings in his neighborhood beautiful." Can be said in Arabic as 'almabani fi hartuhom jamilah". In all these examples the omission of the "verb to be" could be caused by negative transfer from the first language.

Redundancy of the Verb to Be:

As shown in the table above , 82 errors of the total number of errors were redundancy errors. This means that a verb to be is used where it is not needed. The examples below show the redundant use of the verb to be:

- He is like travelling. (incorrect)
- He likes travelling. (correct)

Before the sun was set, we left the camp. (incorrect)

Before the sun set, we left the camp. (correct)

It is quite clear that the students in all of the above instances used the verb to be 'is & was' redundantly as in 'is likes" in the first example and " was set" in the second example. These errors are not due to interference. They may be related to other factors such as wrong analogy.

4.2.1.5. Subject and verb agreement

One of the most frequent types of errors made by the subjects in their writing in this study is subject- verb agreement (concord). The subject and verb in the English sentence agree in number , person and gender. They constitute a total number of 224 errors with a percentage of (10.6%). The following are some examples of errors of subject-verb agreement:

A. plural subject does not agree with singular verb:

- His family <u>live</u> in Jeddah. (lives)

- Our team <u>have</u> won the cup. (has)

b. singular subject does not agree with plural verb:

- He <u>take</u> me with him to college. (takes)

-None of his relatives <u>are</u> a doctor. (is)

As shown in the examples above that most of the agreement errors are not caused by interference because in both languages English and Arabic, the subject agree with the verb that follows it, that is to say if the subject is singular, the verb should be singular, too. Therefore , a possible explanation for why students tend to add –s after plural, and omit –s after the singular as seen in these examples may be due to overgeneralization of the rule. Students overgeneralize the plural through adding the plural –s to the verb that follows and omit the –s from the verb if the subject is singular. Most Arab students confuse between the third person singular (–s) and the plural (-s). They tend to add -s to the verb if the subject is plural and omit –s if the subject is singular.

4.2.1.6. Pronoun Errors

As seen in table (4.18) and graph 4.1, errors of the pronouns constitute 8.9% and a number of 190 errors of the total number of errors made by the students in this study. They include errors of omission and substitution.

Omission of pronouns:

Omission of a pronoun means that a pronoun is left out where it should be used. These errors include the omission of the pronouns: he, she, it, her, it, they, them,..etc. The examples below show some of the pronoun omission

errors:

He wants to study abroad because is better than here. (incorrect)

He wants to study abroad because it is better than here. (correct)

In the example above, the pronoun "it" is not omitted before the verb "is". This error could not be attributed to interference because in both languages English and Arabic the verb agree with the subject and the pronouns are used in both structures. Therefore, the omission of the pronoun here does not reflect lack of knowledge. In the contrary, it could be just a performance error which arise from factors such as carelessness and fatigue.

Substitution of Pronouns:

Substitution of pronouns refers to the use of a pronoun instead of another one in a way which does not fit properly. The following examples show errors of pronoun substitution:

-He is the best one in him group. (incorrect)

-He is the best one in his group. (correct)

-He carries students in his car to them houses. (incorrect)

- He carries students in his car to their houses. (correct)

In the first example, the pronoun "him" wrongly used instead of "his". The same happened in the second example, the pronoun "them" is incorrectly used in place of the pronoun "their". The errors in these two examples do not seem to arise from negative interference from the first language. However, these types of errors might be caused by hastiness and carelessness and therefore, they can be classified as performance errors.

4.2.1.7 Plurality Errors

As seen in graph (4.1), the percentage of errors of plurality in this study is very low compared with the other types of errors made by the students in their compositions. They constitute 3.6% of the total number of errors made by the students in this study.

The following are some of the examples of the errors in plurality :

1 Errors in which the "s" is left out of countable noun plurals

a. My friend has many hobby. (incorrect)

My friend has many hobbies. (correct)

b. Regular and irregular plurals.

e.g. Three mans stopped us. (incorrect)

Three men stopped us. (correct)

In the first example, the student mistakenly dropped the "s" from the countable noun, he used "hobby" as a singular instead of "hobbies" as plural. One of the possible explanations for this is that the student may lack the knowledge that determiners such as some and many require plural nouns.

In the second example, the student made an error by using "mans" as a plural of "man" instead of "men". This type of error in using irregular plurals is very common among Arab learners of English in general and Saudi students in particular. This confusion in the use of regular and irregular plurals may be due to overgeneralization. Linguists such as Jain (1974) and Tan (1978) attributed these errors to some strategies such as simplification and generalization from the learners' part.

4.2.1.8. Errors of Adjectives

Graph (4.1), reveals that 84 errors of adjectives were made by students in this study. They constitute 3.3% of the total number of errors. The examples below show some of the adjective errors made by the students:

a. It was such an interested lecture presented by Dr. Ali. (incorrect)
   It was such an interesting lecture presented by Dr. Ali. (correct)

b. He is more stronger than his brother. (incorrect)
   He is stronger than his brother. (correct)

In example a, the –ed adjective "interested" wrongly used to describe the

noun “lecture”. It seems that this error does not arise from interference from the mother tongue language because in both languages the noun can be modified by both of the two verbs. Therefore, this error can be caused by overgeneralization of similar rules.

In example b, more is redundantly used before “stronger” which indicates double comparatives. This error can be due to ignorance of the rule that adjectives of one syllable such as strong their comparative is formed by adding –er to the positive whereas longer adjectives take more in the comparative.

4.2.1.9. Errors of Word Order

The word order refers to that the words in the sentence should follow the English sentence structure order which is based on “SVO” subject verb object.

Table (4.19) and graph 4.1, reveal that errors of the pronouns constitute 5.9% and a number of 130 errors of the total number of errors were made by the students in this study. The following examples show some errors of wrong order made by the subjects of this study:

- Helping the poor is a habit good. (incorrect)
- Helping the poor is a good habit. (correct)
- How we can help the poor. (incorrect)
- How can we help the poor? (correct)

In the first example, the adjective “bad” is wrongly used after the noun “habit”. Also, in the second example the modal verb “can” is mistakenly used after the subject “we” where it should be placed after the question word “How” and before the subject “we”. These errors clearly show the effect of negative interference from the mother tongue language (Arabic). In the first example , the learner used his first language in producing the sentence

because in Arabic the adjective comes after the noun, whereas in English the adjective precedes the noun. In the second example, it seems that the learner overgeneralized the rule of forming a question without paying attention to the proper English question word order in which the verb comes immediately after the question word.

4.3. The Grammar Test

In this section the results obtained from the grammar test administered to the first year Saudi university students not majoring in English language will be displayed and analyzed. The test aimed at assessing the first year (Preparatory) university students performance in an isolated grammar test. The test was intended to investigate and assess the students' performance in a separate grammar test , not integrated in a composition in order to find out if there is a correlation between the students' syntactical performance in composition writing and in a separate grammar test . The test covered most of the grammatical items studied by the students in their English language syllabus.

Table (4.21): Frequency of occurrence , percentage and frequency rank of syntactical errors in the grammar test.

Type of error	Frequency of occurrence	Percentage%	Frequency Rank
Wrong Tense	214	14.3%	1
Verb to be	204	13.6%	2
Articles	184	12.3%	3
Prepositions	166	11.1%	4
Word order	160	10.7%	5
Adjectives	144	9.7%	6
Subject verb agreement	123	8.3%	7
Adverbs	86	5.8%	8
Plurality	71	4.8%	9
Pronouns	63	4.2%	10
Possessives	45	3%	11
Relative clauses	30	2%	12
Total	1490	100%	

As can be seen in table (4.21) 12 types of grammatical errors have been made by the subjects of this study in their grammar test. These errors have been arranged in a descending order beginning with the most frequent errors and ending with the least frequent ones. It is clear from the table that the most frequent errors made in this study are the " wrong tense" errors accounting for 14.3% percent of the total number of errors. It is followed by verb to be 13.6%, articles 12.3%, prepositions 11.1%, word order 10.7%, adjectives 9.7%, subject verb agreement 8.3%, adverbs 5.8% , plurality 4.8% , pronouns

4.2%,possessives 3%, and relative clauses 2% of the total number the errors made in this study.

4.3.1. Types of Errors: Results and Discussion

This section gives an account of the most frequent errors in the grammar test. The questions of the test were intended to measure the students abilities to answer grammar questions in isolation.

The test was made up of 10 multiple choose questions. The answer options were represented by the letters a, b or c. A table and a graph were designed for each question. Unanswered questions were indicated by the word "missing".

In the following the researcher will provide the results and a discussion of each item of the grammar test.

4.3.1.1. Wrong Tense

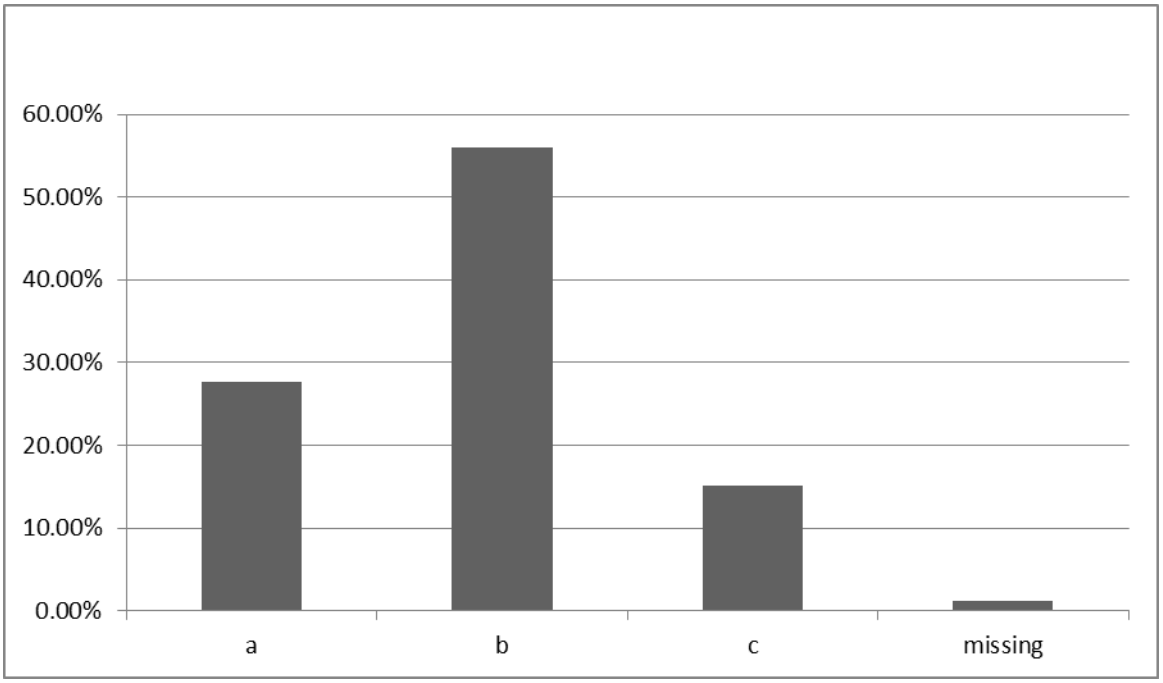
Q.1. He……me two hundred riyals last week.

a. lend b. lended **c**. lent

Table 4.22 Frequency and Percentage for the Answers to Q.1

Option	Frequency	Percentage
A	69	27.6%
B	140	56%
C	38	15.2%
Missing	3	1.2%
Total	250	100%

Figure(4.2) Frequency and Percentage for the Answers to Question1



As shown from the table and figure nearly 85% of the respondents chose the wrong alternatives (a) and (b) whereas only 15.2% gave the right answer (c). This result indicates that the students face a real difficulty in understanding and using tenses . The main factor behind this could be interference from the first language because the grammatical structure of the English sentence differs from that of the Arabic sentence.

Q.2. None of the students……late.

a. are **b**. was c. were

The table and figure below show the frequency and percentage for Q.2

Table 4.23 frequency and percentage for the answers to Q.2

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	124	49.6%
b	46	9.2%
c	79	31.6%
Missing	1	0.4%
Total	250	100%

Figure4.3 Frequency and percentage for the answers to question2.

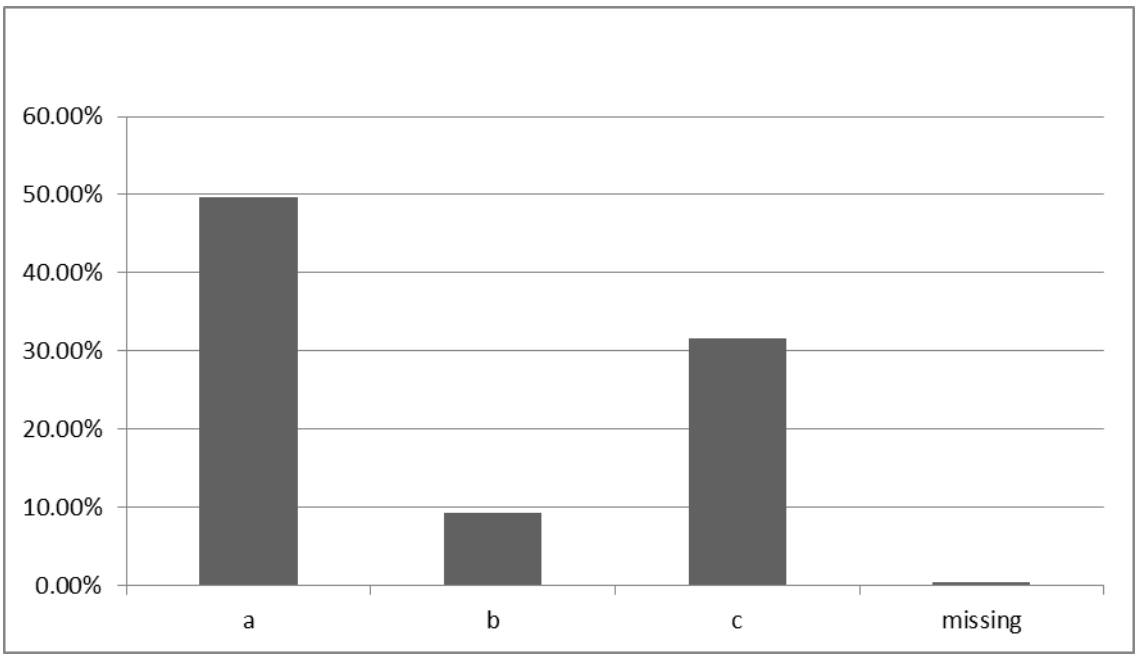


Table (4.23) and figure 4.3 reveal that 49.6% of the respondents chose the wrong alternative (a) . The result reflects the difficulty the students have in using the verb to be . This type of error may not arise from interference from the mother tongue language since in both languages a singular subject requires a singular verb to be. Therefore, this problem could be due to other factors such carelessness and incomplete knowledge.

Q.3. He used to work at…….university in Kuwait two years ago.

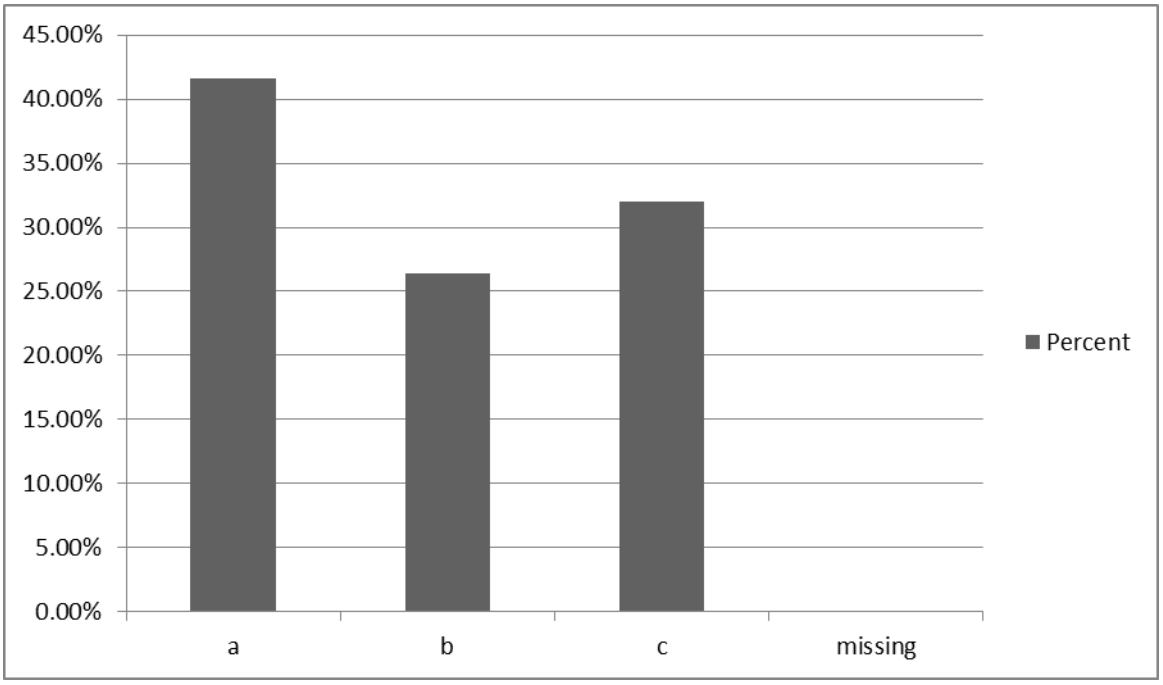
a. the **b**. a c. an

The table and figure below show the frequency and percentage for Q.3

Table 4.24 frequency and percentage for the answers to Q.3

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	104	41.6%
b	66	26.4%
c	80	32%
Missing	0	0%
Total	250	100%

Figure4.4 Frequency and percentage for the answers to question3.



The table and figure above show that nearly 75% of the respondents chose the wrong alternatives (a) and (c) . This indicates that most of the students have a

problem in dealing with articles. The reason behind this may arise from generalization . Some students use an before all words that begin with a vowel letter. For instance, in this question “an” can’t be used before “university”.

Q.4. My son was born…….April15,2015.

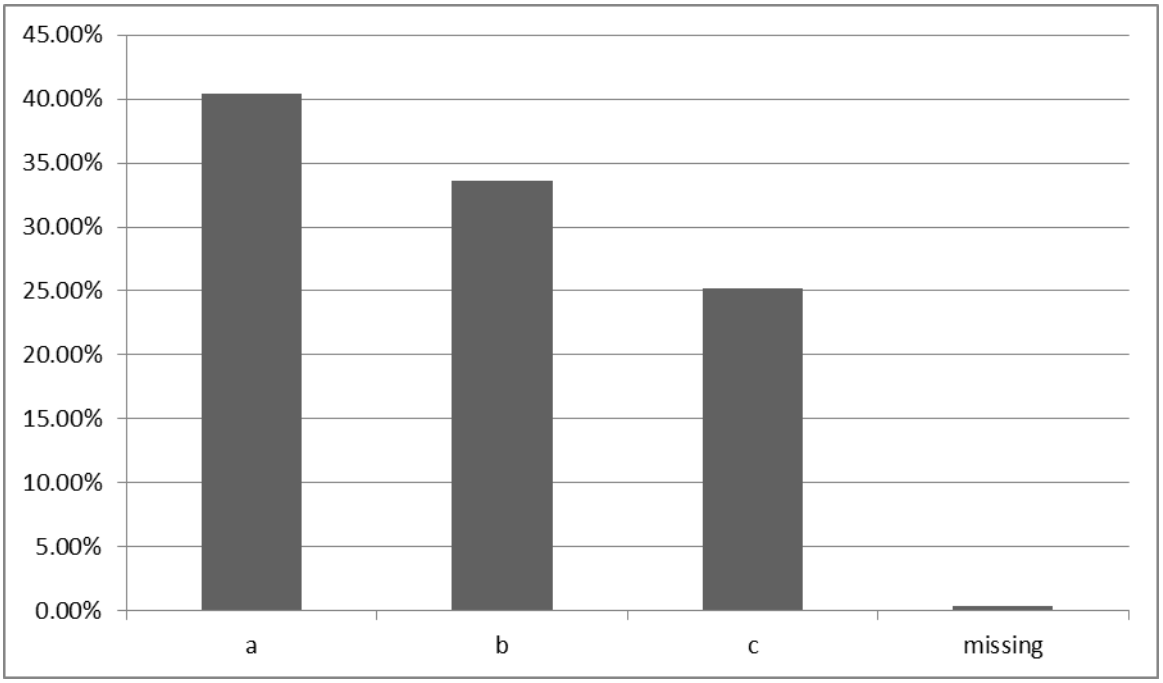
a. in **b**. on c. at

The table and figure below show the frequency and percentage for Q.4

Table 4.25 frequency and percentage for the answers to Q.4

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	101	40.4%
b	84	33.6%
c	63	25.2%
Missing	1	0.4%
Total	250	100%

Figure4.5 Frequency and percentage for the answers to question4.



From the table and figure above it is noticed that a high percentage of about 67% of the respondents chose the wrong answer while 33% picked the correct answer. The result indicates that the students face difficulty in dealing with the prepositions. The reason behind this may arise from negative interference because the use of some English preposition such as "in , on" may be confusing to Arabic learners.

Q.5. Mr.Chung is ……..

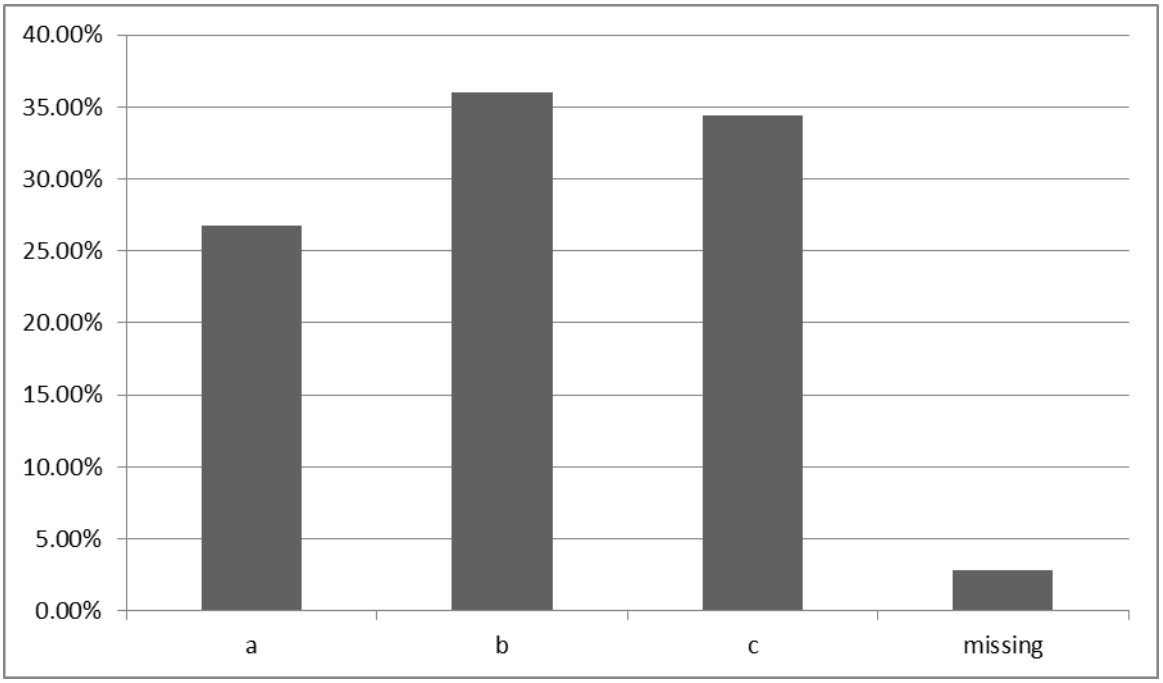
a. an old Chinese kind man b.a Chinese kind old man **c**.a kind old Chinese man

The table and figure below show the frequency and percentage for Q.5

Table 4.26 frequency and percentage for the answers to Q.5

Option	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	67	26.8%
b	90	36%
c	86	34.4%
Missing	7	2.8%
Total	250	100%

Figure4.6 Frequency and percentage for the answers to question5.



The table and figure above show that a high percentage of about 62% of the respondents chose the wrong answer whereas 38% picked the correct answer. The result indicates that a considerable number of the students have a problem in using the English sentence order properly. One of the main reasons behind this could be from negative interference from the native language (Arabic). The English sentence order is "s + v +o" which means the subject comes first and then the verb which is followed by the object. In Arabic the sentence order is "v+s+o" here the verb comes first and the subject comes second. Another major difference is that in English the adjective precedes the noun whereas in Arabic the adjective comes after the noun.

Q.6. This is the ……...TV program I have ever seen.

a. good b. better **c**. best

The table and figure below show the frequency and percentage for Q.6

Table 4.27 frequency and percentage for the answers to Q.6

Option	Frequency	Percentage
A	73	29.2%
b	70	28%
c	106	42.4%
Missing	1	0.4%
Total	250	100%

Figure4.7 Frequency and percentage for the answers to question6.

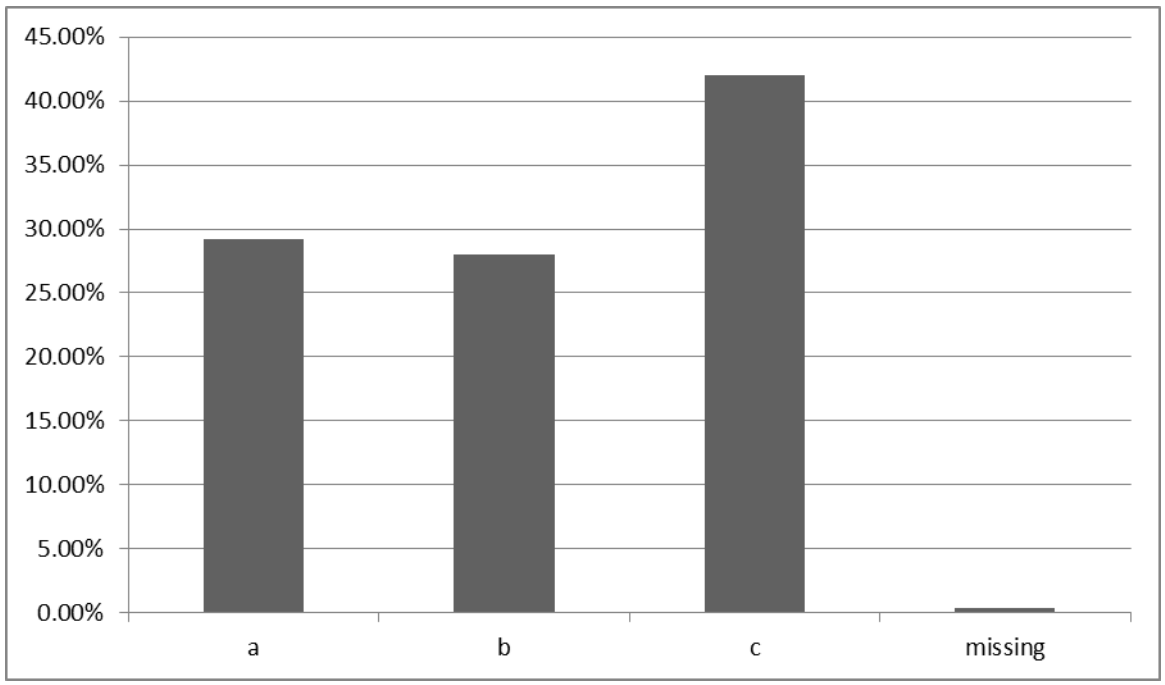


Table (4.23) and figure 4.7 reveal that 42.4% of the respondents chose the right alternative (a) .This result indicates that most of the students find no difficulty in using adjectives. This type of error may not arise from interference from the mother tongue language. Therefore, this type of error can be classified as a performance error which occur due to other factors such as misapplication of some rules and ignorance.

Q.7. Tom…….coffee. He drinks tea.

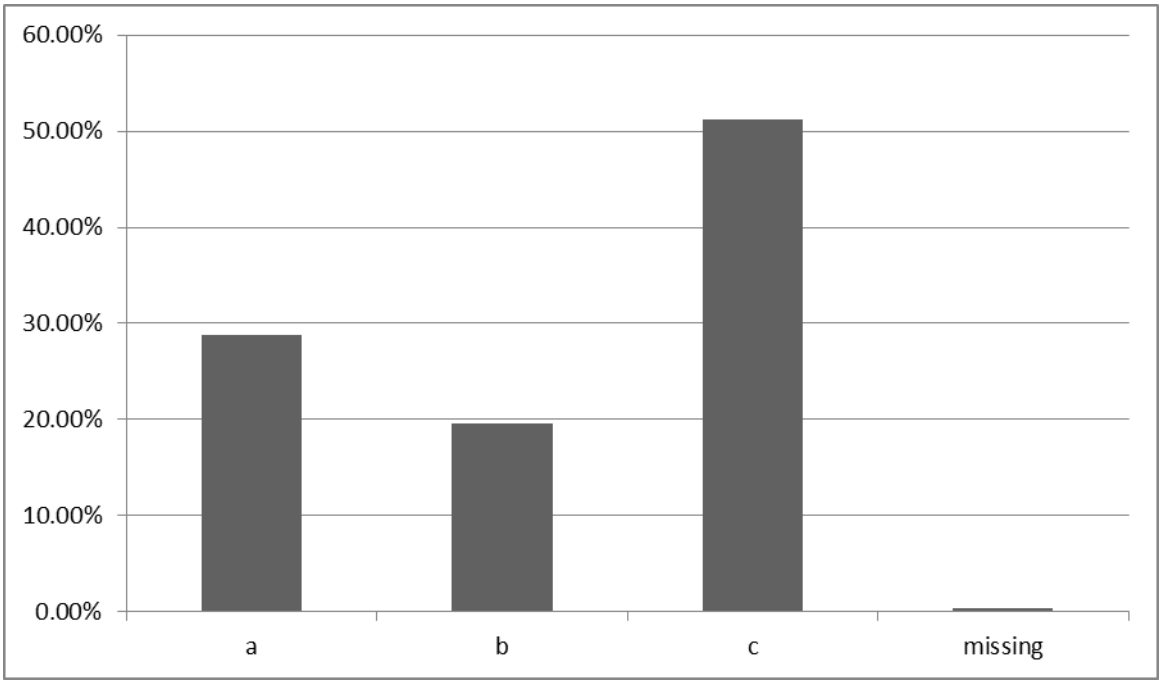
a. drinking b. didn't drink **c**. doesn't drink

The table and figure below show the frequency and percentage for Q.7

Table 4.28 frequency and percentage for the answers to Q.7

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	72	28.8%
b	49	19.6%
c	128	51.2%
Missing	1	0.4%
Total	250	100%

Figure4.8 Frequency and percentage for the answers to question7.



The table and figure above reveal that 51.2% of the respondents chose the right alternative (a) . The result reflects clearly that more than half of the respondents have no difficulty in using subject and verb rule . This type of error may not arise from interference from the mother tongue language since in both languages(Arabic and English) a singular subject requires a singular verb. Therefore, this type of error could be due to other factors such hastiness and overgeneralization.

Q.8. He runs……

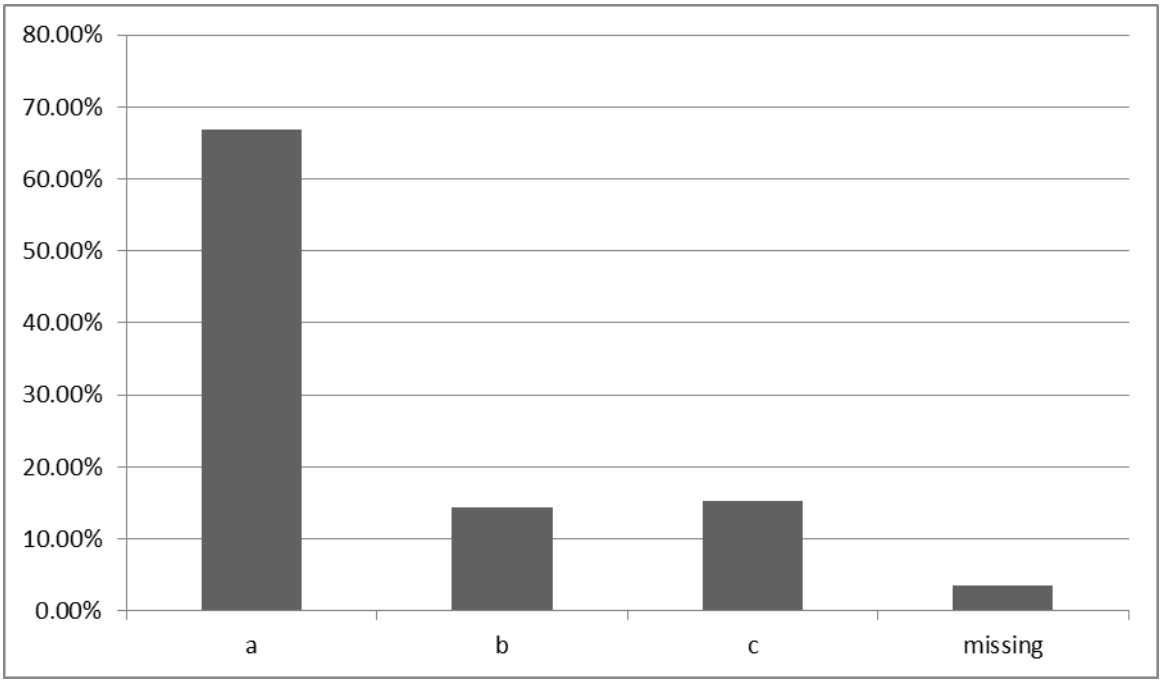
a. fast b. fastly c. the fastest

The table and figure below show the frequency and percentage for Q.8

Table 4.29 frequency and percentage for the answers to Q.8

Option	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
a	167	66.8%
b	36	14.4%
c	38	15.2%
Missing	9	3.6%
Total	250	100%

Figure4.9 Frequency and percentage for the answers to question8.



The table and figure above reveal that 66.8% of the respondents chose the right alternative (a) . The result show clearly that the majority of the respondents face no difficulty in using the adverbs . The errors which were made in adverbs by some of the respondents might not arise from negative interference. They could be caused by other factors such overgeneralization. For instance, some students think that all the adverbs end in "ly" therefore they overgeneralize this. In the question, the adverb is "fast" and not "fastly".

Q.9. My uncle has two…….in his farm.

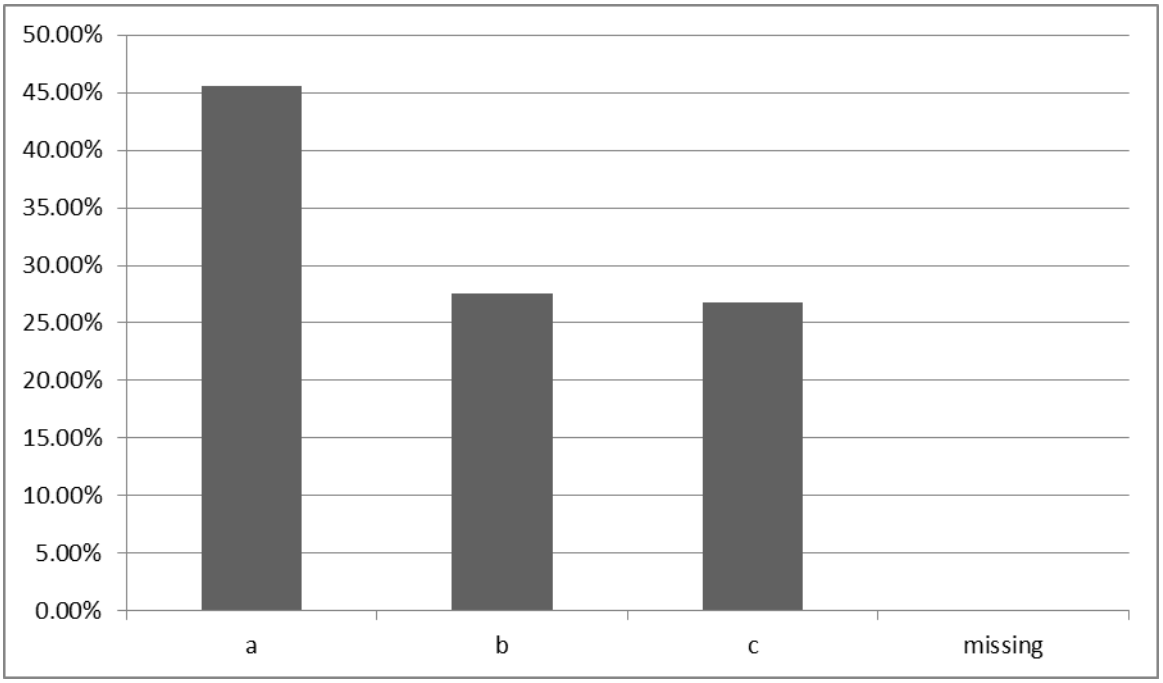
a. sheep b. sheeps c. sheepes

The table and figure below show the frequency and percentage for Q.9

Table 4.30 frequency and percentage for the answers to Q.9

Option	Frequency	Percentage
a	114	45.6%
b	69	27.6%
c	67	26.8%
Missing	0	0%
Total	250	100%

Figure4.10 Frequency and percentage for the answers to question9.



The table and figure above reveal that 45.6 % of the respondents chose the right answer (a) . The result reflects nearly half of the respondents have no difficulty in using plural form . As for the errors made by the students, they could be due to overgeneralization. In question 9, the plural of "sheep" is "sheep" and "sheeps" which is chosen by a considerable number of the students. The reason

here is that some students think that all the plural nouns end with "s" ignoring that there are also irregular plurals which do not end with "s".

4.4.The Correlation between the students' errors in the writing and the separate grammar tests:

The tables below show the correlation between the students' errors in grammar in both the writing test and the separate grammar test:

Table (4.31): Wrong tense errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Writing Test	250	1.85	1.33	.033	.60
Grammar	250	.86	.381		

As seen in the table (4.31) above, from the calculation of the SPSS ,There is a low positive correlation between wrong tense errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .033). Although the correlation is low but it is positive and statistically it is not significant (Sig.= .060 > .05).

Table (4.32): Article errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	1.36	1.037	.007	.91
Grammar	250	.74	.442		

As seen in table (4.32) There is a weak correlation between the article errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .007). Since the correlation is very low statistically it is not significant (Sig.= .91 > .05).

Table (4.33): Preposition errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	1.38	1.29	.006	.92
Grammar	250	.70	.756		

Table (4.33) above shows that there is very weak correlation between preposition errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .006). Since the correlation is very low statistically it is not significant (Sig.= .92 > .05).

Table (4.34): Subject and Verb Agreement errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	.88	1.244	.123	.05
Grammar	250	.49	.501		

As seen in table (4.34) There is a low positive correlation between subject and verb agreement errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .123). Although there is a positive correlation, there can hardly be any statistical significance in the correlation (Sig.= .05 =.05).

Table (4.35): Verb to Be errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	1.03	1.405	.055	.383
Grammar	250	.82	.388		

As seen in table (4.35) There is a low positive correlation between “verb to be” errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .055). Since the correlation is very weak statistically there’s no significance (Sig.= .38 > .05).

Table (4.36): Word Order errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	.24	.466	.061	.341
Grammar	250	.62	.487		

Table (4.36) shows that there is a low positive correlation between word order errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .06). Because the correlation is very low statistically there's no significance (Sig.= .34 > .05).

Table (4.37): Plurality errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	.30	.563	.068	.285
Grammar	250	.28	.450		

As seen in table (4.37) There is a low positive correlation between plurality errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .07). Since the correlation is very low statistically there's no significance (Sig.= .29 > .05).

Table (4.38): Pronoun errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	.76	.932	.133	.036
Grammar	250	.25	.435		

As seen in table (4.38) There is a weak correlation between the pronoun errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .13). Although the correlation is low , there is a positive correlation and statistically significant (Sig.= .036 < .05).

Table (4.39): Adjective errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	.28	.491	.062	.330
Grammar	250	.58	.495		

Table (4.39) reveals that there is a low correlation between adjective errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .06). Since the correlation is very weak statistically there's no significance (Sig.= .33 > .05).

Table (4.40): Adverb errors in both tests writing and separate grammar test

Type of exam	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	**Sig. (2-tailed)**
Writing Test	250	.17	.708	.073	.252
Grammar	250	.33	.472		

As seen in table (4.40) There is a weak positive correlation between adverb errors in the writing test and those in the separate grammar test (Corr.= .07). Since the correlation is very low statistically there's no significance (Sig.= .25 > .05).

To conclude based on the SPSS calculation shown in the tables above, there is a correlation between the students' grammatical errors made in the composition writing test and those which were made in the separate grammar test (Corr. = .21, Sig. = .001<.05). The correlation may indicate that it happens that the students may perform well in a separate grammar test, however, when it comes to writing a composition they face real difficulties and commit more errors. This could be due to many factors such as the method of teaching . For instance, explaining grammatical rules separately in isolation and not in a context . Also, the way of testing it is seen that students performance in questions such as correct and choose could be different from that in a paragraph writing. In addition to that, writing is known to be the most challenging skill

Summary of the chapter

This chapter has presented and discussed the results of the teachers questionnaire, the writing (composition) and the separate grammar test. The questionnaire was intended to assess the opinions of the ELT teachers at the

faculties of Arts, Education and Languages at the Saudi universities. It aimed to investigate the teachers views on grammatical errors made Saudi university students in writing. The writing and grammar tests on the other hand were administered to first year Saudi university students not majoring in English language. They attempted to test the research hypotheses mentioned previously in chapter one. A sample of 250 students performed the two tests and a sample of 100 teachers responded to the teachers' questionnaire.

The data obtained from the questionnaire and the tests were computed and analyzed through the statistical packages for Social Sciences (SPSS).The responses were presented in tables and figures. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were calculated to examine the variability of the scores of the respondents as seen in the statistics of the results.

The chapter consists of four sections. The first section dealt with the results obtained from the ELT teachers questionnaire. The second one reported the results of the writing test. The third section dealt with the results of the separate grammar test. The last one dealt with the correlation between grammatical errors in the composition writing test and those in the grammar test. The results of the research instruments can be summarized as follow:

As for the first hypothesis regarding causes such as L1transfer could be behind grammatical errors made by Saudi students. This hypothesis was measured by the first statements (1), (2), (3) and (4) in the teachers' questionnaire, was confirmed. As for the two tests though the results indicating some aspects of difficulties but generally they support this hypothesis .The analysis of respondents' performance in the questions related to this hypothesis was generally satisfactory.

Regarding the second hypothesis that there are certain recurrent types of grammatical errors made by students in their writing activities. This hypothesis was measured by statements (5), (6), (7) and (8) in the teachers' questionnaire, was strongly confirmed by the teachers' responses. It is also confirmed by the results of the respondents performance in the writing and grammar tests.

As for the third hypothesis which is about teachers' attitudes towards grammatical errors made by students . This hypothesis was measured by the statements (9), (10), (11) and (12) in the teachers' questionnaire, was not confirmed by the teachers' responses. As for the two tests though the results indicating some aspects of difficulties but generally support this hypothesis .The analysis of respondents' performance in the questions related to this hypothesis was generally satisfactory.

- Concerning the last hypothesis that the Saudi English language syllabus does not sufficiently cover the grammar component. This hypothesis was measured by the statements (13), (14), (15) and (16) in the teachers' questionnaire, was confirmed by the teachers' responses. It is also confirmed by the results of the respondents performance in the writing and grammar tests.

It could be noticed that generally the results of the tests were consistent to some extent with the results of the teachers' questionnaire. The results were also consistent with the results of some of the previous researches relevant to the this study.

The researcher so far has analyzed and discussed the results of the data obtained from the research tools (the teachers' questionnaire, the writing and the separate grammar tests). The next chapter will provide a summary of the study and the conclusion as well as recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

Chapter Five

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS and SUGGESTIONS for FURTHER STUDIES

Chapter 5

Summary Conclusions, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies

The present chapter will provide a summary of the whole study. It will also present conclusions for its results and findings .Also, recommendations drawn from these findings will be made. The chapter will finally offer some suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary

The purpose of this study was to analyze the common grammatical errors made by first year Saudi university students not majoring in English language . It is an attempt to explore the causes and types of syntactic errors made by the Saudi university students. It also aimed at investigating the impact of teachers' attitude and the English language syllabus on grammatical errors made by the students.

Because of their high frequency in occurrence, and because they can influence learners' writing abilities, grammar has gained a considerable attention in ELT research studies.

The present study provided a description of the most common grammatical errors and the causes behind them. Research on grammar and common syntactical errors, as presented in the reviewed literature, revealed that grammar is a real challenge to many Saudi students in particular and foreign language learners in general. Researchers who dealt with the issue of teaching grammar revealed that students lack proper use and understanding of grammar rules.

In this study the Analytical Descriptive method was used. The objectives of the study were to investigate the common grammatical errors made by Saudi students and the major factors behind them. To collect the required data, a questionnaire was designed and addressed to the ELT teachers at some Saudi universities. Two tests were also designed on composition writing and grammar for the students.

The questionnaire was meant for EFL teachers in the faculties of Languages, Education and Arts in some of the Saudi universities. It aimed to assess ELT

teachers' views on the causes and types of grammatical errors made by Saudi university students. It also intended to investigate their opinions on the influence of the teachers' attitudes and the English language syllabus on the syntactical errors made by the students.

The composition writing was intended to investigate the most recurrent grammatical errors made by first year Saudi university students not majoring in English language in composition writing. The researcher didn't design special test for composition writing, however, the written production (compositions) were taken from the subjects answers of the first semester final exam 2014-2015.

The grammar test, on the other hand ,was intended to investigate the most common grammatical errors made by the students in a separate grammar test. It was designed by the researcher to measure the students' abilities in understanding and using grammar in isolation. It was a multiple choice test.

The validity of the research tools was verified by a group of ELT experts. As for the reliability of the test , the researcher used the test – retest method to verify its reliability. Pearson correlation was used to estimate the reliability of the test and to measure the correlation between the students grammatical errors in the composition test and in the separate grammar test.

After confirming the reliability and validity of the research tools, the researcher administered them. The tests were administered in Jazan university in Saudi Arabia. The ELT teachers' questionnaire was answered by ELT teachers from Jazan university and some other Saudi universities.

The following study questions were raised :

1.What are the possible causes of grammatical errors made by Saudi university students?

2.What are the most common types of grammatical errors students make in writing?

3.What are the teachers' attitudes towards the grammatical errors made by students?

4.To what extent does the English language syllabus sufficiently cover the grammar component?

Four hypotheses stemmed from the above questions. The first hypothesis which stated that Various causes such as L1 transfer could be behind grammatical errors made by the students. This hypothesis although it was strongly supported by the ELT teachers questionnaire ,it was only partly supported as shown by the results of students in the writing and grammar tests. The second hypothesis stated that There are certain recurrent types of grammatical errors made by the students in their writing activities was confirmed by both the responses of the ELT teachers' questionnaire and the results of the students in the writing and grammar tests. The third hypothesis claimed that teachers' attitudes towards grammatical errors made by the students are expected to be negative. This hypothesis although it was not confirmed by the ELT teachers questionnaire, it was partly supported by the results of the students in the writing and grammar tests. The last hypothesis which stated that the Saudi English language syllabus does not sufficiently cover the grammar component was confirmed by the responses of the ELT teachers' questionnaire and partly by the writing and grammar tests.

The study adopted the descriptive method and the data obtained was analyzed by using the SPSS program and critically discussed.

Generally, it could be concluded that the present study assessed the common grammatical errors made by Saudi university students not majoring in English language . It also assessed how ELT teachers view common syntactical errors made by the students.

5.2 Conclusions

In light of the responses of the ELT teachers to the questionnaire and the performance of the students in the writing and grammar tests, the following conclusions were revealed:

Generally it could be concluded that the low performance of the study subjects in both writing and grammar tests revealed respondents' lack of abilities of understanding and using syntactical rules properly.

The findings of the study revealed clearly that the wrong tense errors followed by prepositions and verb to be errors are the most frequent syntactical errors made by the respondents in this study as shown by the results of the respondents in the writing and grammar tests.

The results of the ELT teachers' questionnaire showed that negative transfer from the mother tongue was one of the major causes of syntactical errors made by the students in their composition writing.

It was also found out that there was a correlation between the syntactical errors made by the participants in the composition writing test and in the grammar test.

5.3 Recommendations

In light of the findings of the study the following recommendations are formulated:

(1) Since wrong tense errors are the most frequent errors in this study, the researcher recommends that more attention should be paid to grammatical errors particularly tenses using more effective ways stressing tenses in meaningful and interesting texts.

(2) Teachers should be more aware of the different types of errors made by

their students and provide the necessary follow up work to check the problem areas and provide suitable solutions. In dealing with grammatical errors in writing, it is important for the teachers to establish what an error is, to determine the possible sources of errors, and to explain why they happen because a deeper knowledge of the causes of the errors enables the teacher to work out a more effective teaching strategies to deal with them. Finally, it is important to decide how serious they are and what sort of a remedial work they need.

(3) Students need also to be taught about the English text awareness rather than transferring. This can be done through guiding learners to look critically and analytically at their written texts and try to find out the grammatical errors by themselves and correct them .

(4) The English language syllabus and the course textbooks should include more free and controlled writing exercises that could help improve students abilities in both grammar and writing. On the other hand, teachers should vary their teaching techniques in order to assist and enable their students to use grammatical rules more competently in their writing.

(5) Error analysis could be used by EFL teachers and researchers as an important tool by which they can learn more about the psycholinguistic processes involved in teaching and learning English grammar and efficiently using it to enhance students' writing abilities.

It could be concluded that this study dealt with a limited number of the linguistic aspects involved in syntactical errors made by students in writing due to the limitations of space and time. Clearly, there is a great deal of work to be done in this area in the future as suggested below:

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

Further studies should focus on issues related to syntactical errors made by learners in written texts. The following areas could be investigated in the future research:

- Researchers should investigate errors made by learners before the tertiary level.
- Researches could be conducted to investigate the impact of colloquial Arabic on errors made by Arabic learners of English language as a possible source of negative transfer.
- Comparative studies could be conducted to investigate areas of similarities and differences between English and Arabic languages regarding the characteristics of the syntactical structures of the two languages.

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Appendices

Appendices

Appendix1

Validity of the Research Tools

The research tools; the ELT teachers' questionnaire and the grammar test were introduced to a group of ELT experts. They were requested to insure the validity of these tools. Their recommendations and suggestions about the validity of these items were taken into consideration , and were cooperated in the final version.

The referees were the following four experts:

1. Dr.Ibrahim Al- Faki - King AbdulAziz University
2. Dr. AbdulMajeed Altaib – Um Alqhura University
3. Dr. Ahmad Taha Musa - Jazan University
4. Dr. Osamah Mudawe - Jazan University

Appendix 2

ELT Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear colleague,

This questionnaire is part of a study which is an attempt to investigate grammatical errors in composition writing made by first year Saudi students not majoring in English language. It also aims to assess ELT teachers' views on the students' syntactical errors and their relevance to the teaching methodology and materials. Hence, your contribution is highly required and appreciated. The information you are going to write here will be treated confidentially and will not be used for any purpose other than the one stated in this study.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Mohammed Adam AbdulRahman Uthman

Ph. D Candidate

Sudan University of Science & Technology

The title of the study is**: An Analysis of Common Grammatical Errors in Writing Made by First Year Saudi University Students.**

Part (1): Personal Information

Please, provide your information by ticking (√) in the gaps below.

Academic Status (*choose from the table below*).

Lecturer **( )**	**Assistant Professor** **( )**	**Associate professor** **( )**	**Professor** **( )**	**Other** **( )**

Teaching Experience in English Language

Less than 5 years ( )	**6 to 10 years ( )**	**More than 10 years ( )**

<u>Part (2): Please tick (√) the letter that indicates your opinion in the right column:</u>

1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Not Sure 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Saudi university students' mother tongue interference (Arabic) is one of the main sources of grammatical errors.					
2. Saudi university students' motivation towards learning English language is…. (1. very high 2. high 3. not sure 4.low 5. very low)					
3. To what extent do you think Saudi university students are aware of that some English grammatical rules have no equivalent in Arabic. (1. very aware 2. Aware 3. Not sure 4. Not aware 5. Not at all aware)					
4. Saudi university learning environment negatively affects learning English language.					
5. From your teaching experience, wrong use of tenses is one of the common grammatical errors .					
6. From your teaching experience, misuse of subject-verb agreement rule is one of the common grammatical errors.					
7. From your teaching experience, omission of the third person					

singular marker is one of the common grammatical errors.					
8. From your teaching experience, miss use of prepositions is one of the common grammatical errors.					
9. English language teachers' at Saudi universities attitudes towards students errors in English language are negative.					
10. The teacher should correct every single error made by the student.					
11. The teacher should correct only the major errors.					
12. Poor teaching of English at Saudi universities is one of the main sources of grammatical errors.					
13. Lack of learner-centered syllabus at Saudi universities negatively affects learning English language.					
14. Grammar is not sufficiently covered in the Saudi English language syllabus.					
15. The time allocated for teaching grammar at Saudi universities is not enough.					
16. The English teaching syllabus at the Saudi universities does not sufficiently meet the students' needs.					

Appendix 3

Test on English Grammar for First Year University Students not Majoring in English Language

Choose the letter of the correct answer **a, b** or **c**:

1. He……me two hundred riyals last week.

a. lend b. lended c. lent

2. None of the students……late.

a. are b. was c. were

3. He used to work at…….university in Kuwait two years ago.

a. the b. a c. an

4. My son was born…….April15,2015.

a. in b. on c. at

5. Mr.Chung is ……..

a. an old Chinese kind man b.a Chinese kind old man **c**.a kind old Chinese man

6. This is the ……...TV program I have ever seen.

a. good b. better c. best

7. Tom…….coffee. He drinks tea.

a. drinking b. didn't drink c. doesn't drink

8. He runs……

a. fast b. fastly c. the fastest

9. My uncle has two…….in his farm.

a. sheep b. sheeps c. sheepes

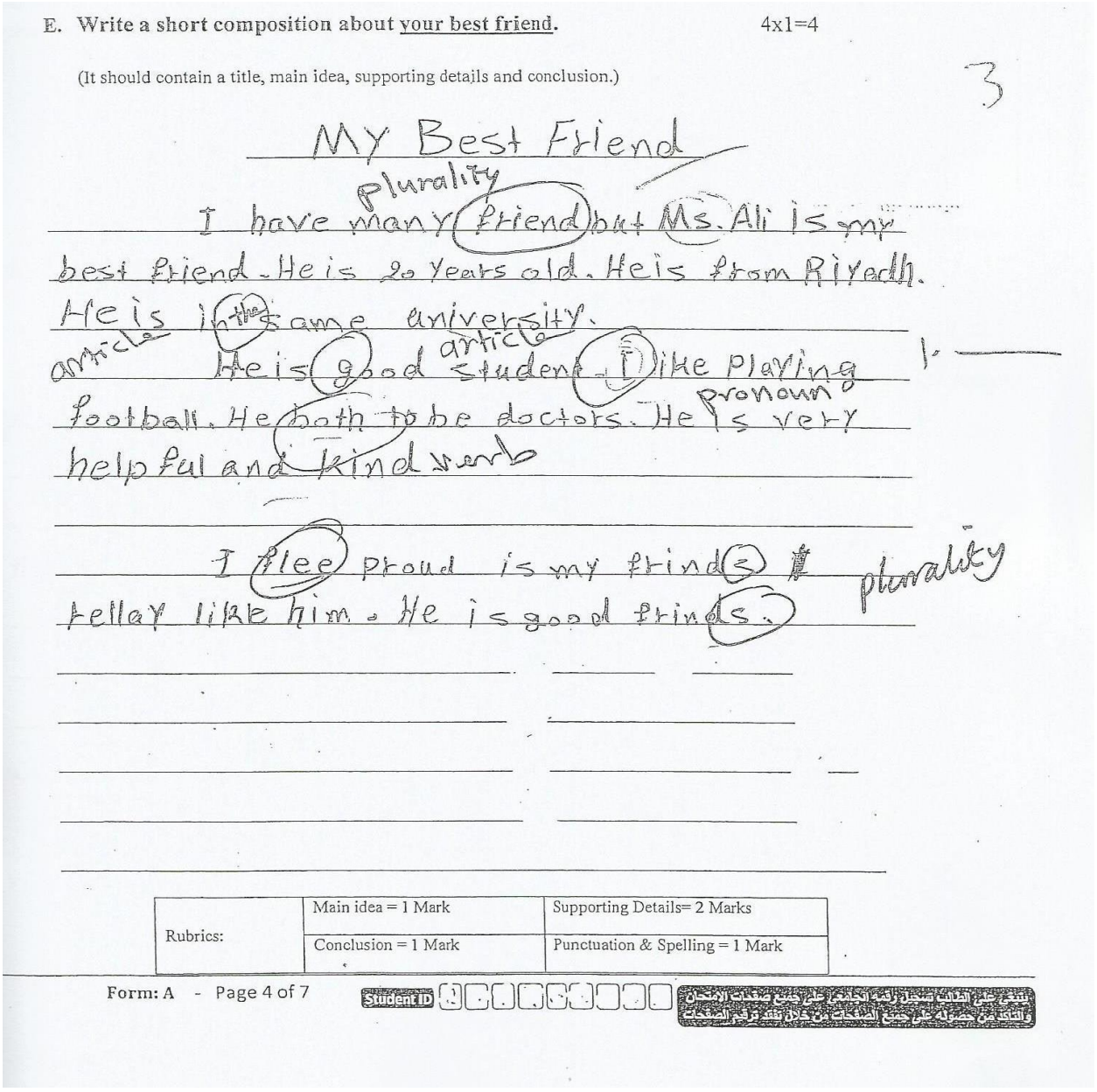
10. Cook and Jim are in my classroom. I sit behind……

a. me b. him c. them

Appendix 4

Samples of Students' Compositions

Sample no.1



E. Write a short composition about your best friend. 4x1=4

(It should contain a title, main idea, supporting details and conclusion.)

3

MY Best Friend

I have many friend (plurality) but Ms. Ali is my best friend. He is 20 years old. He is from Riyadh. He is in the (article) same university. He is good student (article). I like playing football. He both to be doctors. He (pronoun) is very helpful and kind (verb)

I (Plee) proud is my frind(s) (plurality) bellay like him. He is good frinds (s).

Rubrics:	Main idea = 1 Mark	Supporting Details= 2 Marks
	Conclusion = 1 Mark	Punctuation & Spelling = 1 Mark

Form: A - Page 4 of 7 Student ID

Sample no.2

II. Writing 10 Marks

8

A) Write a narrative composition about a situation in which you experienced joy, peace or other pleasurable emotion. (5 Marks)

4

capitalization

Last Vacation in Farasan

Last vacation was the best vacation in my life. In last vacation I went to Farasan to take a picture for the Island.

Farasan is the first Island I see in my life. When I went to Farasan I bought a good fish.

capital

At last, last vacation was the best vacation. I was very happy. I hope that the next vacation be good.