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Language Transfer errors in speaking among Saudi Arabia students; a comparative study between Students in Saudi Arabia and Students in the UK.

By

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Publications

Dedication

To my mother, Najia,

"May she rest in peace",

Whose dream was to see me have completed this work one day…

She taught me to give my very best at everything I do…

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Abstract

In the field of language education, analysis of second language errors has become more widespread, with particular focus on the early stages of acquisition. The analysis of the errors made by second language learners communicating in their target language has received tremendous attention from researchers, linguists and EFL teachers throughout the world. The aim of this study is to investigate the most common grammatical speaking errors of Saudi learners at an intermediate level of English, focusing on language transfer theories and the role of first language in the acquisition of English grammar. Before carrying out the investigation proper, we look at the students' experience of learning English in two different learning environments: Tibah University and Leeds Language Centre.

Not many studies conducted on Saudi learners' grammatical errors in spoken production of English. This study works to establish whether the differences between the "native" environment represented in Leeds Language Centre and the "non-native" Tibah University influence the sources of grammatical errors. We also examine whether these errors result from first language interference or other environmental learning factors.

The thesis is divided into six main chapters. The first chapter is a very concise description of the research overview which states the problem and gives a brief background of teaching English language in Saudi Arabia, and the role English plays in the educational system. The second chapter provides a theoretical background of theories related to language transfer and possible sources of errors. The third chapter discusses the major findings that describe the two learning environments examined in this study. Chapter four and five, discuss in great details the categories of the most common errors among the two groups, investigating into details their consistency and sources illustrated by examples derived from the interviews collected as theses chapters introduced our research main findings in the light of the discussed theories. In Chapter six, we shall discuss the important implications these findings have on second language researchers and teachers. Accordingly, we conclude our study by making various suggestions for the incorporation of these findings in the foreign language acquisition, which we are convinced, will help Saudi learners to perform better in the English language.

This study does not limit research to theoretical aspects of language transfer, instead examining application in the classroom. Our investigation relies primarily on the use of reported data, via reports of English classes attended in different learning environments, to observe how learners experienced language learning. Interviews with students were conducted in order to investigate and analyse their spoken errors, to discover information about the most common speech errors that Saudi students commit during the second language learning process, and to gain insight regarding their source. As this study focused on spoken English, oral interviews were conducted and transcribed before analysis.

Our findings suggest that learners' first language plays a major role in the acquisition of a second; this is inherent to the natural learning process, and has a great impact on language proficiency irrespective of the learning environment. Furthermore, findings showed that errors occurred more as a result of first language influence, which affected the number of errors produced, not the quality. This has been attributed to factors related to the learning environments examined in this study.

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List of Abbreviations

EA	**:**	Error Analysis
EAP	**:**	English for Academic Purpose
EFL	**:**	English as a Foreign Language
EFSA	**:**	English for Saudi Arabia
ESL	**:**	English as a Second Language
ICAS	**:**	The Intersegment Committee of the Academic Senates
KFUPM	**:**	King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals
KSA	**:**	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
L1	**:**	First Language
L2	**:**	Second Language
LLC	**:**	Leeds Language Centre
MOH	**:**	Ministry of Higher Education
S.A	**:**	Saudi Arabia
TEFL	**:**	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
U.K	**:**	United Kingdom

Chapter One
Research Overview

1.1 Introduction

English has become the most prominent international language in the world. In Saudi Arabia, it is being taught as a compulsory subject in both the public and private school systems. New plans are to be initiated to improve students' language proficiency in view of the tremendous importance of English as an international language and its critical role in the commercial, industrial, technological, and audio-economic development of the Saudi Kingdom. However, based on the Ministry of Education statistics (2011) speaking performance remains low within the context of Saudi students. The proposed research aims to analyse the Saudi students' speaking errors in term of grammatical features, and to determine sources of those errors, pedagogical conditions of learning environment and teaching speaking skills among undergraduate students in Saudi Arabia in comparison with the United Kingdom will be examined. This will require an understanding of the existing Saudi students' speaking errors with regards to their sources due to the differences of learning environments among both groups, such as curriculum programs, learning strategies and the use of communicative skills in order to identify the reasons for the lack of English speaking proficiency among language students in Saudi Arabia and the UK.

This examination will be undertaken from the perspective of language transfer theory with a view to analyse the speaking errors made by Saudi students in both groups and to classify them according to their source in order to provide planners of English curricula in Saudi Arabia with a clear view of the difficulties encountered in terms of speaking by Saudi students in two different groups. The study will also entail a critical and methodological assessment of the Saudi curriculum, placing emphasis on how the teaching of speaking skills can be improved in Saudi Arabia. In light of this, it is evident that the level of language accuracy is one area in which speaking proficiency among Saudi students must be improved, with a particular interest in the grammatical errors that occur in speaking English as a Foreign Language. Additionally, the thesis will examine the role of learning environments in both case studies, at "Tibah University" in Saudi Arabia as well as "Leeds Language Center" in the United

Kingdom, with regards to the sufficient criteria used to overcome the lack of English speaking proficiency.

1.2 Significance of the Research

With the expansion of the commercial, industrial, and technological sectors, the importance of teaching and learning English in Saudi Arabia has increased. Despite studying English for seven years in public schools (and for four years at university in all fields of study, such as medicine, engineering, science, and computer science), students' general standard of spoken English is low. According to a study done by the Saudi Ministry of Education (2011), a high percentage of students cannot perform well in the four basic language skills of speaking, as recent research conducted by the Saudi Ministry of Education (2011) confirmed that students' performance in the English language is generally poor. In fact, the Saudi school system follows the plan of five educational stages: kindergarten for children from three to six years old, elementary (six to eleven), intermediate (twelve to fourteen), secondary level (fifteen to eighteen), and university level (typically nineteen to twenty four years old depending on the subjects studied, and the form of higher education). Elementary education consists of level one through six, intermediate schools consist of level seven, eight and nine, and secondary or high schools consist of level ten, eleven and twelve, where the secondary stage is the final phase of general education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. English starts in level six in public schools (government-run) while it starts from the age of three in private schools, which teach English as a main subject from kindergarten and continues through level twelve. Though the Ministry of Education nowadays, has approved the teaching of English from the first grade, the decision has still not been implemented. Nevertheless, some private Saudi schools have started teaching English from the first grade as a compulsory subject due to the importance of teaching English as a foreign language. It is compulsory for all and students' upgrade from one level to the next depends on a pass in English language (and all other compulsory subjects such as Science, Arabic language and Religion). Despite improvements made due to recent researches conducted by the Ministry of Education, which resulted in a change in the educational system, according to Abu Garahah (1990), and Alshumaimeri (2001), not that much emphasis is given to all skills in English language Saudi's curriculum, (EFSA; English for Saudi Arabia text books), as these books only focus on written texts neglecting the role of productive skills such as speaking and listening which resulted in a lack of

speaking ability despite years of studying English academically. The authors of those course books claim that, the methodology, materials and exercises are designed to meet students' needs for all language skills. As they reported: "We talked to Ministry officials. We talked to supervisors. We talked to many teachers. We visited many schools in cities, towns, and villages. We observed many classes and watched how the existing materials were being taught. We tried to see where they were successful and where they were not so successful. We tried to find out what teachers' problems were by listening to their suggestions and by watching them teach" (Al-Qurashi *et al*, 1995a: P.6). Consequently, an emphasis has been given to students in their last secondary stage, level twelve, where English language proficiency must be good to the extent which enables them to acquire a satisfactory level of English speaking in particular in order to start their preparation year (first year at Saudi universities). The educational system changed nowadays to compel students to study the first year at universities (preparatory year), which equals the foundation year at the United Kingdom universities, in English language only, regardless of what their subject area is. In spite of attempts to develop and change the curriculum of English language for Saudi Arabia, the emphasis in teaching English is still placed on written exercises that demonstrate an understanding of grammar and vocabulary in most course books as the most important skills in language teaching. Alshumaimeri (2006, p.6) mentioned in his analysis of Saudi English course books "Not all language skills are given equal emphasis in (EFSA; English for Saudi Arabia text books). Each year, the course concentrates on one or two skills so that all skills are brought to the highest possible standard by the end of the stage". The writers of the course books claimed that, the focus on one or two skills in each level would make students' language competence better in certain skills before moving to the next level. In fact, the first level of the secondary stage focuses on reading and listening skills only, as they assume that students need those skills in the first level in order to cope with other subjects, especially the scientific subjects such as chemistry, mathematics and physics while acquiring some which will be studied in level two and three while acquiring some English background. However, more emphasis need to be put on teaching all English language skills and therefore they should be focusing on the developing of communicative approaches to increase language competence, especially speaking skills. A Saudi study conducted by King Saud University in Riyadh (2009), addressed the issue of teaching English as a second language at the secondary stage (high school in the UK). It paid particular interest in the teaching of listening and

speaking skills to Saudi school students inclusive of the three levels at that stage. The study showed that there was a 10% reduction in the failure rate in the subject of English language as a result of changing the curriculum and methods and improving the quality of the teachers by giving training teaching courses and English language workshops. This is evidence of the fact that the education system, especially in regard to the teaching of English, needs improving to be adequate with the current needs of the market. Accordingly, it has been recognised that there is a need for revision and development of the educational system to make a satisfactory improvement. Moreover, students in Saudi Arabia still rely on the structure of the Arabic language (their first language) when speaking English as a second language which results in the production of speaking errors. This is called the language transfer phenomenon as mentioned by many scholars, Fries (1945), Selinker (1969), Corder (1981), and Kasper (1992), etc, and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Despite the steps that have been taken to improve English language teaching, it remains difficult to identify any significant changes in Saudi students' ability to speak English appropriately and effectively (Abu-Ras, 2002). Braine (2005), who discusses situations that unfold across the world in regard to English teaching, states that in Saudi Arabia "the curriculum department at the central offices of the ministry of education and national committee for the English language undertake the tasks of developing guides, establishing standards, and planning instructional units for further improvement" p.(128). It has become clear that English language teaching in Saudi Arabia does not meet the desired standard, and it is one aspect that this body of research seeks to address in order to investigate how it affects English speaking proficiency in terms of grammatical errors.

Although it is becoming widely recognised that the standard of spoken English is less than to be desired, the main reasons for students' low level of proficiency in English, especially with regards to their speaking skills, have not yet been fully elucidated. Recent literature on the teaching of the English language sees the issue of language transfer as one of the major problems that foreign language learners encounter. This has been discussed by many researchers worldwide and will be analysed in more detail in this study. Studies on the problem of language transfer among Arabic speakers, and in particular, among Saudi students, are quite rare. Therefore, the errors resulting from

language transfer will be my main area of concern and the basis for the linguistics study from the perspective of the language transfer theory that I hope to conduct.

Many students in the early stages of learning rely heavily on their first language (in this case, Arabic) when they try to speak English as a foreign language and this results in the errors that are produced in spoken English. As a result of language transfer, not only Saudi, but also Arab learners encounter problems when speaking English. This issue will be discussed from a theoretical point of view in chapter two. Additionally, other studies that are either directly or indirectly related to my area of research will also be briefly reviewed in order to arrive at agreement regarding the study's findings and the answers to my research questions.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

In light of the above mentioned and taking into account all the contradictions regarding the rejection or acceptance of the language transfer theory which is centred around the divergence role of the native language in second language learning, the current research will attempt to understand whether speaking errors in Second Language (L2) production are the result of language transfer or other language learning factors. It will also seek to classify these errors according to their importance and consistency in order to identify the major causes of L2 errors among Saudi speakers of English in two different learning environments, and divided in two groups. The findings of this study will hopefully provide an understanding of the sources and the consistency of grammatical errors produced by Saudi learners, and informs education practitioners in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Planners at the Ministry of Education and at the Ministry of Higher Education will be able to use the results to help raise awareness of Saudi students' major difficulties in relation to speaking competences so as to develop the English curriculum and place greater focus on improving spoken English skills in different grammatical English features. In addition, the results of this study will help language teachers in Saudi Arabia to understand the extent to which errors are the result of language transfer so that such errors can be treated according to their source and students can be helped to speak English accurately and fluently. I believe that this study will make a positive and significant contribution to the teaching of the English language in the Arabic, and particularly the Saudi context.

1.4 Research Questions

Despite some similarities that this research may have with various studies in term of the error analysis and their sources which we shall review briefly, it nevertheless differs in its content from these studies in many respects. First, in terms of the students' learning environment, this research compares two different language environments: one is native based in the United Kingdom (UK), and the second is (non-native) based in Saudi Arabia; while many of these previous studies investigated students' errors in one learning environment. Second, in terms of analysing learners' errors and possible interaction of language acquisition, most studies carried out from a linguistics approach only, without relating these errors to other possible factors correlated with learning environment, such as the use of different learning and teaching strategies, concluded in both internal and external factors of errors production. Third, in the light of this study, only nine features of 'syntactical' grammatical errors are analysed in-depth, where they are focused on oral production only (speaking) of Saudi students, while many other studies are concerned in analysing errors in both written and spoken forms of English language. Moreover, previous Saudi studies such as Noor's (1996) and Abu Ghararah's (1990) involved different aspects of language features, for instance, the semantics and phonological language features, whereas the aim of this study is to investigate the most significant Saudi students' English language grammatical errors. On the basis of these premises a variety of questions has been set out in order to be investigated and answered in this study.

The main research questions that will be addressed are:

1. What are the most common errors that Saudi students (Intermediate level of English) in both Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom produce when speaking?

2. What are the major reasons and sources behind the committing of these errors?

3. Do students improve by learning (constructed input = taught)? Or do they improve based on a natural process (caught) without too much focus on errors?

4. What types of teaching approaches are currently adopted and how can they be improved in order to help students overcome grammatical speaking errors in Saudi Arabia?

5. To what extent does the environment help to improve language proficiency (in regard to the differences between language learning environments in Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom)?

6. How to examine the transfer patterns at the language speaking level as a function of proficiency among both groups of students?

7. Does language take care of itself (caught) or can language be improved (taught) over time by ignoring errors when speaking in the case of Saudi Arabia students?

1.5 Research Methodology

The research will be based on an analytical study by following two main methods. I will first conduct interviews to identify the most common errors made by Saudi students both in Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom, representing the two different groups of Saudi students. I will then attend English language classes at one of Saudi universities, more specifically the foundation year at Tibha university students, in which the English language curriculum aims to prepare students for entry to the university level (the equivalent of the foundation year in the United Kingdom). I will also attend classes at Leeds University, these will comprise the general English course for the intermediate level Saudi speakers, in order to compare the level of language, English language curriculum, learning strategies, and the kinds of errors produced accordingly, as well as the procedures that students learn in order to overcome the transferred errors in the two different learning environments.

In order to provide an accurate analysis of the speaking errors, I will use interviews to collect the students' data as this is a very common and an important method of conducting research, interviews are usually "one-on-one between an interviewer and an individual, meant to gather information on a specific set of topics". (Harrell & Bradley, 2009, p.14). I am supposed to listen to the participants' speech. There will be 15 students in Saudi Arabia and 15 students in the UK. I will use recorded interviews as my main research instrument. I will begin the interviews with open-ended questions such as: 'What major will you choose at university?', 'Why did you choose England to pursue your studies (for Saudi students in the UK)?', 'How have you obtained your scholarship?', and 'What subject areas are you particularly interested in?' The aim of these questions is to turn the interview into a kind of conversation between the students

and myself. Some items will have follow-up questions, which will be used with some students in order to elicit their responses and encourage them to talk more as some of them may be shy to speak when being recorded. The follow-up questions will serve to keep the conversation going as the aim will be to hear them speak, as opposed to soliciting the right answers to my questions. Robson (1993) states that interviews as a speech genre should contain an introduction at the beginning and a warm-up stage, after which the main body of the interview contains the main content. Finally, there should be a cool-off period, which is a sign that the interview is about to end, followed by a concluding statement. The interviews that I will conduct will mostly coincide with these stages. I will begin by giving the students a general idea of the purpose of the interview. The interview itself will be divided into three sections. First, there will be an informal interview in which the students will tell me about themselves. During the second section, I will ask them to retell a story or describe a television programme that they like or watch. This will enable me to discern which aspects of grammar are produced as a result of language transfer. In the third section, we will discuss current affairs which they have recently heard of or read about. In order to bring the conversation to a close, the interviews will be summed up with two or three sentences, such as thanking participants for their cooperation and for taking part in the study. In addition, the numbers of students will total 15 from Saudi Arabia and 15 from the University of Leeds; the research will take place at Tibah University and Leeds University Language Centre.

The second research tool will be classroom observation, which involves taking notes of different aspects of teaching. As I will attend 5 classes in Saudi Arabia, in the Language Centre at Tibah University, and 5 classes in the Language Centre at the University of Leeds. According to Richards and Lockhart, observation is a way of collecting information rather than evaluating teaching in a particular class. Additionally, according to Sheal (1989, p.92), "Teacher trainers and educational researchers argue that observations can provide useful feedback to teachers, and can improve the overall effectiveness of the teaching/learning process". The aim of attending classes at both Leeds University and Tibah University will be to allow for a critical assessment of the strategies used to teach speaking skills and to understand the feedback that students get with regards to overcoming language transfer errors. This will enable me to describe and analyse the classes from different perspectives as a researcher who is interested in

language transfer errors and as a future teacher. "The goal of this process is to construct and reconstruct our own knowledge about teaching and researching and thereby learn more about ourselves as teachers" (Gebhard, 1999, p.35).

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The study of errors in the field of second language acquisition and, more specifically, from the perspective of language transfer, is a vast area of research that has been examined by many theorists. I will investigate only the few features of language transfer that relate to the grammatical aspects of the second language that occur in speaking, although there are certainly more features to be examined such as semantics and phonological aspects, especially within the language contexts that I have chosen. The number of students will be small compared with other studies that have included hundreds of students. My research will represent a comparative case study; this may indicate that more views related to the same issue may have developed if the study had been based on a larger sample, though the sample size is small, one can extrapolate from this study and make useful generalisations. The two groups that I will use as my sample may relate to different aspects of language transfer and the different sources such as "inter-language" and "intra-language" which will be represented in detail in the next chapter, as English language errors may vary in their sources, and are not only limited to the classifications included in this study. However, I will only focus on the grammatical features and errors produced in the English language and not analyse other types of errors such as the phonological, semantic or lexical production of language. Thus, there is the possibility of obtaining different results with different sources and types of errors (not only grammatical ones) for the same Saudi contexts as a result of examining two different learning environments. For example, the classes which will be observed in Saudi Arabia will contain only female students, whereas the classes that will be observed in the UK will contain mixed gender of students due to the different cultural and educational systems in both countries, where the Saudi government law prohibits mixed genders in any educational sector. Although I provided a general idea about the main aspects of my research, a wider and larger study may need to be done in order to obtain more accurate results and to garner more varied views regarding the lack of English speaking proficiency within the Saudi context.

1.7 Organisation of the Thesis

The thesis will consist of six chapters:

Chapter One: Introduction

This has set the scene for the entire thesis and provided details about the background of the study: Saudi Arabia's system of teaching English as a second language, significance of the study, research questions, research methodology, and limitations of the study.

Chapter Two: Language Transfer Theories; Literature Review

This chapter will present a detailed review of language transfer theories by first providing background information on earlier studies that have examined first language transfer in relation to the contrastive analysis hypothesis. This chapter will also investigate the role of the first language and the kinds of errors that result from language transfer. Moreover, the importance of error analysis will be discussed, followed by an overview of inter-language and intra-language studies as major sources of learners' syntactic errors in this study, and an assessment of the role of comprehensible input and its importance in overcoming the problem of language learners' errors.

Chapter Three: Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia and the UK

This chapter will provide a critical review of the English programme and curriculum in both Saudi Arabia and the UK. In order to determine the extent to which the learning environment influences English language proficiency, we investigated multiple factors across both environments: curriculum, teaching practices, and teacher and students' attitudes toward learning English. Moreover, the different factors related to the language learning environments among both groups such as the strategies used to teach spoken English in Saudi Arabia and in the UK based on the classes attended. Also, the factors related to students' behaviour toward English language learning, such as motivation and anxiety, will be reviewed in detail in order to provide a critical assessment of students'

grammatical errors, as these factors are believed to correlate remarkably with second language speaking proficiency.

Chapter Four: Data Descriptions

This chapter, which will be the main focus of the research, will present the case study in both Saudi Arabia and the UK. The data will be provided in this chapter, as well as the numbers and figures of the data collected, which is based on the interviews transcribed, for both students in Saudi Arabia and the UK. The analysis and the discussion of the collected data will be carried out in the following chapter for both case studies (Saudi students in Saudi Arabia and in the UK).

Chapter Five: Discussion and Analysis of Data

This chapter will outline the findings of both case studies and analyse in depth the data of grammatical transfer speaking errors according to their source and consistency. This will be illustrated with examples from the group of students at Tibah University in Saudi Arabia and the group at the Language Centre at the University of Leeds in the UK.

Chapter Six: Remarks and Conclusion

This chapter will provide a critical assessment of the results and the learning strategies used to overcome the problem of speaking proficiency from a language transfer perspective. The results of the two case studies in Saudi Arabia and the UK will be compared in regard to the errors produced and the learning outcome. This information will then be analysed in light of the need to make alterations to the English curriculum in Saudi Arabia. I shall also provide useful recommendations based on the five chapters and my research experience throughout the process of completing my PhD study.

Chapter Two

Language Transfer Theories: An overview

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a broader theoretical content in which to place the subject matter of language transfer. It also includes an insight into how the concept of language transfer has developed. I shall, therefore, first undertake a discussion of a background on earlier studies of language transfer. Moreover, the concept of language transfer will be discussed as it was first introduced in the contrastive analysis hypothesis theory. This chapter also investigates the role of the mother tongue in reshaping second language learners' acquisition, as well as the types of errors that result from language transfer. The importance of error analysis as one component of the language learning process will also be illustrated. I will also analyze the kind of errors produced by learners and will seek to determine whether language transfer facilitates or hinders foreign language learning. In regard to the latter, the approach of error analysis will be highlighted, as a discussion of both inter-language and intra-language perspectives will be undertaken as they are important aspects in identifying the sources of learner's errors, which are the major process of attempting to learn a second language resulted from first language transfer and other cognitive factors. Finally, the chapter concludes with the role of comprehensible input which is investigated in light of the importance of the communicative approach in language teaching, and its role in overcoming the language transfer problem will also be examined.

Language transfer theory has been studied by a plethora of researchers in the Arab world. For example, Hamdan (1994) studied the problem of language transfer and the acquisition of the English dative alternation by native speakers of Arabic. This occurs when students use grammatical forms from their first language and apply the rules from their native language to the target language. Although this is a syntactic-based study, the results show that the issue of language transfer is a common problem among Arab learners. Many researchers have conducted studies to research this phenomenon. In a Saudi study, Alsamadina (2010) focused on the issue of language transfer as it occurs in

written form in the Saudi context. Kamel (1990) studied the factors affecting writing performance in English as a foreign language; the results of this study showed that transfer from Arabic to English remains a problem for Arab learners and affects their writing skills. Likewise, Flege (1980), investigated Saudi learners' ability of producing English sounds without interference from their first language (Arabic), his findings indicated that learners experience a high degree of influence in the phonological system from their L1 into L2. In addition, Noor (1996) conducted a research in King Abdul Aziz University in Saudi Arabia among Saudi learners, to examine to what extent the structure and system of Arabic language influences the production of written English grammar and his findings showed that more than 70% of errors in grammar resulted from the differences between Arabic and English. Labidi (1992), Ru (2001), and Ibnian (2001) all studied the learning strategies used by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students who were learning either vocabulary or grammar. These studies indicated that learners at various stages use forms of their native language and apply them to the target language.

Many additional studies have investigated this phenomenon (Khan, 2001; AbiSamra, 2001; Emad, 2010). Alsamadani (2010) studied the possible relationship between Saudis' first language (Arabic) and second language (English) in relation to writing competence and students' ability to express themselves in the second language. Furthermore, Grami & Alzughaibi (2012), investigated common examples of Arab learners by highlighting the incorrect usage of English sounds and words resulting from first language interference. The aim of this study was to find out appropriate methods of teaching English in the classroom. The study provided multiple examples of both spoken and written interferences. For instance, they examined the influence of Arabic on English spelling, collocations and phonological system in light of recent theoretical view of first language transfer. They summarised their findings as follows: "Interference errors among Arab ESL students are quite possibly one of the biggest problems they face in their endeavour to achieve a satisfactory proficiency level in English". (2012, p. 8).

Studies in the field of language transfer suggest that various first language elements, both oral and written, are transferred during second language (L2) linguistic production. Other studies involving language transfer have examined in depth the transfer of simple prepositions from standard Arabic to English (Asma, 2010). The type and classification

of errors, whether they are grammatical or phonological in nature, or whether they relate to vocabulary, is an area that has been studied by researchers such as Ahmad (2011) who focused on pronunciation problems among Saudi Learners at Najran University, Saudi Arabia. This study showed that the most common phonological errors involve those sounds that do not exist in the students' first language (Arabic) and that these are the ones that are most frequently mispronounced and affected by the sounds of the first language.

Language transfer was considered to be a major component of the the contrastive analysis hypothesis theory approximately 50 years ago. Thus, the concept of transfer according to this theory, which will be discussed in the next section, assumes that certain elements in the first language hinder second language acquisition through negative interference or facilitate learning through positive interference. Therefore, linguists assume that by contrasting first and second languages, they could foresee those areas in which learners would encounter difficulties.

2.2 Earlier Studies on First Language Transfer

The understanding of the nature of second and foreign language learning has developed significantly in recent years as a consequence of research into many dimensions of language and behaviour that were previously unexplored. Studies of the acquisition of different aspects and terms of language learning and teaching have been expanded. The concept of language transfer was initially taken from Lado's remarkable claim about second language acquisition, which he made in (1957). He stated that "individuals tend to transfer the forms and meaning, and the distribution of forms and the meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign 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 cultures as practised by the native" (p.2). This quotation and the associated research have been a famous source for hundreds of bodies of empirical studies related to the field of second language acquisition in contact situations and the phenomena of language transfer. Additionally, and since the early days of second language acquisition research, theoretical accounts of first language transfer have undergone a valuable revision. According to Ellis (1997), it was believed that errors were considerably the results of interference in the peak success of the behaviourism theory, which represents interference only in its term of negative

transfer. According to the behaviourist theory, errors result from the transfer from first languages. Corder (1971) assumed, "one explanation of L2 errors is that the learner is carrying over the habits of his mother-tongue into the second language… Clearly this explanation is related to a view of language as some sort of habit-structure" (cited in James, 1980, p. 20). This concluded that first language habits would supposedly hinder learning a second language and be only an obstacle for learners. In this belief, the interference of first language, and thereby the learning difficulty could only be predictable by highlighting the differences and the areas of the target language in which are different in their structure from the first language. In the 60s and 70s the behaviourists with this assumption have witnessed a revolution in both the fields of linguistics and psychology, as behaviourism has been strongly supplanted by cognitive psychology. Later on, the turning point for this theory was marked by Chomsky, who presented the transfer from L1 into L2 as a "controversial and hypothetical concept" (cited in James, 1980, p.21). This was a refining of the concept of transfer at this time to enhance the theory but not to reject it. However, James explains this concept with the following reference: "The sense we make of our environment depends on what we already know about it ... the relevant existing cognitive structures may be those of the mother tongue" (Corder, 1971, cited in James, 1980, p.21). As he added, if behaviourism can be expressed in this content and according to the cognitive psychological term, so can the contrastive analysis hypothesis. Consequently, the comparison made between the two languages led later on to raise the importance of the contrastive analysis. Likewise, behaviourism theory cannot sufficiently account for second language acquisition as it was well known in its time, but it led to two major developments in the field of language learning. According to Ellis (1997) and Norrish (1983), who argued that some theories advocating strong mentalists accounts of second language errors, which pursued to play down the role of first language. The second development according to Ellis, was to "reconceptualise transfer within a cognitive framework" (1997, p.52). This was what led Larry Selinker in identifying language transfer as one of the mental processes introduced by "inter-language theory", which will be discussed in more details later on in this chapter. However, in her book, *Language Transfer and Language Learning*, Gass (1983) illustrates the development of the concept of language transfer, while Fries (1945) formulates the need for a contrastive analysis in language learning by observing learners' errors and how they relate to the differences and similarities between the two languages, which will be

explained more in the next section. In 1954 Harris proposed a model of "Transfer Grammar", basing his views on the translation type model as language learning founded upon a purely structural comparison of the two languages. Thus, the early notion of language transfer discussed a number of views around the importance of understanding how a second language is learned.

Transfer is a highly ambiguous term that has been intensively investigated by numerous researchers, such as Weineriach (1953) and Juhasz (1970), who argued that "transfer in production…is found not only in second language productions in that they resemble the primary language, but also in the absence of appropriate target language structures as a result of an interaction from L1 to L2" (as cited in Dechert and Raupach, 1989, p. xiv). This means that the target language is facilitated by the structure of the native language and that transfer usually occurs in a target language contact situation. Thus, the notion of transfer was first considered a major source of learner error before follow-up studies provided further evidence of transfer as a learning process rather than focusing on the negative role of the first language in understanding second language learners' errors. However, after the 1960s, the role of the native language in the learning of the target language began to be considered as facilitative rather than as a source of errors resulting from the underlying similarities between languages. Selinker (1966) was the first to discuss language transfer from the native language to the second or foreign language by providing further evidence of transfer as a major process of language learning and by researching the relationship between transfer and inter-language, which was always his primary area of focus. Though Selinker (1969; 1972) did not characterize what the learner's inter-language should look like (Corder, 1981), he did repeatedly imply that transfer was one of the factors associated with the unique system of the learner language (Liu, 2001). Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that after Selinker's revolution in the field of linguistics and his controversial theory about language transfer, there were other views that argued that language transfer was relatively unimportant in language learning. For example, Krashen (1982) and Burt and Dulay (1980) believed that learning a second language was based on habit formation and that the first language played only a minimal role in learners' second language acquisition. Nevertheless, Gass claimed that "there is overwhelming evidence that language transfer is indeed a real and central phenomenon that must be considered in any full account of the second language acquisition process"(1983, p.7).

The phenomenon of language transfer has also raised numerous questions in the field of language learning; these include what language transfer entails, what is actually transferred, how language transfer occurs, and what type of language transfer has been proven to be true. The main concern of language transfer is linked to second language learning and the level of language performance. Building upon Selinker's findings, "The identification of transfer was also discussed by Corder (1981), who remarked that it is the duty of both teachers of languages and native speakers of the language to point out the transfer according to the rules of language. At the same time, Corder implied that "the source of data for transfer research lays in the learners' production or utterances that are the observed output which results from the second language learners' attempted production of a target language norm." (Liu, 2001, p. 4). This means that it is important to observe second language learners' production of the target language in order to identify which area is being transferred from the native language. In this regard, the concept of transfer has been subjected to a host of studies that concern the role of the first language in second language learning. Ringbom illustrates the role of the first language as follows: "We are naturally inclined to assume that the nearer the foreign language is to our own, the easier it is" (1988, p. 44). Nevertheless, relevant findings and research carried out until the 1990s have revealed that the issue of transfer is still uncertain regarding whether the linguistic entities in the native language facilitate or hinder learning of the second language. Kasper (1992) identifies the concept of transfer in second language acquisition by comparing the differences and similarities between the native and the foreign language. This knowledge can then be used to determine whether transfer has a negative or positive influence.

In light of the arguments concerning the concept of transfer and, more specifically, whether it should be counted as an important stage in the language learning process or merely an unimportant notion in second language acquisition, researchers have increasingly begun to focus their attention on this issue. It is quite obvious that there is, in fact, a need to delve more deeply into the concept of language transfer and its effects in view of the utterances produced by second language learners and, more specifically, by those who are beginners in this regard. Selinker (1983) assumes that, at some point of their learning process, most second language learners have experienced the effect of language transfer on their level of language proficiency and that serious treatment of this issue should refrain from examining different language learning and teaching

approaches. Rather, relevant discussion of the definition of the term transfer in the literature review, given what is meant by language transfer, can be undertaken based on the native language. Thus, the concept of language transfer is difficult to pin down. According to Ellis (1997), "what is meant by language transfer is what it can be used from the native language, 'the use of linguistics information' and apply them in a context of the target language". Osgood (1953, p. 520) defines transfer in the field with regard to training and learning a language as follows: "The effect of a preceding activity upon the learning of a given task". Ausubel (1963, p. 28) provides yet another definition of language transfer, which is "the impact of prior experience upon current learning". According to these writers, an accurate definition cannot be given as the "preceding activity" or "prior experience" is related to the native language, while the "given task" or "current learning" is related to the foreign language. In addition, Liu (2011), defines it as the following, "Transfer can mean the carry-over or generalization of learned responses from one type of situation into another, especially, the application in one field of study or effort of knowledge, skill, power, or ability acquired in another". (2011, p. 1). She added to this definition that "linguistics transfer means what the learners carry over to or generalize in their knowledge about their native language, to help them learn to use a target language". (2011, p. 1). As a result, the definition of transfer does not indicate which features of language are transferred and which are not. Also, the term transfer in its linguistics term does not explain transfer as if it is considered to be a good or bad sign of the process of learning, as transfer in this definition is given as a neutral concept. Additionally, Kasper (1992), identifies transfer in second language acquisition as an "informal estimation method", which he explained as the following: "In informal estimations, we decide whether transfer can be established by looking at the similarities and differences of the percentage by which a particular category of inter-language features, such as (semantics formulae, strategy, or linguistic form) occurs in the native language and the target one". (Cited in Liu, 2001, p. 2). Moreover, Kellerman and Sharwood-Smith (1986) attempt to draw a distinction between transfer and influence. According to them, transfer is not the same as influence. Transfer refers to those linguistic behaviours that are incorporated from the first language into the target language without capturing other elements of the effects of the second language, whereas influence, on the other hand, refers to those first-language effects, such as avoidance and other speech aspects of the first language, that act as constraints on second language learning and performance. Furthermore, Lott (1983, p. 256) defines

interference as "errors in the learner's use of the foreign language that can be traced back to the mother tongue". Whereas, Ellis (1997) refers to interference as transfer which is "the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2" (1997, p. 51).

Theoreticians and language teachers have also debated whether the term transfer is still a valid concept in second language acquisition. For instance, Lado (1957), Corder (1973), Selinker (1972), and Ellis (1997) propose that at least in one stage of the learning process, second language learners rely heavily on the patterns of their native language when communicating in the target language, usually while beginning to learn a foreign language. Dulay and Burt (1974) argue that the term transfer is largely unimportant in the second language learning process. Thus, to determine the importance of transfer, it would be useful to briefly consider the relevant theories in which the concept of language transfer was first discussed.

2.2.1 Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

It is important to mention that the concept of language transfer was first discussed in the contrastive analysis hypothesis as it was a major component of this theory. One of the general hypotheses concerning second language acquisition and language transfer in particular is contrastive analysis. According to Gass (1994), the major assumption of this theory is that second language learning difficulties can be predicted and compared with the patterns of the native language and teaching materials can be chosen according to the similarities and differences. This theory was formulated by Lado (1957) and, in his view, in regard to linguistics across cultures, "we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that will not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and the culture to be learned with the native language and the culture of the student" (p.1–2). Thus, it might be suitable to refer to Fries' famous statement regarding the remarkable nature of contrastive analysis in regard to language learning: "The most effective teaching materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learnt, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner" (1945, p. 9). In fact, earlier studies of contrastive analysis had been tremendously successful for a long period of time until their rejection by many theoreticians in the field of linguistics and language learning. Such theoreticians claimed that the difficulty or ease of learning can

sometimes be determined by other factors rather than the differences between the systems of two languages. Additionally, it is not possible for learners to learn only about the differences between languages while ignoring the similarities, which it is already assumed will facilitate learning since every language has its unique system and language patterns (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

In spite of the rejection of perspectives of contrastive analysis in language learning and teaching, there remain a number of beliefs about the validity and reliability of that theory. According to Wardhaugh (1970) in his reviews of the contrastive analysis hypothesis in relation to teachers of English and to speakers of other languages, it might be interesting for teachers and researchers of linguistics to accept, to some extent, contrastive analysis in the teaching and writing language curriculum, though it is difficult to practise the theory with respect to choosing teaching materials. In light of this view, contrastive analysis may be divided into two versions, the strong and the weak version.

2.2.1.1 The strong version

It is also called the predictive contrastive analysis hypothesis. In regards to this version, many researchers claim that it is impossible to predict difficulties in language learning and that it is unrealistic to choose teaching materials based on this version. Nevertheless, more precisely, in a book entitled *Trends in Language Teaching*, Banathy, Trager, and Waddle (1966) state of the strong version of the contrastive analysis hypothesis that "the change that has to take place in the language behaviour of a foreign language student can be equated with the differences between the structure of the student's native language and culture and that of the target language and culture. The task of the linguist, the cultural anthropologist, and the sociologist is to identify these differences. The task of the writer of a foreign language teaching program is to develop materials which will be based on a statement of these differences; the task of the foreign language teacher is to be aware of these differences and to be prepared to teach them; the task of the student is to learn them" (p. 37). In other words, it can still be argued that, in some cases, it is possible to compare the system of the native language, such as its grammar, phonology, or semantics, with the system of the foreign language in order to predict the difficulties that a speaker of the second language may encounter and to construct or choose teaching materials to help with the learning of that language. The

matter, which I believe teachers of second language can improve is by paying serious attention to their learners' errors and choose the teaching materials and give appropriate feedback according to the source of errors. In this regard, many recent bodies of research still focus on the contrastive analysis in foreign language teaching in terms of the prediction of learners' errors. Such as the studies about transfer of sentence processing strategies which provide a comparison of L2 learners of Chinese and English (2001), and the studies promoting learner awareness of language transfer errors in China with a comparative study between Chinese and English for learners who learn English as second language (2005), with a focus on grammatical aspects as a "syntactic based study". This version of contrastive analysis also leads to the explanation of the weak version which follows.

2.2.1.2 The weak version

The proponents of this version on the other hand, explained by Wardhaugh, link this weak version to first language interference, stating that "the weak version requires of the linguist only that he uses the best linguistic knowledge available to him in order to account for observed difficulties in second language learning. It does not require what the strong version requires, the prediction of those difficulties and, conversely, of those learning points which do not create any difficulties at all. In this version systems are important, because there is no regression to any presystemic view of language, nor does the approach result in merely classifying errors in any way that occurs to the investigator" (1970, p. 126). In other words, it claims that some of the L2 learners' problems can be observed and explained according to the linguistic difference between the native and the target language. Despite the criticisms levelled against the weak version, it is still important for linguists and language researchers to consider errors as a result of one significant learning process transferred from the native language, as this weak version leads to another approach to understanding how languages are learned and grasping the concept of language interference. Thus, the contrastive analysis hypothesis is not proven to be workable as originally expressed in its strong version. Upon undertaking a deeper examination of the weak version, it is evident that it has proven to be helpful and undoubtedly useful in regard to language interference or transfer. However, the contrastive hypothesis hoped to have an influence on second language teaching, curriculum construction, and recent research. Nevertheless, Klein (1986) assumes that researchers cannot predict whether the influence of the hypotheses will

have a significant impact or a lesser effect on second language teaching, though the role of the native language in learning a second language has begun to be regarded as facilitative as a result of the underlying similarities between languages. These similarities emanate from "language universals" (Koda 1988; Smith 1978). Moreover, this view is also supported by Ringbom (1992), who believes that transfer depends on how closely the first language is related to the second. The closer the two languages, the greater the number of cognates, and the congruence of the grammatical systems will facilitate learning the target language. He acknowledges that "even though cognates may be deceptive, the context allows learners to eliminate any misunderstandings caused by false cognates" (p.2). Though contrastive analysis reached important findings in interpreting L2 learners' errors, the role of the first language will be discussed in the next section as a major source of language transfer errors.

2.2.2 The Role of the First Language and Kinds of Transfer

After examining the general arguments related to the dissatisfaction with the contrastive analysis as a major account of second language acquisition, the contrast between the systems of the two languages is understood as not being the only factor affecting second language acquisition and responsible for second language learners' errors. Another major factor is the role of the first language in language learning. According to Richards (1980) in his study of learners of English, the mother tongue is considered to be the first important factor in the language learning process. He assumes that "interference analysis tends to be from the deviant sentence back to the mother tongue. Contrastive analysis works the other way, predicting errors by comparing the linguistic system of the mother tongue and the target language" (p. 5). Hence, current research tends to partly dismiss contrastive analysis and the comparison between the two languages; the focus is now placed on the learners themselves as they develop their own language competence throughout the process of learning using the mother tongue. Likewise, there is a widespread acknowledgement to identify the role of first language according to learners' cognitive processes, which in other words, represent the first language as a kind of "input from inside", according to Ellis (1997), who sees transfer not completely as interference but rather as a mental process that aides language learner.

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A definition of second language learning from the perspective of language transfer is provided by Ellis: "It is the way in which people learn a language other than their mother tongue using some elements of that native language" (2000, p. 3). Ellis (1997) argued, that "transfer is governed by the learners' perceptions about what is transferable and by their stage of development in L2 learning" (cited in Bhela 1999, p. 23). In learning a foreign language, learners in this case construct their own temporary rules. Ellis (1997), Selinker (1971), and Seligar (1988), claimed that learners use their L1 knowledge only when they believe that it will help them throughout the learning process, as when they become more proficient in the use of the target language, transfer will be impossible. Accordingly, the process of learning undergoes different stages; learners' knowledge of the language gradually develops as they rely heavily on the use of the linguistic elements of the mother tongue. There is a common belief that second language (L2) acquisition is strongly influenced by the origin of the learner's first language (L1). In addition, Carroll (1964) pointed out, that the circumstances of learning a second language are quite similar to the ones of learning mother tongue. "Sometimes there are interferences and occasionally responses from one language system will intrude into speech in the other language", (Bhela, 1999, p. 23). Correspondingly, Beardsmore (1982) indicated, the difficulties in second language learning whether they are phonological, syntactical or semantic are due to the interference of rules from L1, as the use of L1 rules usually result in errors within the structure of L2, as the system of the two language are usually different. As a result, research has been conducted in the field of second language acquisition to measure the role of the native language and its effect on the process of learning a second language, as well as the relation between the two languages has been significantly accounted for. I am particularly interested in this area due to the results of my own recent research and my direct contact with and observation of native speakers of the Arabic language who are learning English as a second language.

Many theories and approaches have been concerned with the transfer of the first language or the interference of L1 as one important stage in the process of learning as it has become increasingly accepted in the field of language learning as a phenomenon rather than a problem. Moreover, Corder states that, "since most studies of error were made upon performance of learners in formal situation where it appears that errors related to the mother tongue are more frequent, it was natural that an explanation of the

phenomenon was of considerable concern to the applied linguist" (1977, p.85). Additionally, Gass quoted George's claims as follows: "One third of the errors in his corpus could be accounted for by means of native language interference" (1982, p. 324). As a result, for many years, it was presumed that the only source of learner errors resulted from first language interference, though there were other factors that were considered to be major sources of errors related to the learner's environment. However, my reason for mentioning the issue of language transfer or interference is that I strongly believe that it affects the learner's performance at least in one stage of the learning process. Consequently, Krashen's (1981) research findings regarding the role of the first language in the acquisition of the second language, which are also in keeping with the views of Banthy, Trager, and Waddle (1966), indicate that the first language interferes as it might be a "substitute" in some parts, while the second language is acquired as the learner uses his or her first language to convey a message in the target language as a lack of the target language acquisition. To some extent, what Krashen found could be true in some respects, such as the level of learners, as he linked his findings to the early stages of learning the language, beginners and intermediate learners. Thus, some other evidence proved that even advanced learners may unconsciously transfer some elements from their first language to the target language, which is a case that is still being discussed in the field of second language learning. Gass and Selinker(1983) state that acquiring a second language is a creative process in which learners are interacting with both environmental factors and the mental process in order to produce unlimited utterances of the linguistic data of the second language to which they have already been exposed; thus, their language production cannot be predictable.

However, after the arguments of theories discussed above about the source of learners' errors resulting from language transfer, the influence of the first language as a major source of errors has been divided into three main components. According to Ellis (1997), Gass and Selinker (1983), and Odlin (1989), the learner's first language can be directly correlated with the type of errors accrued during the second language learning process. This is called "negative transfer", which refers to when the differences between the two languages appear to be the main reason behind certain errors. It is a process that can occur whenever there is a significant difference between the target language and the first language (mother tongue), and the learner attempts to produce the target language by relying on the system of the first language. This kind of error has been examined in

many recent bodies of research related to aspects of language such as grammar and phonology. A 1994 study of Arab speakers by Hamdan proved that in speakers of the Arabic language the English dative alternation is transferred from the system of the Arabic language and is applied to the second language (English) even among advanced-level learners. Though it is a syntactic-based study, the results still prove that negative language transfer affects language competence as a result of first language interference. However, not every transfer is negative. Also, the similarities between two languages sometimes facilitate learning, such as when similar elements already exist in the two languages, or at least have already been recognised by L2 learners. When such similarities between the two languages occur, the new language seems easier for learners to produce as a part of the process of acquiring the target language. There is agreement today regarding the recent perspective on the language transfer issue. More specifically, that there is a clear and accepted relationship between L1 and L2 and that, to some extent, the learner can perceive and use many similarities between L1 and L2 to facilitate his or her learning process. Learners who have an L1 that is closely related to the target language can, at the beginning of the learning process, make use of easily perceived formal similarities with their first language. However, according to Ringbom, "languages unrelated to the target language also influence learning. Even if learners cannot perceive cross-linguistic similarities to the L1, they tend to assume such similarities. In many cases, assumptions of similarity cause errors, especially in production" (2007, p. 6).

This type of effect is known as "positive transfer", as it also leads to another aspect of language interference. For example, Ellis (1997) and George (1979) illustrate this aspect of positive transfer using the "avoidance" method in language production, which is considered to be the major role of L1 transfer. It usually occurs when some learners do not use a particular tense or verb form due to the absence of such tenses or forms from their first language. Thus, recent research correlated with the issue of language transfer for Arab students proved that most Arab learners are unfamiliar with the use of some English grammatical tenses that do not exist in their first language, resulting in their avoidance of the use of certain forms of the target language. This leads us to the third aspect of L1 transfer, which is "neutral language transfer". Gass and Selinker explain this as "the process which occurs whenever there is no statistically significant predominance in the native language of either of the two alternative linguistics entities,

which is then paralleled by a lack of predominance in an analysis of the attempted production of the foreign language, one alternative linguistic entity being a non-error since it concurs with an experimentally established norm of that foreign language" (1983, p. 51). In other words, when the learners produce some speech utterances that do not exist in the second language and attempt to apply them in an effort to communicate using the target language to give the impression of fluency, these learners use unconscious neutral transfer, which relies on the overuse of certain elements of the first language, such as applying certain forms or structures from the mother tongue to the second or target language. Ellis (1997) describes this as the "overuse of speech acts", where learners try to transfer their first language formulas, such as requests and apologies, to the new language. This kind of language use indicates the influence of pragmatic features transferred from the mother tongue. Littlewood consequently suggests that there is "a need to emphasise the linguistic features of the target language for second language learners in order to give them the opportunity to integrate separate structures into a creative system for expressing meanings" (1984, p. 91). These descriptions of the kinds of transfer from early studies are still uncertain as many other theoretical approaches provide other explanations for the errors produced by second language learners. Also, the reason for engaging in a brief discussion about them is the reasonable recognition of using some aspects of the first language function related to the learners' competence in the target language, which are an issue I am concerned about and one that will be discussed later against the background of error analysis.

Accordingly, and as mentioned earlier in regards to the behaviourism theory, most errors are considered to be a result of transference of habit from the mother tongue. However, this theory has recently been rejected. Language development is viewed as a formation of habit in which learners make connections between the system and the experiences of their mother tongue, and attempt to apply them to the new language (McLaughlin, 1987). Although this theory suggests that the influence of the learner's first language may result in errors, learning a language is a more complex and complicated process than merely the interference of the habits and structure of the first language, which might prevent learning. Ellis (1997) claims that comparisons between two languages are not always possible. As some researchers claim (e.g. Dulay and Burt, 1975), only 5% of errors are a result of the differences between two languages, and even the relationship between this theory and the contrastive analysis hypothesis cannot

predict all of the kinds of errors that hinder learning. Some of the errors are unique and unpredictable (Krashen, 1985). Additionally, Ellis states, in regard to the use of the linguistic features of the L1 while speaking in the L2, that learners have a sense of which features of the L1 are, in some way, basic. They are more prepared to risk transferring such features than they are those that they perceive to be unique to their own language (1997, p. 53).

Moreover, errors resulting from transferring from the mother tongue are a significant aspect of all Second Language Acquisition theories, whether behaviourist, mentalist, or cognitive. Selinker (1975) assumes that the transfer of rules from the mother tongue is more frequent in beginners and intermediate learners rather than in advanced level learners. This is because the latter tend to use what they already know about the language in order to make sense of new experiences during the process of learning a second language. However, according to the above mentioned theories, many teaching materials and methods have been designed to serve the purpose of helping students to overcome these predictable errors (Lightbown, 1984). While other studies are concerned with the kind of grammatical features that result from the stages of development of the second language, which are not related to the transference of rules from L1 to L2, the main concerns of the language transfer hypothesis relate to language as a result of the cognitive process (Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2005). In other words, the transfer of the L1 and its relationship to L2 acquisition is still the most controversial issue whether the language is learned by transfer or by students' capacity to pick up the language by learning and practising what they learn. However, Ellis, Krashen, Littlewood, and Lightbown all suggest that learning is improved when we distinguish between the "acquired L2" and the "learned L2". However, the reason for my quick review of the role of the first language in the acquisition of the second language is to expand our understanding and experiences, and to help in my continued search for further explanations of language transfer, and to identify the source of learners' errors which will be explained more in the importance of errors analysis.

2.3 Error Analysis

In spite of the above arguments about language transfer and the kinds of transfer that result in learners' production of errors due to the similarities or differences between the target language and the first language, efforts are on-going regarding justification of the significance of second language learner errors. Since the strong argument about the

learners' source of errors and whether they are due to differences or similarities between the two languages, or are a result of the influence of the mother tongue, the approach of error analysis has come to be seen as more reliable when dealing with learner errors. Recently, studies in second language acquisition have significantly focused on learners' errors since errors allow predicting the difficulties involved in language learning. In this way, researchers in the field can be aware of the problematic areas to be encountered by learners, and devote a special emphasis to those errors. Error Analysis becomes an approach which focuses on the linguistic analysis of errors that learners produce. Sometimes, it involves a comparison between the errors made in the first language and the target language, or compares the elements in the target language itself. Error analysis emphasises the significance of learners' errors which is found throughout the learning process of the target language. The process of learning undergoes different stages by means of which the learner's knowledge of the language gradually develops. A learner's production of a language is due to external and internal factors to which he or she is exposed. Moreover, as previously mentioned, learning a second language depends in some way on the learner's previous knowledge of his or her first language. Lightbown and Spada (2006) argue that prior knowledge can be advantageous in learning a second language as it gives the learner an idea of how language works. On the other hand, it can also be responsible for errors due to incorrect guessing as to how the new language might work. However, one way to investigate how a second language is developed is to analyse errors. Recently, there has been a growing research interest in the analysis of learner's errors produced while learning a second language. The study and analysis of the errors (EA) which are made by learners has been the subject of controversy for a long time. The importance of error analysis has ascended from the need of objective statistics to prove or reject the controversial linguistic hypotheses (Sawyer, 1965), which have been discussed earlier.

Undoubtedly, understanding learners' errors and the origins of those errors will help both teachers and learners know the difficulties faced in the learning process. In this regard, Corder (1981), stated "the errors that learners make are a major element in the feedback system of the process we call language teaching and learning" (p.35). As by analysing learners errors in some particular areas in the target language, some linguists believed that no matter how significant those errors are, the comparison between the structural system between the two language is not always valid, as well as a prediction

of learning difficulties based on the theoretical reflection and linguistics consideration may not be a sufficient approach for the characterisation of the exact learning context Huang (2002). He also added, it was expected that by doing an analysis of errors a quantitative method should be provided in order to maintain more reliable results of the learner's difficulty or at least would enhanced the assumption of the contrastive linguistics' work. Moreover, Corder (1981) raised the importance of this approach by stating that "error analysis is part of the methodology of the psycholinguistics investigation of language learning" (p.35). As well as this, errors are considered to be a pedagogical reasons for identifying the process of second learning, as errors themselves are in fact a necessary part of language learning. As a result, errors are no longer seen as a sign of failure of language learning; on the contrary it has been seen as part of the developmental process of second language learning. In this respect, Brown (2007) maintains that "by the late 1960s, SLA began to be examined in much the same way that first language acquisition had been studied for some time: learners were looked on not as producers of malformed, imperfect language replete with mistakes but as intelligent and creative beings proceeding through logical, systematic stages of acquisition, creatively acting upon their linguistic environment as they encountered its forms and functions in meaningful contexts. By a gradual process of trial and error and hypothesis testing, learners slowly and tediously succeeded in establishing closer and closer approximations to the systems used by native speakers of the language" (cited in Shekhzadeh & Gheichi, 2011, p.159). However, this notion led later on to the development of the error analysis theory with its new version in among the other linguistic approaches concerned with learners' errors. In the light of the Error Analysis approach, some important terms have been created to designate the legitimacy of second language learners' errors. Accordingly, Keshavarz (1999, p.11) stated: "There have been two major approaches to the study of learners' errors, namely Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis." He further discussed that, "Error Analysis emerged on account of the shortcomings of Contrastive Analysis which was the favoured way of describing learners' language in the 1950s and 1960s" (cited in Heydari & Bagheri, 2012: p.1).

According to Ellis (1994), errors are quite important because they are a significant feature of language learning and they help learners to develop their knowledge through self-correction. Consequently, identifying errors is very important for investigating learners' performance and learning development. According to Richard "errors are the

use of linguistic items in a way that a learner of the language regards them as showing faulty or incomplete learning, they occur because the learner does not know what is correct, and thus errors cannot be self-corrected." (1985, p. 95). Moreover, Gass and Selinker (2001) claimed that errors are to some extent systematic, sometimes they occur and are not recognized by the learners and it is the teacher or researcher's job to identify the source of errors. In regards to the previous, Ellis (1997) states that the distinction between errors and mistakes must be clear: "Errors reflect gaps in the learner's knowledge"; in contrast, "mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance" (Ellis 1997, p. 17). Mistakes are not a result of deficiency in the learners' competence, they are considered as slips of tongue as long as they are corrected by the learner, but errors occur as a result of a major source which should be identified according to one of the previous theories. Additionally, Brown (2000) differentiates between errors and mistakes as the following: a 'mistake' refers to a performance error in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly, while an 'error' is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker, reflecting the inter-language competence of the learner" (cited in Xie & Jiang, 2007, p. 2). Therefore, Error Analysis is considered to be an essential tool in both language teaching and learning, "in order to reorganize the teacher's point of view and readdress his or her methodology for fixing and fulfilling the students' gaps" (Heydari & Bagheri, 2012. P.5). Consequently, the major purpose of error analysis indeed, according to Corder (1974), is "to find what the learner knows and does not know" and to "ultimately enable the teacher to supply him not just with the information that his hypothesis is wrong, but also, importantly, with the right sort of information or data for him to form a more adequate concept of a rule in the target language" (Heydari & Bagheri, 2012. P.6). However, errors and mistakes are not easy to identify but can be differentiated if a learner is asked to self-correct (Littlewood, 1984) or by "checking the consistency of (a) learner's performance" (Ellis 1997, p. 17). As a result, according to Ellis and Littlewood, learners commit two different types of errors. One is transfer errors, where a learner makes use of his or her first language knowledge. This is also called mother-tongue interference, which is the issue of language transfer: "The familiar patterns will be preferred to new, different ones, and this preference constitute(s) the basis for mother-tongue interference" (George, 1972, p. 160). Moreover, Littlewood states that the influence of the first language can be positive if it helps with learning the second language, or it can be a negative transfer in which differences between the two languages appear and lead to learning difficulties and

errors. The other source of errors is over-generalisation errors, which "reflects the learner's attempts to make the task of learning and using the L2 simpler" (Ellis, 2000, p. 19). Which is basically fit under the other external and internal factors involved in the production of errors, known as "intra-language errors" (this concept will be discussed in more detail in following chapters). Furthermore, when learners commit errors, this can be an indication that they are processing the knowledge of their language learning into their own terms (Littlewood, 1984). In addition, Littlewood (1984) divides errors into "inter-lingual", where learners transfer rules from their mother tongue, and "intra-lingual", which refers to the simplified use of the learner's knowledge of the second language, which is also known as over-generalisation errors.

Another important feature of identifying errors is to investigate why they occur. Ellis states that, "errors are, to a large extent, systematic and, to a certain extent, predictable" (1997, p. 18). On the other hand, the prediction of errors is not always possible. As Lightbown and Spada(1984) argue, many errors cannot be predicted according to contrastive analysis, which posits that errors can be predicted by the influence of a first language on the acquisition of a second language. In addition, Littlewood claims that "it is not possible to decide whether over-generalisation or transfer is the cause of errors" (p. 27). However, some errors that learners make are unique, and, according to Ellis, one way to identify these errors is to "explore the universality of L2 acquisition by examining the developmental pattern learners follow" (1997, p. 20). This means that no matter the source of the errors, whether they are universal, local, or unique, different approaches can be followed to identify and analyse the sources in order to investigate the learning process. Consequently, the analysis of errors has thus become a very important issue in the field of linguistics, which allows both teachers and researchers to benefit from the results of the analysis, as well as understand the extent of the learner's proficiency in language learning. Hamdan (1994) summarises the processes of error analysis as follows. It is very important for researchers to:

- First collect the data by following a certain method.
- Classify errors according to the categories into which they fit such as semantic, syntactic, and phonological.
- Justify the source of errors (the role of the first language, first language interference, and transferred errors).

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- Evaluate errors (determine the extent to which they are serious and differentiate between errors and mistakes).
- Identify the implications of dealing with different kinds of errors; give suggestions regarding different teaching approaches, and offer feedback to learners.

Despite the importance of the error analysis approach and its contribution to the understanding of the process of second language errors, there are still controversial issues related to the term "errors" that cannot be resolved, such as how to interpret some unique errors and their source and cause, and how to choose the best methodology to overcome each error found in the learning process. According to Jain (1974), errors are diverse due to the source, such as language background, learning strategies, teaching technique, and speech proficiency, which may contribute as different factors of language learning. Nevertheless, the issue of error analysis in second language learners' speech is complex and difficult to clarify. Learners usually undergo different stages in the process of learning, and errors might be induced due to different teaching techniques (Doughty & Williams 1989). Different approaches and methods can be followed by language teachers in order to expose students to the right input inside the classroom. The review of the literature in this section addresses the approach of error analysis itself, not yet the sources of learners' errors which will be reported in various studies in the next part of this chapter. It is necessary to mention it on order to find out more about further studies that justify learners' errors. Accordingly, both the inter-language and intra-language studies should be focused on as they are the most recent theories that justify learners' errors after the arguments being raised about contrastive analysis hypotheses mentioned earlier in this chapter.

2.3.1 Inter-language Studies

It was noted earlier that some theories explain learner errors as being a result of different factors throughout the process of learning a foreign language. Researchers claim that some errors result from first language interference, while others interpret errors as being due to the differences between two language systems. Still, there are further assumptions that consider language learning as having developed as a result of the mental knowledge of the second language and that view errors as simply a natural process of the development of learning that language. Moreover, Hamdan (1994) views

errors as an important and natural part of the learning process and states that they are likely to accrue in spite of different learning strategies or methods of instruction aimed at overcoming language errors. Furthermore, they happen despite learners' and teachers' greatest efforts. In fact, recent research has examined learners' linguistic competence and the production of errors and has, as a result, led to the construction of a new system, which differs from the first language and also from the target or second language. This hypothesis defines it as a new concept of second language acquisition called "interlanguage". The term interlanguage was first presented by Larry Selinker, who explains it as follows, "L2 learners construct a linguistic system that draws, in part, on the learners' L1 but it also different from it and also from the target language. In addition, Keshavarz (1994), identifies interlanguage as source of learners' errors: "Interlingual errors result from the transfer of phonological, morphological, grammatical, lexico-semantic, and stylistic elements of the learner's mother tongue to the learning of the target language (cited in Shekhzadeh & Gheichi, 2011, p.160). A learner's interlanguage is, therefore, a unique linguistic system" (Ellis 1997, p. 33). More importantly, Selinker (1974) argues that second language learning developed due to exposure to the target language as well as to the influence of the first language as a major process of developing second language learning. He also claims that language transfer is considered to be the first stage in constructing the learner's interlanguage. The concept of the interlanguage has developed to the point where it involves very important hypotheses regarding the process of second language learning. Ellis (1997), Richards (1974), Gass and Schahter (1989), and Selinker (1974) assume that the learner invents new linguistic rules and constructs a system as a result of the production of the L2, which is referred to as unique mental grammar that appears to be error-produced. Also, the production of the target language, such as its grammatical and phonological elements, are open to the influence of outside factors, namely the environment, and inside factors, namely the mental process. The errors result whether they are errors of commission, over-generalised, or transferred. In any event, they is still evidence of internal language processing. Thus, interlanguage interprets the learner's level of proficiency as transitional in terms of grammar. The learners change their language competence from time to time by adding or deleting rules, which results in an increase in their L2 knowledge and complexity. Ellis states that initially, learners may have very simple language competence and, over time, they attempt to add more complicated language functions to their speech, thereby resulting in errors. This transitional nature of

the interlanguage is considered to be a major sequence of second language acquisition. Other views of interlanguage argue that learners construct different kinds of rules; they may invent other rules at any stage and level of their language development. When learners attempt to communicate, they use their knowledge of both L1 and L2, which results in errors and leads to the argued position that interlanguage is an aspect of performance rather than a competence. Moreover, what is interesting about the interlanguage hypothesis is that it explains different kinds of errors as being a result of different learning strategies employed by the learners, and addresses whether over-generalisation or transferred errors are still considered evidence of learning strategies. Selinker(1974) suggests that only 5% of second language learners can develop the same mental language structure as native speakers. It is the case that most learners are likely to develop their language competence due to the correlation of different factors. Farech and Kasper illustrate the importance of the interlanguage concept in relation to language transfer by stating the following: "It has liberated the notion of transfer from its behaviourist bonds and preserved it as an important theoretical concept in second language acquisition" (1987, p. 111). In fact, the concept of interlanguage views a wide range of hypotheses in one linguistic term. It is, to some extent, a combination of both the contrastive analysis views and the role of the first language, and it represents this in a new term that emphasises the role played by both internal and external factors in second language acquisition. Additionally, it has opened the door for further explanation and advanced our understanding of how a second language is acquired. Selinker notes that "there is no empirical evidence of why the native language should not act as a tool which the learner uses while attempting to discover the formal proprieties of the target language" (1987, p. 2). Despite the importance of the interlanguage concept in second language acquisition, Corder (1974) and Ellis (1997) argue that there remain some issues that cannot be resolved. These include the following: When does the input work for second language acquisition and when does it not? In which cases should the learners rely on L1 transfer and when do they over-generalise their language competence? Finally, what causes learners to restructure their interlanguage? These are some of the issues that need further explanation and more studies to reshape the value of previous theories in the field of foreign or second language acquisition. Methods and approaches had been provided in the literature review to overcome the phenomena of language transfer. The role of the communicative approach in overcoming the issue is examined by Littlewood (1984) who states that no

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matter how errors are accrued by learners, as long as there are teachers who are able to control learners' exposure to the second language, provide them with opportunities to practise it, make them aware of the significant features and patterns of the new language, and provide a variety of feedback to ensure that the learning process is efficient, then learners will be successful. Therefore, I consider this issue an appropriate focus for my context, and for the further research that is necessary to attain more knowledge of the subject for the sake of my professional development and improved interpretation on the part of Saudi students who are seeking to master the English language.

2.3.2 Intra-language studies

Conventionally, and as mentioned earlier from the above theories, the sole source of second language learners' errors was, for many decades, accepted as interference from the learner's first language, under the effect of the strong version of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. Nevertheless, in the field of Error Analysis, transfer from mother tongue, resulting from one's native language, is known as "interlanguage", which by no means can be considered the only source of learners' errors. However, in the late 1960s, Selinker developed the nature of this theory, focused on the kinds of errors which are influenced by the native languages and interfere with target language learning. This idea spread rapidly and has become synonymous with the notion of the interlanguage theory. Indeed, efforts have been made to recognise and identify a second common source of language learner error, in order to demonstrate the other factors that influence the learning process rather than the role played by one's native language. Various researchers have concentrated on those errors to investigate the relationship with the other factors, which relate to both internal and external factors that influence learning processes, rather than the widespread belief that first language interference is part of cognitive learning processes. At the outset, although it was and still is strongly believed that most foreign and second language errors are produced as a result of the transformation of rules and meaning from one language into another, and this was proven to be accurate in many studies mentioned earlier in this chapter, some researchers and linguists have looked into other language features, including which language aspects are transferable and which are not. Among those researchers, Richards in the early 70s was the first who challenged this belief and argued that there are many other factors that influence second language acquisition other than the interference of a

first language. Richards in his aforementioned linguistics theory argued: "Many of the learners' errors came from the strategies that they use in language acquisition and the reciprocal interference of the target language items. Error Analysis would allow teachers to figure out what areas should be focused on and what kind of attention is needed in an L2 classroom so that the language teachers can be better able to develop curriculum and select materials that can facilitate L2 learning processes" (Richards, 1971, p. 208, cited in Heydari & Bagheri, 2012, p.13). In relation to the investigation into learner errors, Richards (1971, cited in, Khansir 2012), classified these possible sources;

a) Over-generalisation, covering instances where the learners create a deviant structure on the basis of their experience of other structures of the target language;

b) Ignorance of rule restriction, occurring as a result of failure to observe the restrictions or existing structures;

c) Incomplete application of rules, arising when the learners fail to fully develop a certain structure required to produce acceptable sentences;

d) False concepts hypothesised, deriving from faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language (Khansir, 2012, p. 4).

In this regard, researchers start to identify the concept of "intralanguage" as a different source of learner errors rather than the interference of the mother tongue. Brown (1980) identified a good model for second language errors, and he described it as the negative transfer and over-generalisation of rules within the target language itself rather than a transfer from a first language. James (1998) added that intralanguage can be used to describe the kind of errors which are a result of and caused by the on-going process of learning the target language itself. Errors appear as a result of incomplete application of rules, building a wrong hypothesis in the system of a new language. As well as the over-generalisation and under-generalisation of the target language, learners overlooking the restrictions of the rules of their target language and the simplification of grammar can lead to the production of errors within the new language itself during the learning process. Although, these classifications provide a sufficient justification of learner errors, it is important to point out that some errors can be a result of the weakness of a learner's memory. Accordingly, Gorbet (1979) has added to the concept of intralanguage. He believed that in order to learn a language, the learner during this process creates a system of different rules from the language they are exposed to, and

this system becomes in charge of the target language production, making the second language learner rely on it.

Consequently, researchers, instructors and linguists started to take into consideration the errors resulting from learning environments and observed different language features. In this regard, Collins (2007) stated that second language learners from different backgrounds and cultures may face similar learning obstacles and equal types of challenges. Thus, later studies were carried out in order to observe different sources of learners' errors. Kim (1987) identified in his studies on Korean intermediate learners that intralanguage errors were almost more than half the total of errors resulting from first language transfer. Noor (1978) argued in a study on linguistic analysis on adverbial clauses found that the transfer is less observed in adverbs than intralanguage errors. Furthermore, Asfoor (1978) found the most frequent errors for Arabic learners were in auxiliaries as a result of intralanguage, and that only 10% were a result of first language interference. Kim (1988) likewise examined errors in English nouns and verbs with reference to voice, tense and mood along with the Korean language, during a study in which students were asked to translate 42 sentences from Korean to English. The results shown in regards to the sources of errors were that over-generalisation errors accounted for 65%, compared with 21% resulting from learners' first language. Additionally, Kim (2001) also oversaw another study in analysing learner errors. Indeed, the aim of conducting this study is to observe and analyse Korean students' writing at college level in order to scrutinise the influence of their first language on their second language production. He mentioned that "it is widely believed that Korean learners of English often show incorrect use of English expressions due to their L1 interference. Despite such a prevalent belief, the sources of learners' errors and L1 interference were not clearly identified" (p. 160, cited in Heydari & Bagheri, 2012, p. 11). In order to inspect learners' errors, he did further research on different features of writing by comparing 30 samples of students in different categories, looking at linguistic features such as omission of tenses and incorrect use of conjunctions and articles. The study revealed that the main source of error for the Korean students was in fact intralanguage, and first language intervention appeared to contribute less to learners' errors. This lends support to what Heydari & Bagheri (2012) have indicated about "the assumption that L2 learners follow similar developmental patterns to those found in children's L1 acquisition" (p. 5). Thus, it might be concluded from Kim's study that learner error is a result of a cognitive process where the student seeks out the rules they are familiar with

in the system of the target language rather than looking for a common deviant in the new language which could be corrected. Additionally, Bataineh (2005) also created a study of the sources of learner errors through examining Jordanian students at intermediate level. She mentioned that the role of the first language transfer proved to be minimal among other factors of language features (such as the simplification of rules, which he found to be the most common among those learners). She noted in her study that "the results obtained above suggest that the majority of errors made by the four groups are the result of common learning processes, such as over-generalisation and simplification of the English article system. The impact of the subjects' native language was found to be minimal" (2005, p.75). Furthermore, Sattayatham and Honsa focused their research in 2007 on first year of medical students at Mahidol University. The study showed that 44% of participants who were in total about 237 students produced errors as a result of intralanguage sources. The learners' task was to translate sentences from their first language (Thai) into the target language (English). The results showed that syntactic and the phonological errors made by students resulted in both sources from intralanguage and interlanguage interference. However, errors caused by intralanaguage were much more substantial than those that were a result of mother tongue interference, which were only represented by a small portion from the total of errors.

Likewise, Ahmadvand (2008) made several findings in his study analysing the errors in the writings of his Iranian second language learners. He examined the writing of around 40 students with both a pre-intermediate level of English and upper-intermediate level. He found that the most common errors were the result of additions, regularisations and omissions. In consequence, and based on his data, negative transfer from their first language was only responsible for 30% of the total of errors. The other 70% were the result of other type of sources, such as rules of misinformation. Accordingly, it was claimed that the role of the first language has sharply declined and the negative transfer from learners' first language (Persian) to the target language in written production of English was neither the only source of errors nor the major one. Ahmadvand's study (2008), indeed, is strongly against the role played by a learner's first language, as he correlated learners' errors to other sources associated with their intralalnguge.

Henceforth, it follows from the above mentioned definitions of intralanguage, and the studies reported in this section, that many linguists and researchers in the field of second language acquisition and language learning have contemplated intralanguage causes as the prevalent source of foreign language errors. A tremendous number of studies done

by many researchers have signposted that foreign language learners on different levels of learning languages have produced a vast number of errors resulting from interlanguage sources. Among those researchers are Brown (1994), Littlewood (1995), and Ellis (1997), who also observed learners progress in acquiring the norms of the target language, and they found that interlanguage sources contributed to their errors and that intralanaguage sources of errors were less demonstrated (Lee, 2001).

In summary, we must take into consideration all previous studies and reports by researchers interested in the field of errors analysis when examining the sources of learner errors. Those research pieces have been conducted in order to find out the significance of errors and classify them into categories in order to provide the best understanding of the causes of these errors. However, based on the review mentioned in this section on both the theories of interlanguage and intralanguage and the vast controversial debates about the accuracy of these theories, researchers are conducting further studies in this field in order to provide sufficient evidence for any of these theories to be acceptable. In correlation with the importance of learner errors, researchers in the field of language learning have suggested different approaches and methods built on the perspective of these theories in order to find a cure to second language learner errors. Focus has been placed on the learning input and the role of using the communicative approach has been highly manifested due to the importance of adopting appropriate teaching strategies to seek a solution. As for the role of the communicative approach being one of the most important solutions, this will be represented in more detail in the next section.

2.4 The Role of Comprehensible Input and the Communicative Approach

Based upon the outlined perspective on the issue of language transfer, operational research has been conducted to identify solutions to overcome the errors that result from the influence of the mother tongue on second language learning. There is a very prevalent belief that research into theoretical and applied linguistics posits that the communicative approach is an effective comprehensible input that can resolve this issue. However, the use of linguistic devices, such as the model of grammar or phonology, in the process of developing a theory of human cognition in language learning is still being debated. In other words, those who are concerned with language

teaching assume that using a model of linguistic theory is not always relevant to solving problems in language learning although there are some general principles and objectives that define some aspects of language transfer that must necessarily be applied in language teaching. In the view of Widdowson, "We cannot assume that what the linguist identifies as significant should correspond with aspects of language to be focused on in the teaching and learning of a language as a school subject. But this is not of course to deny that relevance or significance can be inferred, that insights can be drawn from the discipline and their implications for the subject explored" (1990, p. 9). Nevertheless, there are certain issues that, it has been argued, represent a direct link between linguistic theories; these include the issue of transfer and the principles of language teaching. Furthermore, Widdowson discusses aspects of language teaching based upon insight into linguistics theory and identifies as a major concern the role of the structure of language and the nature of the cognitive process of language learning. In fact, I became concerned about the achieved level of understanding of linguistics theory, which might support the use of certain methodologies in language teaching. In regard to this issue, Chomsky(1981) claimed that not every sufficient input enables language learners to learn rules and apply them directly; their innate knowledge of that language controls, to some extent, the process of learning. However, Ellis (1979), in discussing what such input would entail, divides the issue into positive and negative evidence. The former, he argues, provides sufficient information for learners based on grammar only, because learners in their earlier stages cannot identify the different functions of the language. On the other hand, negative evidence assumes that the input sometimes provides other ungrammatical functions, which might be influenced by the learners' first language, which may be generally responsible for their learning mistakes. Consequently, the role of this input is still undetermined with regard to the provision of the information that is necessary for sufficient and successful learning. One of the goals of second language acquisition is to improve foreign language learning using different teaching approaches. Some research has sought to investigate the impact of classroom practice on second language learning as a significant aspect of the communicative approach. For example, one of the pedagogy questions in this regard is: are learners able to accurately use the structure of the second language that they are taught? Does teaching grammar have any effect on their interlanguage development? Also, will practising inside the classroom enable learners to produce the correct language utterance? In light of these questions, I will consider the issues involved in my own

context, i.e., with respect to the many Saudi students whom I face and my concern regarding their ability to attain speaking proficiency.

Traditionally, providing learners with real communicative experiences is an objective that has been emphasised by language pedagogy. My reason for focusing first on grammar teaching is that the issue of universal grammar is considered to be an aspect of the study of languages that enables interesting predictions about which skills second language learners will acquire first and what they will transfer from their first language. Additionally, grammar and the role of practice that it serves are an aspect of language transfer hypotheses regarding what kind of structures will cause learning difficulties. According to Ellis, "there is no consensus on this issue. It should be noted however that universal grammar does not claim to account for the whole of a language or even the whole of the grammar of a language. As such, it allows from modularity, the existence of different components of language that are learnt in different ways, some through universal grammar and others with the assistance of general cognitive abilities" (1997, p. 71). In other words, determining whether practising the language by using its grammatical function has a direct effect on the acquisition of that language. This case will be discussed in the following sections.

"Grammar could be picked up through simply communicating: By exercise of reading, writing, and speaking … all things belonging to grammar, will without labour, and whether we will or not, thrust themselves upon us" (Thornbury, 1999, p.14). On the other hand, "the learning of any skill is seen as the formation of habits, that is, the creation of stimulus response pairings, which become stronger with reinforcement" (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p.31). The teaching of grammar using the communicative approach has always been controversial in both the teaching and learning of language; this relates to the teacher's ability to differentiate between (linguistic) theories to be taught and to provide the learners with a choice of the methods to be followed in learning. There have been longstanding arguments regarding whether learners can achieve communicative goals by using grammatical rules, or if grammar should be practised in a socially appropriate way in order to attain knowledge of communicative competence (Larsen-Freeman, 2003).

Thornbury (1999) raises an important question that will lead into further discussion in this study: Do we have to learn the rules and apply them in real-life situations in order

to attain knowledge of how to use language, or do we have to use the language in life-like communication in order to learn it? In other words, will learners only be able to use the language of communication by simply communicating? Ellis (1997) and Mitchell and Myles (2004) claim that there is very little empirical evidence to support the position that communication that results from receiving comprehensible input facilitates the acquisition of grammatical features or new patterns. Moreover, the scale of communicative competence is still to be devised because acquiring a language requires more than a communication function since communication is not the only function of language learning (Rutherford, 1987). According to Krashen (1988), typical learning of grammar, results from instruction in the classroom, even with limited use in real life, while acquisition accrues when the learner is exposed to the right input in a free environment, for example a native environment. He also claims that when both teachers and students are convinced that the acquisition of grammatical functions occurs by learning and participating in a suitable classroom environment, they are deceiving themselves due to the fact that learning occurs by means of a free medium, not through the teacher's message in a learning environment (Krashen, 1988). Ellis (1992), however, states that the acquisition of certain grammatical features can occur only by learning and that communicating in a second language in a native community does not ensure the development of full target language competence nor does it even allow the learner to overcome cognitive obstacles such as L1 interference or to develop an interlanguage system. In my opinion, there is always room for grammatical features and accurate language functions to be learnt inside the classroom; these can then be further developed in real-life communication with total ignorance of errors produced by the learners. Additionally, there is "the possibility that some grammatical features (e.g., the resilient ones) may be learnt naturally, whereas others (e.g.: the fragile ones) may not be" (Ellis, 1997, p.50). Many theories contain the assumption that practice is a very important condition for second language learning. Nevertheless, Dekeyser (2007) states that the concept of second language practice is still unexamined in the terms of theoretical points of view of second language learning. He also poses a very essential question about the concept of practice to what extent may the practice of certain tasks contribute to improving the performance of a specific language aspect? This brings us to the following question: Can practice in the classroom really guarantee that students will be able to produce the language? Ellis (1992) suggests a clarification of the term "practice", establishing a distinction between "skill knowledge getting" and "skill

knowledge using". Moreover, he claims that the purpose of practice is "to activate the new knowledge to the point where it can be used automatically and correctly in normal communication" (Ellis, 1992, p.102). Additionally, Swain (1993) claims that the act of producing language, such as speaking accurately, may not depend on the comprehensible input that the learner may have; rather, other factors may interfere depending on the student's ability to use the knowledge that he or she has that correlates with his or her previous L1 system. Larsen-Freeman (2003) argues that even massive quantities of comprehensible input may not be sufficient to enable a learner to produce the language with accurate functions. In other words, even when students are able to understand some grammatical rules and second language forms, it does not automatically mean that they will be able to produce them. On the other hand, Dekeyser (2007) points out that practice is meant to improve the performance of language production, not to teach competence regarding knowledge of grammatical rules through comprehensible input. For example, with regard to explaining the notion of practice, he states that learners may be exposed to L2 input that has been carefully selected by the teacher and that they are requested to interact with it in order to demonstrate their performance and their knowledge of the second language. Such procedures may tend "to push learners to speak before they are ready, which might lead to negative affect and misrepresentation of the grammatical rule" (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, p.105). Interestingly, Ellis (1997) raises another problem that may arise in such classroom interaction; when learners listen to each other talk, with the errors they might commit, it can serve as a kind of practice and may encourage an early fossilisation of language competence. Moreover, the concept of practising language in the classroom may include the repetition of certain skills in order to form a habit of using the language, although the habit formation itself may be considered a major source of errors resulting from language transfer. Ellis (1992) claims, however, that habit formation is only a minor aspect of learning to communicate. As a result, according to Krashen's theories about learning, which indicate that learning a language does not mean acquiring knowledge of language competence, this might influence, to some extent, the certainty of the important role of the term "language practice" in the production of effective language competence (Thornbury, 1999). However, it is important to underscore that although the aforementioned arguments contain negative views concerning the role of practice in language acquisition, this does not signify that practising should be considered a futile approach in language learning. There are still some views that have succeeded in

emphasising the importance of practice for the acquisition of knowledge of language functions as well as the improvement of the learner's communicative abilities in regard to language functions. In spite of some of the above-mentioned arguments regarding the ineffective role of practice, some studies still support the statement made by Dekeyser that "most second language learners and teachers believe that practice in production, or output practice, is crucial for developing L2 proficiency" (2007, p.51). Ellis (1992) states that the perfection of practice can be found in its ability to help learners to gain control over new knowledge; in other words, that "practice serves to draw the learner's attention to the salient features of a new structure so that the essential attributes are not obliterated through overgeneralization or transfer" (1992, p.105). This might lead us to put practice, in one way or another, on the same level as presentation, as both have the same functions. Ur (1988) views the aim of practice for learners as an absorption of grammatical structures, which means that through practice, students will be able to transfer what they know from short-term memory (doing exercises in class) to long-term memory (producing the language they have learnt). This means leaving a gap between doing exercises in the classroom and producing the language that they learn and having some kind of language transfer in between. This cannot be ignored as one aspect of the second language learning process. However, Larsen-Freeman (2003) assumes that even when students transfer what they have been taught and have practised inside the classroom, they will be unable to transfer their knowledge to real-life communication. In other words, the process of integrating new grammatical structures into language production requires time. In this case, Larsen-Freeman suggests that "instruction draws learners" attention to language features and permits them to develop knowledge of those features, but learners will not incorporate such features into their interlanguage until they reach the requisite developmental stage" (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, 103). Additionally, what practice can do is provide learners with the opportunity to produce comprehensible output inside the classroom, and make them realise what they know and do not know about the language, which might enable them to use the target language in a controlled atmosphere at first, and lead to them processing their knowledge in more natural interactions. This will help them to contribute more grammatical competence in real-life communication (Ellis, 1997; Ur, 1988; Hinkel, 2005). To clarify, "practice may help learners gain more comprehensible input or better access to the language developing system" (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, p.105). Thus, the role that practice via interaction can play is to facilitate students' fluency by allowing

them to use the target language throughout exercises in class and assisting them to overcome the problems related to first language interference and the differences between the two languages. This gives them additional opportunities to develop better language competence, although it may not help with the construction of new grammatical knowledge (Dekeyser, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2003; Widdowson, 1990).

In light of what has been mentioned about the role of practice, there has been no evidence to prove the relationship between the amount of input that students have in the classroom and the amount of practice they get, and their level of competence with regard to language functions and proficiency (Mitchell & Myles, 2004; Russell, 2001). However, Ellis sums up the major role of practice by stating that "the goal of practice activities is to develop the kind of automatic control of grammatical structures that will enable learners to use them productively and spontaneously" (1992, p.237). Nevertheless, this does not enable the acquisition of the new rules of the second language without the use of previous linguistic knowledge of the first language. Furthermore, as I have mentioned before, practice has almost the same function as the role of presentation in teaching grammar. The problem of learners' lack of ability to use the target language based upon what they have learnt regarding language functions might be helped by both practising the language and raising their awareness of the system of the new language. Interestingly, Ellis compares the goal of practice and of consciousness raising as follows: "Practice is directed at the acquisition of implicit knowledge of grammatical structures the kind of tacit knowledge needed to use the structures effortlessly for communication. Consciousness raising is directed at the formation of explicit knowledge" (1992, p.238). In other words, even though learners may not need explicit knowledge in order to communicate, raising their awareness about the new language system may help them to contribute to their own ability to communicate. Additionally, Rutherford states that "learners require opportunities for both form-focused and function-focused practice in the development of particular skill areas, and if one or the other is lacking, they do not appear to benefit as much" (1987, p.25). In comparison with the role of practice, many researchers have assumed that raising students' consciousness about the target language and certain functions facilitates their language acquisition (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). Moreover, the role of consciousness raising is to help learners by focusing on language items from the perspective of linguistic knowledge that can facilitate their acquisition. "If the teacher

uses techniques that direct the learners' attention to form, and if the teacher provides activities that promote awareness of the target language, learning seems to result" (Thornbury, 1999, p.24). Thornbury also claims that paying attention only to grammatical features and raising learners' awareness of certain forms of the language are insufficient for the acquisition of a basic level of language competence that will enable communication by both raising the learner's awareness about the target language and using the communicative approach in the classroom. For example, practising certain activities may help to develop the learners' ability to communicate. "A language is acquired through practice, and it is merely perfected through grammar" (1999, p. 25). In other words, as Willis puts it, learners should be encouraged to practise the language inside the classroom, and even with inaccuracy of grammatical function or language competence, their attention should be drawn to the forms of the target language that they produce; this way, use of the language can be gradually stimulated to foster the acquisition of language competence (Willis, 2003). However, the question remains: How can we as teachers encourage students to develop their communicative ability? What activities can we use to make learners first understand the functions of the target language without referring to the first language and then be able to practise the target language to ensure their ability to use it fluently both inside and outside of the classroom? Based upon my own experience as a language learner and English teacher, I have found it difficult to judge or give an absolute answer to these questions. I have learnt grammar by focusing on form, which I thought I understood very well as we had been given the opportunity to practise in the classroom following the communicative approach to learning grammar. However, when I attempted to produce the second language in real life, the language patterns that I aimed to use were not completely accurate. The production of the language still derived from my first language in the absence of similar language patterns in the target language or due to similarities between the two languages. For example, I felt that I knew how to say "the air conditioner is not working"; however, what I actually said was "it not works". I paid attention to the present simple and to the use of the third person and the pronoun "it", but a similar form does not exist in the Arabic language; thus, the target language was not fluently or spontaneously produced, which means that I used my intralingua abilities more than the interlingua ones. Harmer (2007) suggests that grammar teaching and solving target language problems can be done in a variety of ways; we can raise students' awareness of the grammatical function of the target language and teach them

how grammar works in that language with regard to the differences between the first and the target language and then give them the opportunity to practise the language in order to develop their language competence (Johnson, 1996). Thornbury (1999) suggests that teaching a foreign language can be based first on the presentation of a particular grammatical function, which plays the role of raising students' consciousness and ensuring their understanding, and then providing the students with activities that might help them to practise the target language via immediate and accurate input. According to Krashen, "another important part of the input hypotheses is the claim that comprehensible input, when delivered in sufficient quality and quantity, automatically contains all the appropriate structure for the acquirer, we need not deliberately programme grammar. Rather, if we supply enough high quality comprehensible input, all the structures, those described by linguists and those not yet described, will be provided in just the right quantity and will be automatically reviewed" (1989, p.10). On the other hand, Larsen Freeman suggests that teaching grammar through practice may depend on the kind of activities that are designed to facilitate students' acquisition of grammatical competence by focusing on patterns and structures. Moreover, students should be engaged in the activity in order to produce the language willingly rather than being forced to produce a particular grammatical pattern before they are ready to practise, which, as previously mentioned, may lead them to learning fossilisation. Consequently, the ability to achieve the goal of solving language teaching problems resulting from first language interference or the adoption of a definite method or activity that will enable learners to communicate effectively using the target language is not always possible. However, Ur (1988) suggests a variety of techniques that a language teacher can use to attain better language learning and which combine the two methods suggested above. He assumes that teaching language can begin with the introduction of grammatical structure to the class in order to assist the students to perceive the structure (with a focus on form) and raise their awareness of the differences between the first and the target language. By using such strategies, students may be able to repeat, copy, or reproduce what they have learnt about a certain structure throughout a text. Another technique that Ur suggests as a second stage is what he calls 'isolation and explanation', where the teacher can move from context and focus instead on certain grammatical items in order to ensure that students understand various aspects of the given structure. Additionally, by explaining and making generalisations about a particular rule, the teacher can provide the learners with the opportunity to understand it well. Finally, he

states that practice is an important procedure for teachers to include as it enables students to use the target language inside the classroom and, by receiving comprehensible input by following the previous procedures, they might be able to produce what they have learnt in a communicative way.

In my opinion, Ur's approach appears to be the most effective in helping learners to learn, understand, and practise particular language functions and structures, although we cannot assume that it will help them to produce the target language or fully acquire knowledge of language competence. There is still some space for the learners' cognitive ability, which cannot always be viewed as a source of major errors. What they learn is in a controlled environment, under the supervision of their teacher; additionally, it is a result of instant reflection of the materials that they have covered, which might be difficult to apply or even generalise in a real-life situation in which there can be totally different input. Their interaction may also vary according to the language that they are called upon to communicate effectively and spontaneously.

To conclude, the acquisition of target language competence is still a controversial issue and, to date, no evidence has proven whether, or to what degree, it can be acquired by practising the language in a native community or by learning it in a second language classroom setting. "The role of grammar within communicative methodology is elusive, sometimes excluded as an irrelevance, sometimes 'done' latently in the classroom, sometimes reinvented in what is deemed to be a more accessible, palatable format and centring on a discourse that focuses on language as 'patterns'." (Field, 2000, p.142). However, Ellis did state the following: "What is learnt might not be the same as what is thought" (1992, p.118). A teacher should recognise this truth, and, as Saudi teachers, we should provide our students with more opportunities to practise the language inside the classroom and raise their awareness of the problem of transfer that they may face as they have no opportunity to practise the target language in a native community. We should also bear in mind that practising would make the best of learning, as it will facilitate language acquisition, leading to better communication, whereas real-life communication assures the unconscious acquisition of language knowledge (Rutherford, 1987; Thornbury, 1999).

Chapter Three

Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia and U.K

3.1 Teaching English in Saudi Arabia

The English language has certainly become the most prominent international language in the world. The teaching of English attracts the attention of many researchers for many socio linguistic and pedagogical reasons especially for the development of higher education in the teaching of English as a foreign language. Various initiatives in non-English speaking countries, including the Arab world, have been launched to promote the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. More specifically, in Saudi Arabia, the awareness of the proper process of teaching and learning English is considered to be essential in education. "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has undergone great political, social and economic development. To meet new challenges, the Ministry of education has introduced English as a foreign language (EFL) in schools since 1925" (Al-Ahaydib, 1986, p.13). According to the Saudi Kingdom's educational policy, the aim of teaching English is to provide students with knowledge of at least one international language which is English and the only one which is available to learn and to teach as an official foreign language in the Saudi educational system. Although some private schools provide French as a second foreign language in Saudi Arabia, but it is still not seen as an official foreign language in the compulsory Saudi education system. By learning English, Al Wadah believes that students will be able to communicate and represent their culture to the world using this language (Al Wadah, 2000). Furthermore, in the Arab world, there has been an increased interest in learning English as a foreign language due to the numerous opportunities it provide its speakers in various fields. However, one needs to keep in mind the challenging and often complicated process of learning English, especially for the learning and teaching of English in Saudi Arabia with its different levels in the Saudi education system, which includes the elementary, intermediate, and both the secondary and the university stages.

Saudi Arabia has a compulsory education system that consists of three levels: the primary level, which consists of six grades, and the intermediate and secondary levels, each of which consists of three grades. Students start learning English in the fourth year

(year 4) of the primary level and are aged between 9 to 11 years. The number of weekly English sessions is four at the primary level, and the duration of each session is 55 minutes. This continues through the remaining three main compulsory educational stages in the Saudi System with the same number of classes and minutes. One can state that students aged between 6 and 18 years are not exposed to sufficient English input due to the limited number of English classes, the poor quality of teachers, the English language curriculum and the teaching strategies used inside the classroom. These factors result in future language-learning obstacles when students begin their foundation year (i.e., the first year of Saudi universities). For example, the implementation of English as a foreign language among Arab Countries and the Gulf States has been given a great deal of attention as a result of the expansion of globalisation, which has obliged all countries to adopt an international language. Hence English has been finally accepted in different learning institutions in the Gulf States, such as Kuwait and Emirates, which are among those nations seeking to teach English language to students since they start kindergarten (aged between 4 to 5 years old) and continue to study English as a compulsory subject. Besides, at university levels students are prepared to study most of the subjects in English language which resulted in better language learning outcome throughout the educational movement. (AlOthman & Shuqair, 2013).

3.1.1 The Teaching Programme and Curriculum in Saudi Arabia

The teaching of English in the Gulf region in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular, attracts the attention of numerous researchers and scholars, especially with regard to the programmes, curricula and teaching strategies. According to Khan (2011), the teaching of English at Saudi universities serves two purposes: first, it strengthens the foundation of English for Saudi students; and second, it lays the basis for a specific focus on certain aspects of English language learning, which will be used in the coming years as they pursue their specialties after fulfilling the entry requirements for their chosen departments. Although English is taught in schools as a compulsory foreign language in Saudi Arabia, insufficient attention is paid to important aspects of the curriculum. This is also the case in many other developing countries. Despite the attempts of the Saudi government at effective planning and efforts to provide textbooks and a comprehensive curriculum, the teaching learning process seems futile because actual skills development is lacking. The Saudi Ministry of Higher Education is extremely concerned with the pursuit of excellence in effective English language teaching and learning in the

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education arena. However, progress is slow, and continues to be insufficient especially at college level (Liton, 2012). This is a common scenario in almost every stage of learning English in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). In other words, it does apply to every stage of education and in every independent region in Saudi Arabia where teaching English as a foreign language is required to teach the same curriculum following the order of the Ministry Of Education.

The teaching of English as a compulsory subject has received a great deal of attention from the Ministry of Education as well as from the Saudi community. Parents are willing to subside for English language with extra lessons to increase their children's awareness of the language due to its importance. It is the language of economic contracts, higher studies, international research, international affairs and cooperations across the globe; furthermore, it is a language that is shared by many millions of people throughout the world. In fact, the considerable development that has taken place in the field of English language teaching in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) cannot be denied. According to Kahn (2011), in KSA, the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language has undergone several changes and modifications over many decades. The Saudi Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) curriculum was initially prepared in 1999 by the Department of English Language in the Saudi Educational Directorate of Curriculum under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia. This curriculum specified that the goal of TEFL is to focus on the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to enable students to communicate using English, the first spoken language in the world. According to Dr Talal Al-Hajailan in *Teaching English in Saudi Arabia* (2003), during the history of English teaching in the Kingdom, two curriculum documents were prepared to specify the aims and objectives of TEFL. "The first document was formulated in 1987 and became the basis for all TEFL text books. The new series 'English for Saudi Arabia' was born in 1989 by a group of authors collaborating with the King Fahad University of Petroleum and Minerals in Saudi Arabia (KFUPM). The new textbooks employed the latest method of teaching 'the communicative method'. The second document for TEFL was produced and modified by the Department of English in the Directorate of Curriculum under the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia (2000)" (Liton, 2012, p. 3).

However the goal of teaching English at all levels, at schools, colleges and universities in Saudi Arabia is defined in the Saudi Policy of Education and is included in each

textbook, which states the aim as the following: "providing the students with at least one of the living languages, in addition to their original language, to enable them to acquire knowledge and sciences from other communities and to participate in the service of Islam and humanity" (Al-Hajailan, 2003, p.23). Based on this objective, which has been adapted to teach English in Saudi Arabia, and in order to provide a theoretical and critical review of TEFL in Saudi Arabia, a case study of one of the Saudi universities will be presented in more detail to shed light on the strengths and weaknesses of the educational process at Tibah University. Accordingly, ten English language classes at Tibah University have been observed in order to serve the purpose of evaluating the program and the teaching strategies adapted in this particular case study. Moreover, the actual causes of the educational system weaknesses will be identified, and the weaknesses of the language teaching process in this context will be evaluated as well.

3.2 The Tibah University Programme

The establishment of Tibah University in Saudi Arabia, located in Madina, and which is the only university in this city originated from a Royal Decree, issued in 2000 to grant the approval of the resolution of the Council of Higher Education, which signified the integration of the two campuses of King Muhammad Bin Saud University (in Riyadh, the capital) and King Abdul-Aziz University (in Jeddah) into one independent university in Madina. In addition, the Royal Decree of 2001 entailed and pronounced the nascent institute in Madina as Tibah University. The aim of teaching English in general was to provide programmes that were developed according to international standards of quality and academic accreditation and to prepare curricula based on a set of quality standards. Moreover, the major objectives were to conduct studies and research on the development of academic programmes in order to provide an evaluation of learning outcomes (Administration of Tibah, 2004). To achieve the aforementioned TEFL objectives, the English teaching curriculum at Tibah University has undergone significant changes due to the failure to achieve the objectives of teaching the language in each previous taught textbook. According to Liton (2012), who conducted a study on the development of the EFL teaching and learning curriculum in the Saudi university and college context, the authentic EFL text should be designed and should focus on grammar and writing while offering many practical exercises geared towards the development of listening and speaking skills. Furthermore, the textbook provided by

the university has been changed numerous times. In 2001 *English for Saudi Arabia* was introduced as a compulsory textbook which is a reflection of the Saudi national Curriculum. The textbook contains two volumes. English book 1, and English book 2, where students have to finish both books throughout the Academic year. Though each book of those language books, focus on one or two language skills. For instance, reading and writing in book one, and listening and speaking in book two, still not all the language skills, in particular speaking, are given enough emphasise throughout the year. Al-Qurashi et al (1995, p.6) said: "These books form a bridge between the intermediate and secondary courses". Though they represent and include most of the language skills, both the teachers and the students cannot choose the skills they need to focus on to meet the students' need.

 According to the content of these books, they contain almost the same number of units. Which are six units in total and each unit is divided into eight lessons. The lessons vary between different skills, for example, some lessons provide listening and speaking activities. Others focus on grammar, reading or vocabulary learning,. And , the skill of writing is also represented in these books but rather more heavily than other skills, such as speaking which is the focus of this study. According to some reviews of these textbooks, Raghada in her evaluation of the Saudi schools English books surmised it as the following: "speaking about the situation in KSA where there is a lack of qualified teachers and sufficient textbooks.(2010,p.3) Thus, teachers are bond to follow the textbooks quite heavily. The teacher's guide of EFSA 'English textbook for Saudi Arabia' takes control over the teachers which can result in having materials being taught with less variety and flexibility and which can lead to having teachers with limited teaching experiences. Therefore, teachers should evaluate their material. Another point is the lack of interference of Saudi teachers in designing the material and evaluating it since the Ministry of Higher Education in KSA is the one in charge. In spite of the great importance of material evaluation, there seems slight empirical research as opposed to the theoretical one" (2010, P. 2). Since the examination results of the students and the insufficient outcome of learning which have been done by the Ministry of Education's assessments has failed to meet the objectives of learning English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia, an in-depth evaluation has been adopted to change and modify these textbooks. (Al-Shumaimeri, 1999).

As a result, the Ministry of Education then agreed on a pilot edition of a new course book aimed at achieving effective language learning. This book, titled *Challenges for Successfully Learning English*, has been designed for the secondary stage of Saudi schools and the foundation year at Tibah University. This text book was a combination of two books: a "student book" which should be studied in the English class with the teacher, and a "work book", in which students practice the exercises included individually at home without the teacher's help. Basically, the ministry has adopted a brand new design of the contents of this book and focused on developing the thinking skills of learning English, relying on the communicative approach as an effective tool of foreign language learning. The "Challenges English text book" contains four modules which are mainly focussed on two major skills. Learning grammar as a crucial skill, and applying it to everyday language use via student communication within the language class. The book was divided into "receptive skills" such as listening and reading, and "productive skills" such as speaking and writing, in which speaking is the focus to be evaluated in this study. All the four modules should be covered during the academic year, divided by an exam zone in between each two modules. The teacher also has to stick restrictedly with the book plan provided by the Ministry of Education. This book has an excellent modern plan for teaching English language and was especially developed and designed for KSA with the cooperation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Pearson Longman, who designed the English language course book (2010). The book follows the Communicative Language Teaching strategy which is an ideal approach to help learners acquire a foreign language effectively. Savignon (2001, p.8) contributed to the definition of communicative approach by stressing that communicative competence is relative and depends mainly on the cooperation of all participants, because it is a very dynamic conception in which at least two individuals are involved in the process of negotiating meaning" (2001, p.8). The book had a promising start when it was first applied in both the secondary stage and the foundation year at university as the book was aimed to help student with better language learning. In fact, in a review of "*New Challenges course books*", reviewers stated that; "the *New Challenges course books* help students become more effective learners and better citizens of the world through personal development. The information-driven approach in *New Challenges* encourages teenagers to think about the world around them and provides lively achievable tasks, building their confidence, creativity, participation and performance. With New Challenges teachers make lessons educational, successful and

fun!" (Pearson, 2014, p.1). But the *"New Challenges text book"* has been used for only two years, and the Ministry of Education decided to change the course book again. The book failed to meet the objective of EFL teaching in Saudi universities and schools according to the ministry results of the final Academic year examination. It was then changed to the *Flying High for Saudi Arabia* course book, which was specially formulated by the English Language Development Project, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education as well, in 2012. The book has adopted the plan of units and lessons in teaching English. It contains 9 units. Every individual unit has exactly the same number of lessons, four lessons in total. The book aimed to cover grammar, language functions, vocabulary and pronunciation. In spite of the variation of contents in this book and the focus on pronunciation which has been represented for the first time in a Saudi English course book as an individual skill throughout the education history of language teaching and learning in Saudi Arabia, the book was only a pilot edition of the Saudi curriculum. It has been once again changed in 2013 to the *Cambridge Touch Stone*, which comprised series 1, 2, 3 and 4. On the other hand, the *Touch Stone* English course book contains 12 units. Each unit deals with different language functions and topics. The teacher should cover the following skills in each unit: grammar, vocabulary, conversation strategies, pronunciation, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary notebook and at the end of each unit there is a session of free talk according to the topics covered. Though the textbook contains a variety of language skills and is designed to a high standard of language teaching, I still believe that the number of units and the language skills included in each unit are quite challenging and difficult to be covered for both teachers and students as they mentioned during the classes attended. As a result, there is less emphasise given to speaking skills. Throughout the attendance of the English language classes in Tibah university and as a part of the data collection for this research as mentioned in chapter 1.5, both teachers and students complained about the huge amount of lessons that had to be covered during the full academic year according to the Ministry instructions to stick to the lessons and units planned in the book. According to Khafaji (2004), the control of the teacher's guide according to the Ministry regulation will irremediably lead to a lack of creativity and flexibility in teaching the language. Khafaji(as cited in Ragadah, 2010) suggested that "there is a need to re-evaluate the learning/teaching context in public schools and universities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and to agree to new materials which can mirror the requirements of learning English in society taking the Saudi students' and teachers' needs into account" (p.3).

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education agreed on "*Touchstone textbook*" to be taught regarding EFL teaching in Saudi universities during the foundation year with respect to the various levels of the official English language textbook.

Curriculum development in Saudi Arabia has not taken into account factors such as materials, language teachers' opinions and learners' needs, all of which should be involved in a rational curriculum development. Ragadah, (2010), divided the rational curriculum changes and evaluation in two mains points: "The first is the impressionist overview which demands a fast look through a lot of new material from which to choose" (Cunningsworth 1995, p.1). Though following this approach cannot be done. This is because the teachers are not allowed to change the materials and the teaching materials and lessons are already provided and planed by the Ministry of Education. The second method in textbooks evaluation is the in-depth evaluation of language textbooks which requires an extensive and close examination that can be carried out by both the teacher and the Ministry of education in order to find out how certain skills and different materials workout for the students' language learning needs. The evaluation of curriculum according to Nunan, is "principles and procedures for the planning, implementation, evaluation and management of an educational program. Curriculum study embraces syllabus design 'the selection and grading of content' and methodology 'the selection of learning tasks and activities'..."(1988, p. 158). Additionally, the Ministry of Education should provide an understanding of what takes place in each edition produced by the Ministry. The materials used in the textbooks should be evaluated with certain criteria and according to both the textbooks objectives and the learners' objectives, which are mainly aimed to be accomplished by the end of the academic year. Ragadah, has suggested three different kinds of material evaluation that vary according to their academies' purpose, timing and formality. "These are pre-use evaluation, whilst-use evaluation and post-use evaluation. 'Pre-use evaluation' requires making choices about the value of materials for their users. It can be context-free, content-influenced or context-dependent. This kind of evaluation is often impressionistic since it consists of a fast decision by a teacher or an institution, as a result some mistakes may come out during the use of the book. 'Whilst-use evaluation' deals with evaluating the material while using it which makes it more consistent than pre-use evaluation. But, it cannot measure the strong or effective learning. As for the

'post evaluation' which is considered the most important since it can measure the effort of the material on the users." (2010, p.4). Consequently, Harmer (2001) sees a distinction between evaluation and assessment. He stated that "the assessment of a course book is an out-of-class judgement as to how well a new book will perform in class. Course book evaluation, on the other hand, is a judgement on how well a book has performed in fact" (p.301). Moreover, the Ministry of Education should take into consideration the effectiveness of methods for both evaluations and assessment of English textbooks before making the judgement on the objectives achieved continuously and excessively.

Additionally, a critical evaluation of the texts should be undertaken via experimental forms and small-scale research to acquire a more in depth understanding of what a comprehensive curriculum should involve and whether or not the Ministry of Education is succeeding in the achievement of this goal. According to Sockett (1994), the curriculum is a programme of activities designed to meet the educational objectives to the greatest extent possible. Initially, this is what the Ministry of Education planned to accomplish through the frequent modifications of newly released English language textbooks. Interestingly, in keeping with the "rational curriculum development" model, Hirst (1968) argued on the basis of the rational development of curriculum as the following: first, when the curriculum consists of deliberately and consciously planned activities, which are applied in schools and colleges, the learning outcomes and objectives will certainly not be met. Language needs a more unconscious sequence of learning, rather than adherence to a consciously planned curriculum.

The latter path will lead to unsuccessful learning outcomes. Secondly, Hirst (1968) argued that the curriculum does not need to achieve all the stated objectives. It is not necessary for the specified objectives to be achieved at the end of the course via certain activities and lessons. It becomes clear that the focus of language teaching should be to provide natural and unspecified material according to the students' needs as this helps to provide learning opportunities for them. However, providing unspecified martials that conferring students` need can unconsciously help them to learn the language, leading to a sufficient language learning outcome. Third, the central point that remains crucial regarding the achievement of the curriculum objectives is the identification of the principles of the objective. For example, do the objectives take into consideration different kinds of behaviours, speaking skills, concepts, creative capacities and students'

abilities to learn and achieve the stated aims? Unfortunately, curriculum development in Saudi Arabia relies heavily on the recognition of aims, which are assessed by the end of each term via a written exam (Alamri, 2008). This assessment is used to determine whether the objectives have been successfully achieved or if further changes need to be implemented. This method neglects the crucial role that other factors may play in the final stages of the learning outcome. Additionally, the number of textbook evaluation studies in KSA is very small (Alamri, 2008). In this regard, Hirst (1968) stated that the concept of teaching is unlike any other field of knowledge. Rational curriculum planning entails the management of human production with regard to certain qualities, accepting that there are no specific objectives that lead to human achievement; rather, there are natural differences that exist among students. Therefore, curriculum planning needs to consider decisions according to different characteristics and contexts rather than being based on a general education principle that needs to be achieved at the end the term. Otherwise, without an actual understanding of the various complex elements that are integrated to produce a sufficient learning outcome, the teaching curriculum will be a complete waste of time, money and effort, leading to unachieved teaching and learning goals. It is this what the Ministry of Education should take into consideration before embarking on further development of the curriculum. The decisions of the Ministry should be based on practical evaluations of textbooks before their official utilisation in the courses such as the one being taught at Tibah University. "There can be no doubt that evaluating the official textbooks for English in Saudi Arabia is a task of great importance to the future success of the program. The decision of which textbook to use is a decision that will affect an entire generation of Saudi Arabian children. By properly scrutinizing the text intended for use, it is possible to make sure that the educational needs of the students are being met appropriately." (Alamri, 2008, p.14)

Despite the aforementioned arguments and the recent curriculum modification and development, the myth of the falling standards of English in KSA, and more specifically at Tibah University as a result of the courses taught which have been described above, has not yet been proved with certainty. There are other foremost factors that affect the standard of EFL teaching and hinder the achievement of the goals of the Saudi curriculum. These factors include teachers' attitude to teaching in Saudi Arabia, which has become increasingly important as the teacher plays a crucial role in helping students

to learn effectively. In a study titled *"The Attitude of Teachers and Students towards the use of Arabic in EFL Classrooms in Saudi Public Schools"*, Haifa Al-Nofaile (2010) examined the attitudes of Saudi teachers and students towards the use of Arabic as a facilitating or hindering tool in English classes. It indicated that teachers' attitudes is a most influential case which needs to be examined in depth. In addition to the curriculum and the teachers' role, students' motivation to learn English in Saudi universities could be considered another important factor affecting the standard of learning teaching practice in Saudi Arabia. In their research on "Intrinsic Motivation in Saudi Learners of English as a Foreign Language", Moskovsky and Alrabai (2009) explained the role of motivation in the achievement of EFL learning goals in the Saudi educational setting. The authors demonstrated that Saudis function well in effective learning environments, leading to the production of better learning outcomes. These factors will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter with a comparison of the same effective factors in a different context at Leeds University.

3.2.1 Strategies for Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Saudi Arabia, "Tibah University"

With regard to curriculum development in Saudi Arabia, it is important to provide a description of Tibah University's on going English language course, particularly in the foundation year, in order to undertake a theoretical analysis of different aspects of teaching speaking and the significant features of the English language classes run by Tibah University. These aspects and features include students' motivation, the teacher's role, teacher-student interaction, language focus and the general atmosphere of language classes. As an essential component of the completion of the foundation year, Tibah University offers English language classes based on its "Intensive English Language Programmes" where "Touch stone" the English textbook previously described, is studied as the core course book of the programme. The aim of these classes is to improve students' English language competency and to help them achieve the targeted level within the contexts of the majors they will be pursuing after they complete their foundation year; these include interior design, mathematics, physics, chemistry, computer science and law. The grade they achieve in this English language course will indicate their English language proficiency and determine which major they will be able to pursue.

The number of registered students in each language class may be as high as 30 students, and student teacher interaction may be affected as a result. According to the National Council of Teachers of English Guidelines, "Classes larger than 25 do not give students and teachers the opportunity to engage literary texts through questions, discussion, and writing" (2010, p.1). Moreover, a study conducted by the University of California and California Community College on the influence of class size and student-teacher interaction in language class stated the following: second language learning demands an intensive interaction between learners and teacher which cannot happen in a class of more than 25 students. The Intersegment Committee of Academic Senates "ICAS", a group of Academic Senate leaders from each of the three segments of public higher education in California, given the goals of a standards-based language program (i.e.: the development of students' communicative competence), stated that "there must be opportunity for frequent and meaningful student-to-teacher and student-to-student interaction, monitored practice, and individual feedback during instructional time. This warrants attention to a class size that remains as small as possible", (2006, p. 2).

However, the number of the students who regularly attend classes in Tibah University, and according to the teacher's records, which have been checked while conducting this research, was usually between 12 and 25. In fact, none of the ten classes attended had the full number of students who were registered on the list, all classes had an average of 5 student absences during the full academic day. As well as this, throughout the data collection period for this research, and when I attended English language classes at Tibah University to find out more about the factors that affect students' English language competence the number of students in each language class continued to decrease, as some students were usually absent in order to study for the midterm or final exams.

Nevertheless, the issue of absences and decreasing attendance is largely a habit not only among students at Tibah University but also at Saudi universities and colleges more generally, as the issue of absences and the decreasing attendance of students gained great attention recently, in the academic and educational field in Saudi Arabia, as absence from lectures is considered to be one of the major factors that affect learning processes in Saudi schools and universities. Ezza (2012) is one of researchers who discussed Saudi students' attitudes towards attending English language classes in particular at Saudi universities and colleges and related this attitude to different

environmental and social factors, which can be summarised as follows. Text anxiety/tension which can be related to the curriculum they have to study, for example, being so difficult for some students, or being easy and boring for others. There can also be learning problems related to coping with the text provided, fear of problems, lack of motivation (which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter in 3.2.3, as one of the important factors effect speaking proficiency), peer pressure and a negative attitude towards academia. There is also the forced choice dilemma; that is to say that students are forced to attend a full day of English classes at Tibah University. This administration rule to monitor student attendance was changed in 2011, when the course became a full nine-hour day from 8 am to 5 pm every day. Once students attend the first classes, they are unable to miss or cancel classes for the rest of the day; they are obliged to be on the university campus for the entire day, which results in a significant decrease in attendance. This is a result of the university's new rules and obligation for foundation-year students, who are no longer allowed to leave the campus during the university's working hours due to many cultural issues. Thus, following such rules may affect Saudi students' emotions toward learning at Tibah University.

With this regards, Marcus (2012) raised the issue of the effect of emotional or social problems on students' performance and achievement in language learning, demonstrating that students performed better when their emotions towards language learning were strong and positive. Khan pointed out the different factors that represent barriers to learning within the Saudi context. He stated that "the barriers are some of those that are very influential: social, cultural, parental, attitudinal, motivational, psychological, personal and pedagogical factors. Pedagogical factors in particular include teachers, action research, teaching strategies, teaching resources and administration" (2011, p. 1). The presence of such important factors can be remarkable and can contribute to the worsening of Saudi students' capacity for language learning in general and speaking proficiency in particular. Rogers (1987) stated that such factors become integrated with students' attitudes to learning, and that the language practitioner should collaborate with other consultative departments in the academic institution to solve such problems. Nevertheless, Saudi students' attitude toward learning at Tibah University seems to be connected with another crucial factor, signified in their motivation towards learning which will be raised and discussed in details in the next section

3.2.2 Student Motivation Towards Language Learning

Much recent research focuses on the relationship between different personality aspects and the acquisition of particular communicative language skills, and how personal characteristics can influence learning process and speech production. According to the classes attended and the English language lessons observed as part of the data collection of this research, one of the reasons behind students' reluctance to speak which has been identified in English language classes is that students may feel that they do not have to speak since they are not going to use it outside the classroom and they are only studying the language because it is part of the curriculum. Hedge (2000) referred to motivation as the reason why we learn the language. Students' lack of speech can be interpreted as a lack of motivation that students have toward L2 learning in general, which is made up of different factors linked to the students' attitudes toward learning a second language. To be motivated to learn something, learners need different opportunities to learn and continued encouragement and support of their learning efforts and effective production of speaking skills (Kharma, 1977). In fact, for more than 50 years, motivation toward language learning has been a controversial issue and can be seen from different perspectives according to different aspects of learning. A definition of motivation is given by Razavi (2014) in an article discussing what science tells us about motivation toward second language learning. She states that motivation is correlated with two different factors which have categorised motivation in learning speaking: integrative and instrumental, where differences between those two types are closely linked. According to her "integrative motivation is the motivation to learn a language in order to get to know, to be with, to interact with and perhaps become like the speakers of the target language, whereas, children have integrative motivation in acquiring their first language, instrumental motivation alongside this characterises second language acquisition" (Razavi, 2014. P.1). As a result, what we need in learning speaking skills is the instrumental motivation which is linked to the practical purpose of learning this language. So with this kind of motivation teachers can inspire their students to achieve more success. Consequently, many significant researches have been moving toward the role that motivation plays in acquiring second language and speaking proficiency. For example, a recent study has been conducted in York university that linked learning processes with motivation from the perspective of science that "the social relevance and social aspects of learning seem hugely important for sustaining motivation and so

determining the outcome of learning" (Razavi, 2014. P.3). As well as this, second language learners need efficient input, interaction, an inspiring learning environment and opportunities for meaningful output, in order to maintain sufficient continued motivation toward learning, as effective language learning is directly linked to the learner desire and passion towards learning. Research is available in bulk, which raises the importance role of motivation towards learning. Karaoglu, in her research in motivating students towards learning successfully described motivations as the passion and the core factor of language learning: "Successful learners know their preferences, their strengths and weaknesses, and effectively utilize strengths and compensate for weaknesses. Successful language learning is linked to the learner's passion. And instructors should find ways to connect to this passion" (Karaoglu, 2008, p. 4). Alongside a study conducted on language learners' motivation, Liviana Ferrari conducted a study into the motivation of adult foreign language learners on an Italian beginner's course, which was part of her Ph.D. thesis. She stated that "though the students joined the classes for a variety of reasons and were taught by different teachers using different approaches, it quickly became apparent that maintaining motivation was closely connected to the social elements involved" (Ferrari, 2013. P. 22). Additionally, a Study of the Attitudes and Motivation of Students of English, Russian, as Foreign Languages at the University of Belgrade in (1975), shows the importance and need for considering that factors which affect students' attitudes towards learning a foreign language according to the country in which they study in and their motivation for learning, which affects their learning process. The result of this study can be summarised with the idea that the more the students are motivated towards learning the language in a specific country, the better outcome and successful learning they gain. Interestingly, this study can be directly linked to the findings of this research which will be discussed later on in this chapter and which indicates that students are less motivated to learn English in Saudi Arabia in comparison with students who learn English in the UK, which is part of the data collection of this study. Moreover, closer to home, Al-Khairy, discussed students' demotivational factors toward learning English as a foreign language for Saudi undergraduates. In his study he stated that there are five main important factors and reasons behind low English language proficiency of Saudi students: "1. Poor teaching methods; 2. Inadequate teaching curricula; 3. Insufficient exposure to the target language; 4. Lack of motivation; and 5. Lack of information about the universities or colleges at which they study." (Al-Khairy, 2013, P. 366). As

well as this, in a similar study Khan (2011) mentioned that Saudi students who learn English at schools or colleges are affected by various reasons such as the influence of Arabic interference, inadequate schools and educational system, insufficient exposure to the English language, poor teaching methods, improper learning facilities and the absence from schools and lack of motivation and self-study. He stated: "lifestyle, discipline, punctuality, motivation, future aim, family pressure, social status, lack of guidance and excessive freedom" (Khan, 2001, p. 1256-1257). Accordingly, many studies have revealed that motivation plays a crucial role in learning productive skills, such as speaking not only for Saudis but all foreign language learners (Khan, 2001). For example, Alderman (1999) has reported that motivation "leads to possibilities for fostering the development of students' potential" (p.3). Additionally, Dornyei (1994) has also discussed motivation as an important factor in ELT, where he described it as "one of the main determinants of second/foreign language achievement" (p. 273). He also suggested that the level of motivation can vary from one educational context to another. The language level of learning and the learning environment were motivational factors with a positive impact on learners; whereas, demotivational factors may hinder students' learning, varying according to the learner level, language level and learning situation level. While motivational factors have been reported to have positive impact on learning process, on the other hand, the demotivating factors have "negative counterparts of motives" (Yan, 2009, p. 109, cited in Fattash, 2013, p.6).

However, one possible reason one can consider for students' lack of motivation to attend English language classes at Tibah University, and which led to less speaking proficiency according to these English classes observed and the interviews employed, will mentioned later in section(4.2), is that they have to attend five hours of English classes everyday with the same teacher in the same room for an entire year, according to the reports of observed data collected in the period of conducting this research. During this period, they are required to focus on only two skills, reading and writing, while almost completely neglecting speaking practice, which is also important. Moreover, since students' assessment is based on a written exam at the end of the term, and they do not have to use the second language outside of the classroom setting, they are unable to achieve the level of proficiency required to communicate in English using basic speaking skills. Students also use the language inside the classroom based on a specific component of the curriculum. Unfortunately, in this case, the language learning process

contradicts the Ministry's stated goals related to the English language curriculum. Hedge (2000) referred to motivation as a crucial factor in language learning. This can be related to students' lack of motivation towards the English course. However, Gardner defined motivation as "the sum of effort plus the desire to achieve a language learning goal plus attitudes or the degree of interactive orientation" (1985, p. 363). Moreover, the concept of motivation "is composed of many different and overlapping factors such as interest, curiosity or a desire to achieve" (Williams & Burden, 1999, p.111). Accordingly, students who are highly motivated seek opportunities to use their second language, and they are more successful with regard to the development of oral communication skills than learners with a lower level of motivation (Lightbown & Spada, 2001), which can be applied to our case at Tibah University. Saudi English classes include only Saudi students, whose first language is Arabic. These students mostly speak Arabic inside the classroom and do not speak to their teacher, who is a native speaker of English. However, this point will be discussed in more detail later on in this chapter section (3.2.5), as teachers' role and attitudes towards teaching English courses at Tibah University will be highlighted as one of the crucial factors that affect Saudi students' assertiveness toward learning English and level of speaking proficiency.

In addition to what is mentioned above, Hedge (2000) suggested that there are two kinds of motivation to learn the English language: (1) students' need to use language as an instrument to achieve a specific purpose, or (2) the desire to engage in certain activities, such as joining another group in a different culture, which is not applicable to the Saudi context. Both of these factors may be useful for interpreting student behaviour toward language learning, and particularly the issue of speaking skills in the classroom, as there is a limited field in which students can practise the second language outside of the classroom setting. Moreover, Nunan (1999) divided learner needs into two main kinds. Objective needs refer to those activities carried out by the teacher to diagnose the students' ability and speaking proficiency and to work with the students' own knowledge by providing the appropriate level of language instruction. The other kind are subjective needs. These include the students' desires, wants and expectations. This assessment is undertaken via a planning programme proposed by the teacher with the support of the academic organisation. Unfortunately, less emphasis is placed on major obstacles such as these, which lead to the provision of an inappropriate learning environment of teaching speaking at Tibah University. Alternatively, since language

learning entails involvement in a language learning situation, the students' attitude plays a crucial role, in addition to the instructor, classroom, textbooks and learning atmosphere, among other factors. Gordon (1980) found that language attitude was the best indicator of English learning achievement among schools and colleges, while Lett and O'mara (1990) found that motivation is an important factor in achievement, even among military personnel. Similarly, Bartley (1969) found that those who withdrew from language classes had less language competence, significantly lower aptitude scores and less positive attitudes towards the language learning environment.

Another important motivational factor linked to favourable attitude towards language learning is called the "foreign language learning situation". According to Dornyei, and Csizérand (2006), when students learn a foreign language at school without having direct contact with native speakers of that language, this has an adverse effect on their willingness to communicate and leads to less oral communication. This, in turn, may discourage students from practising their English language skills outside of the classroom setting. For example, as part of the data collection process towards identifying English language learning obstacles, one of the English classes I attended for the Foundation year was a speaking class dealing with the "Money Unit" as part of the curriculum based on the Touch Stone English course book. The major goal of the lesson was to enable students to use many different types of material to apply rules to real-life situations. Unfortunately, the teacher relied on reading from the book more than on involving students in discussions as this is the most appropriate method to finish the unit in the textbook according to the department obligation. This may have resulted in the level of dissatisfaction with the quality of the English language classes which affect students' attitudes toward language. Humanistic language psychologists, such as Carl Rogers (1983), emphasised the importance of dealing with the "whole learner" and stressed that "learners are not simply processers of information who, when they enter the classroom, leave the deeper layers of their identity outside: they are real people who bring with them the whole array of personal attributes and feeling. These have to be respected, if individual development and growth are to take place". (Littlewood, 1992, p. 98).

Furthermore, Reynolds (1991) conducted a research linking motivation with second language proficiency. This author argued that motivation plays an important role in language learning and that it is directly linked to students' language learning

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competence. Reynolds also differentiates between kinds of motivation. The first refers to the effort expended on learning a second language, called intensity of motivation. The second kind of motivation refers to one's purpose for studying the language. Consequently, classroom performance is correlated in one way or another with students' motivation to learn a second language and their ability to interact effectively in the second language classroom, which appears to be missing in the students who learn English at Tibah University.

3.2.3 Anxiety

Throughout the collection of data at Tibah University and based on the class observations and students interviews from the foundation year, anxiety is considered to be one of the major factors that affect Saudi students' language proficiency, which I have found come together to hinder students' speaking competence, and which affect some students' learning characteristics, such as their communication skills, including basic speaking skills.

In fact, second language learning and learning achievement have been extensively studied by many language researchers. Also, the individual differences between learners, such as motivation and anxiety are found to be highly correlated to second/foreign language level achievement. Language anxiety can be described as "a specific personality situation having two psychological components: emotional arousal and negative self-related cognition" (MacIntyre, 1999, P. 95). As a matter of fact, foreign language learning can sometimes be stressful for some learners, especially when they have to study a foreign language as part of an academic stage and in order to fulfil the course requirements. As a result, many researchers have examined the role of anxiety in language learning since the 1970s (e.g.: MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Lalonde, 1987; Gardner & Lambert, 1972). The studies show that there is a close relationship between student anxiety and the level of language learning. In a study by MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) at the University of Western Ontario on foreign language anxiety, it was revealed that student anxiety is based on the language environment which is associated with language learning. They also divided the causes for anxiety in language learning in two different factors: "general anxiety", which is related to the students' feelings toward learning in general; and "communicative anxiety", which is related to the environments where students are exposed to the language in order to

communicate. It was found that only "communicative anxiety" is considered to highly influence student performance in language production skills such as speaking. Moreover, reviewing the literature, the term anxiety is always associated with performance. For example, Gardener (2006) and Scovel (1978) discuss four studies on language anxiety of French learners which indicate that language performance is highly correlated to student anxiety. Also, Swain and Burnaby (1976) found a negative correlation between language anxiety and the ability of French speaking as well as the level of proficiency. Similar to this study, and as cited in Gardner (2006), Tucker, Hamayan and Genesee (1976) found one index of performance to be significantly negatively related to French class anxiety, but reported three other indices that were not correlated significantly with this type of anxiety" (2006, p. 252). Furthermore, in a study of "Strategies for coping with language anxiety: the case of students of English in Japan" which was conducted by Kondo and Ling (2004), they summarise student anxiety as one of the learners' barriers which can be coped with using different strategies inside the language class. As well as this, understanding the students' behaviour during communication and the usage of cognitive strategies may help to understand and overcome the negative influenced of anxiety during language classes. Moreover, foreign language anxiety is considered to be one of the greatest hidden obstacles linked to second/foreign language performance and achievement. (Young, 1991). As a result, and according to Khodadady and Khajavy, in their study at the Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, they found that, "lower language achievement with higher anxiety is attributed to negative effects of anxiety on language learning" (2013, p. 6). In addition, the study raised the relationship between foreign language motivation and anxiety in terms of the achievement. It concluded that "students who have different reasons for learning English are different in their levels and types of anxiety. The difference becomes most notable when students who had no motivation are compared to those who were motivated (intrinsic or extrinsic). As well as this, of those students who lacked motivation to learn English all had English communication fear, fear of negative evaluation, negative attitudes toward English classes, and were not comfortable in their classes" (Khodadady and Khajavy, 2013, p. 280). However, and similarly to the case of Saudi students in which this research has been conducted, anxiety is found to be one of the most significant English learning barriers at Tibah University which will be discussed in detail.

Indeed, many studies have analysed the relationship between anxiety and second language learning, particularly speaking skills. For instance, MacIntyre and Gardener (1992) pointed out that foreign language anxiety is different from other kinds of anxiety, and that there is a relationship between anxiety and learning proficiency. This, they argued, can be linked to students' attitude towards language learning, and is identified as being specifically related to speaking. Anxiety can be defined as a "subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry" (Dörnyei & Schmidt, 2001, p.364). Additionally, within the language learning context, Zhang (2001, p.74) defined anxiety as "a distinctive complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process". He also defined the relationship between anxiety and speaking in particular as "a stable personality trait referring to the propensity for an individual to react in a nervous manner when speaking in the second language". Furthermore both Zhang (2001) and Dörnyei and Schmidt (2001) argued that anxiety can be a strong motivator for students. It can encourage them to learn a language or it can have a negative influence and prevent them from achieving the purpose of the learning process, thereby possibly preventing them from achieving good oral communication. Zhang's study demonstrates that students were anxious about oral communication as a result of their language learning difficulties. They did not have enough relevant knowledge about the second language, which made them more anxious about practising the language inside the classroom. Their lack of experience with regard to real communication made them worry about their speech production, which, in turn, led to speaking difficulties and decreased self-esteem. Khan (2001) mentioned that one of the most important factors that stands as a language-learning barrier in English classes in the Saudi context is learners' anxiety towards the learning environment. However, with regard to English language competence, Saudi students face linguistic obstacles at the tertiary level of education. According to Khan, "since English is the medium of instruction, and the target learners' background seems to be quite humble, they are often scared of learning a subject of study in English in general and studying English in particular. Sometimes they strive to learning, but English appears as one of those barriers that they are even afraid to handle" (2011, p. 5). Moreover, one of the fundamental characteristics of effective language teaching at Tibah University has been found to be absent from the English classes. How can we expect learners with the major goal of passing the examination based on a certain curriculum to learn the language

(without having the choice of what to study)? In most studies, interactive motivation between the learner and the learning environment is found to produce the best learning outcome. The simplest and most obvious factor that attracts the individual to language learning is the involvement of students in a manner that engages their minds with the language, using creative resources in different contexts,(Littlewood,1992). This enables them to communicate using this language. Learners at the university level differ from students at the school level; the latter need to have their space for learning in order to produce a good learning outcome and better speaking proficiency. They need to determine with the teacher the value of the natural language class in which they work in. Littlewood pointed out that "making space for learners means that each individual learner should not feel threatened by forces outside his or her control (e.g. a negatively-disposed audience) and should not feel that his or her social identity is submerged anonymously within the class" (1992, p. 99).

Although some research provides clear evidence of the relationship between personal characteristics and feelings in language learning acquisition, the findings indicate that personal feelings, such as anxiety, are considered a major factor in the acquisition of conversational and oral communication skills (Lightbown & Spade, 1999). However, it is a fact that some Saudi learners' attitudes towards learning a second language, including their motivation and anxiety, play a crucial role that is linked to their success in interactive communication in the language class in general and in speaking skills in particular.

3.2.4 Student Reticence

Another crucial factor that affects Saudi students' English speaking proficiency in this case study is student reticence while in English classes. Based on the collection of data at Tibah University, which included an attendance for the English language classes, as well as at the interviews conducted, it was noted that students prefer to remain silent in English language classes. They appeared not to have the ability to interact via oral communication. This is called "student reticence", which refers to a student's unwillingness to communicate. According to Lee and Ng (2009) in their research about student reticence, the reason behind this problem is very complex. There are many factors related to student personality, and these are integrated with other areas, such as personal attitude, confidence, motivation and anxiety. These factors, which are

intertwined with each other, affect students' behaviour in class and, in turn, result in a lack of oral communication skills. Moreover, Williams and Burden (1997) stated that student behaviour in the second language classroom depends on a complex set of interacting factors, such as motivation, anxiety and personal attitude towards the language, which may lead to student reticence. Furthermore, Arnold (2001) linked oral production with different personal attitudes, such as anxiety and motivation. The situation that second language learners (especially at Tibah university language class) face when speaking is not easy. Students' lack of knowledge and confidence may lead to several difficulties, which might cause some students to prefer to remain silent and not interact effectively due to their lack of self-confidence. Such behaviours might be the major factors behind student reticence.

In addition, Gardner (2001) stated that the majority of students who are studying the English language feel very motivated and anxious at the beginning. He explained that when they come to class and the teacher involves them in speaking activities, they begin the production of speech. This is when they discover their speaking difficulties, and as a result, they may develop negative feelings towards the foreign language and may prefer to remain silent rather than participate in speaking activities, due to their lack of self-confidence. However, many studies have been conducted with the aim of understanding the relationship between student behaviour and the language learning process. According to Hedge (2000), most research in second language learning and oral communication ability essentially depends on students' personal characteristics. These are the factors affecting learning and learners' motivation, as well as their anxiety and self-confidence. Students who lack certain characteristics may face learning difficulties and suffer from decreased speech production. In order to help students improve their ability to speak in the classroom, teachers should be aware of both the teaching situation, such as why learners are learning the language, and be mindful of individuals who might be influenced by different factors, such as motivation, anxiety and willingness to speak. Due to the lack of knowledge of the administration and the English language course directors at Tibah University based on the data collected, it seems to be that more emphasise should be given to these factors and to be aware that continuing to use traditional teaching methods and certain textbooks that assess written forms while neglecting the value of oral communication and speaking skills inside the English language classroom which have been attended in Tibah university and led to

insufficient language learning in general, and speaking in particular. In addition, Norton (2001) suggested a variety of ways in which personal characteristics (such as anxiety and motivation) associated with oral skills can be treated in a language learning situation, and they identified how to create opportunities for the learner to practise the target language according to their needs.

Scrivener (1994), Thornbury (2005), Harmer (2007) and Arnold (2003) suggested different procedures and activities that might help students to be more motivated, less anxious and more positive towards learning, thereby possibly helping them overcome the aforementioned problems. The main point on which these authors all agree is that it is important to stimulate students' desire to speak the language and to involve them in as many activities as possible. Scrivener (1994) suggested that teachers should encourage students to engage in effective interaction and give them the choice to speak. Moreover, according to Dornyei and Schmidt (2001), students who are highly motivated welcome communicative classes and prefer those that balance the role of the teacher with learner-centeredness. Consequently, Scrivener (1994) suggested that teachers dedicate little time to individuals at the beginning of the speaking activity, then they can organise the activities in pairs, trios and small groups before involving the entire class, including the teacher, in the discussion. The less motivated students may see this as a beneficial opportunity to participate as they will be speaking mostly to everyone in the class, including the teacher. In addition, Arnold (2003) stated that the teacher may focus more on students' attitude rather than the techniques used in the speaking class, which may be of benefit for teachers from the Language Centre at Tibah University. Arnold maintains that "success (in language) depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom" (Arnold, 2003, p.5). In other words, the teacher should create a positive atmosphere for learners to encourage them to participate and to involve them in speaking activities that facilitate the development of their communication skills. Furthermore, I think students in language classes at Tibah University need to determine what might stimulate their desire to be engaged in oral communication and understand what may make them motivated. Also, it would be helpful if language teachers assess the strengths and the weaknesses of their students' language ability and build up their decision according to students' needs and involve the students' experience throughout communication using the English language. Though according to the university

educational system and with the curriculum they have already, and with the Ministry of Education plan, it seems to be difficult for both students and teachers to learn in a free environment, without the Ministry or the Administration of the Foundation year. Scrivener (1994) suggested that teachers try setting a particular topic related to the students' own problems rather than choosing a topic based on textbooks provided. This way, even the less talkative students may view it as an opportunity to discuss their own interests and feelings and be more encouraged to interact. Additionally, Lightbown and Spada (2001) and Dörnyei (2003) suggested different strategies for increasing motivation in the classroom. For example, the teacher can make the classroom a place where students like to be. Also, the content should be interesting for students and should be suitable for their age and relevant to their abilities. Additionally, the goals of the activities should be quite challenging in order to encourage the participation of the less motivated students. The teacher may use a variety of activities, tasks and materials, to increase students' attention and decrease the level of boredom. Furthermore, studies show that co-operative learning techniques can increase students' self-confidence and encourage the weaker and more anxious among them to interact effectively in regard to oral communication. Another effective speaking activity that provides everyone in the class the opportunity to participate, whether or not they feel motivated, is called "split information". According to Nation (1989) and Thornbury (2005) this is a kind of activity that deals with the information gap that result when students move around the class looking for certain points that other students have. This activity gives every student the opportunity to be involved in the class, and forces them to speak, even if they use short sentences, to achieve the outcomes of the task. Students have to communicate with each other in one way or another, rather than sitting as information receivers and play a passive role in the English language class. In regard to dealing with student reticence, Lee and Ng (2009) suggested that teachers use interaction strategies to deal with silent students; for example, the teacher may employ a controlled and interactional manner to ensure that students respond to the activity. The repetition of this kind of activity may encourage students to gradually make more of an effort to interact and to demonstrate their ability to communicate. Furthermore, the teacher may facilitate interaction with students, such as by personalising the speaking topic, giving students more time to speak and making some comments via the use of back channel behaviour.

Finally, as anxiety and students' reticence, within this context, is a complicated matter associated with different feelings towards learning a second language, Zhang (2001) suggested that teachers may encourage students to speak about their feelings and interests; this can be done in their free time or at the beginning of the class. In addition, Saudi students at Tibha University need to have time for private consultation with their teachers to determine if there are any problems related to language learning, class or school, and the four mentioned factors should be taken into consideration by the English language course director. As a result, students may have positive attitudes towards the second language and be more motivated to practise English and acquire the language both inside and outside of the classroom.

3.2.5 The Teacher's Role at Tibah University

The aforementioned factors are related to the quality of the language teaching environment at Tibah University. It is also important to mention another essential factor which has a crucial role on English language learning, which is the role of the teacher, specifically at Tibah University, which has already been highlighted at the beginning of this chapter. It has been found throughout this research, during the data collection and within the class observations, that teachers are not properly motivated to achieve the educational goals related to language teaching of English speaking skills. The teachers were mostly concerned about finishing as much as they could from the English textbooks (the official curriculum which is already supplied by the Ministry of Education), and the students who are attending English classes as part of the foundation year which they need to finish before moving to their desired majors. Most of the teachers at Tibah University are native English speakers of various nationalities who have diverse qualifications. Their language proficiency cannot be considered a factor that influences students' low standard of English language competence. In a similar case and based on his research on learning and social barriers towards learning English at King Abdul-Aziz University, Khan (2011) found that both students and teachers experience a lack of motivation towards Saudi academic institutions. This includes those teachers who are Saudis as well as those from other nationalities. In this context, Khan stated that "it has been found that neither teachers nor students are properly motivated towards educational goals". However, exceptional cases exist. Interestingly enough, the institutional administration tries to motivate both the teachers and the learners from time to time. The government also usually provides both materialistic and

non-materialistic incentives. The students also get stipend at tertiary level to create and retain motivation among them. The issue of dedication and commitment is not only related to the Saudi educational sector, it is a common problem that exists all over the world. A teacher without dedication and commitment is surely unprofessional. Also, most of the teachers in Saudi Arabia (local or international) have been found not well prepared while going for teaching as they have no lesson plans ready or even a scheme of work, though still not the case in every context. What seems to be an obstacle for teachers at Tibah University is that they have to restrictedly stick with the Ministry's lesson plans and textbooks, without having the chance to change the contents according to the students' need. In addition, some of them are not very experienced or well-equipped in dealing with situations arising in classroom settings which they have not come across (Khan, 2011). Students' performance in speaking and motivation towards learning are evidently linked to their teachers' attitudeTeacher motivation contributes to their desire to participate in the pedagogical processes within the learning environment. (Mohhamad & Thabet (2013). "Teachers have both intrinsic and extrinsic needs. A teacher who is intrinsically motivated may be observed to undertake a task for its own sake, for the satisfaction it provides or for the feeling of accomplishment and self-actualization. On the other hand, an extrinsically motivated teacher may perform the activity/duty in order to obtain some reward such as salary" (Ofoegbu, 2004. p.4). The case is that teachers have to follow the tasks which the Ministry provides and finish in the time the Ministry planned. This is a crucial factor since teacher motivation toward any language context either encourages students to learn or hinders their performance. "Educators are aware that reformers of education may establish new schools, effect changes in structure and curriculum, recommend and prescribe teaching methods and aids, at the end, the teacher will be solely responsible for applying them" (Ofoegbu, 2004: 1). In the meantime, students in the English language classes in the foundation year at Tibah University are not grouped according to their language proficiency; rather, they are sorted alphabetically according to their surnames. In fact, this point has been raised through the data collection and it seems that the University does not offer English language placement tests to sort out students according to their language ability. In fact, as a lack of English language laboratories and equipment at the University of Tibah, it would be difficult for the teachers to sort student levels manually or by hand correcting paper tests for all students due to the high number of students enrolled in each academic section, as the foundation year is compulsory for all students in their first year

regardless of their major. Accordingly, the administration followed the method of sorting the student alphabetically instead. This means that each class includes beginners, intermediates, upper intermediates and advanced students, all of whom are not only in the same class but also study the same book, which targets intermediate-level students. The teachers seemed to focus on the beginners and the intermediate-level students while neglecting those at the higher levels. The teachers also relied more on reading from the book than on involving students in discussions. Although the teachers' language was clear and direct, the students' levels were not accurately identified. The teacher used the "closed conception of teaching" model (Gibbs, 1992), where the teacher does all the work, makes all the decisions and selects certain activities and materials to be produced in the class. Although this atmosphere of learning such teaching strategies may be successful for beginner and intermediate learners, the closed methods of teaching are entirely ineffective for the remaining students who are at a higher level (Saljo, 1979). The role of the teacher is among numerous factors that affect students' learning achievement (Wichadee & Orawiwatnakul, 2012). Unfortunately, for some teachers at Tibah University, teaching is an occupation that needs to be carried out within a very limited context using certain textbooks, and it needs to be accomplished and assessed by the end of the year in keeping with the administration's standard of assessment, which is based on the Saudi educational system. In their study on the qualities of good English language teachers employed on the perceptions of Saudi college's students, Mohhamad & Thabet (2013) pointed out that teachers and lecturers at Saudi colleges and universities need to consider the characteristics of effective language teachers, such as their English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, as well as their organisation, communication and socio-affective skills. These characteristics are also mentioned by Wichadee and Orawiwatnakul (2012) who maintain that they encourage students to improve their performance in language class and their English language competence more generally. Nevertheless, teaching is arguably the noblest profession, and the teacher's role is crucial in the area of language teaching and learning performance. This role includes that the teacher is a motivator, planner, curriculum designer, assessor, and instructor and, above all, facilitator of language learning. However, the above mentioned aspects were found to be the most significant English language learning barriers, in particular speaking, encountered by Saudi students at Tibah University. As a result, the next section will be looking at teaching English as a foreign language at the University of Leeds (UK) in order to provide a theoretical and effective comparison

between two different language teaching contexts and to identify the relationship between the factors that affected the language learning outcome among Saudi students.

3.3 Teaching English as a Foreign Language in the United Kingdom

In order to provide a wider vision of teaching English as a foreign language within the aforementioned context (Tibah University), it is important to compare this with another language institution that plays a significant role in assisting learners to develop their English language proficiency and meta-linguistics knowledge in terms of speaking proficiency by providing high-quality instruction in the field of English teaching and learning. Teaching English is a complex process that begins with classroom techniques and strategies and ends with the way in which the institution is organised, which includes programmes, teachers' professional backgrounds and students' educational and social background and learning abilities.

The study will be focused on one of the most experienced English language academic institutions, "Leeds Language Centre" at Leeds University, which has an extensive experience in teaching English as a foreign language to international students for around a hundred years. It provides a variety of English language programmes that are tailored to learners' individual needs. As part of the data collection and English language classes which have been observed, University of Leeds Language Centre programmes are divided into three main categories. Programs for postgraduates study (taught and research degrees) which include: 1. "Academic English for Postgraduate Studies pre-sessional", where English language and study skills prepare students for postgraduate degrees in Engineering, Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences. 2. **"**Academic English for Business & Management pre-sessional", for teaching English language and study skills preparation for postgraduate degrees in Business, Management, Economics and related subjects. 3-."InterComm pre-sessional", aiming to teach English language and study skills preparation for postgraduate degrees in Communication Studies, Journalism, Politics, Development Studies, Translation and Interpreting. The second category of programmes prepares for "undergraduate studies" and includes "Academic English for Undergraduate Studies pre-sessional", where English language and study skills are taught to prepare students for undergraduate studies (including Study Abroad modules) and the International Foundation Year. And the third category is the "General English" program which aims to improve fluency in English and experience British life and culture, where students can use English for everyday communication and develop

their fluency in English and awareness of British life and culture. In addition, these programmes are taught by a highly experienced team of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) practitioners. The institution also provides students with excellent language learning facilities (Leeds Language Centre, 2011).

Additionally, and as a result of the recent Saudi Arabian educational development movement, The King Abdullah Foreign Scholarship programme has been established. This programme provides scholarship recipients with the means to attend the world's best universities to pursue studies that lead to the acquisition of different kinds of degrees and qualifications. Zayid (2012) stated that, "in 2005, the King Abdullah Scholarship program was inaugurated under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia". The programme focuses on "sending qualified and competent Saudis to study in the best universities in various countries throughout the world, promoting a high level of academic and professional standards through the scholarship program, exchanging scientific educational and cultural expertise with various countries in the world, building qualified and professional Saudi cadres in the work environment and finally, raising and developing the level of vocational professionalism of the Saudi cadres" (p.17). Consequently, according to the latest statistics, the current number of Saudi students attending foreign universities and English learning institutions is approximately 43,500 students all over the world. (Arab News, 2011). Moreover, more than 13,000 Saudi students were studying in the UK in 2013, and the number had increased to more than the double then when they were only 5,000 students in 2007 when the programme of the scholarships started (MOH, 2013). These academic disciplines and scholarships are selected according to the needs of the Saudi government ministries, including the Ministry of Higher Education, as well as national corporations and private sector organisations. The primary aim of these scholarships is to fulfil the requirements of the Saudi work markets across the Kingdom in all regions, universities and industrial cities. The programme enables qualified Saudi young students aged between 18 and 25 to study in Europe (the United Kingdom and Ireland are the most favoured options on the list of European countries), the United States and Canada. Upon the students return to the Saudi Kingdom, they can play an active role in the development of the government and the private sector. Additionally, the mission of the scholarship is to prepare and qualify Saudi students in a variety of human science and resource fields. Among the knowledge that is acquired, the scholarship students learn different foreign languages and aspects of the culture, such as

manners, which make them better able to compete in the labour market at the international level. More specifically, this knowledge makes them more competitive in different areas of scientific research and enables them to potentially become highly qualified individuals employed by Saudi universities, the government or the private sector. According to the Ministry of Higher Education, the goals of the King Abdullah Foreign Scholarship programme are the following;

- "To sponsor qualified Saudis to enable them to study at the best universities around the world

- To work to bring about a high level of academic and professional standards through the foreign scholarship programme

- To exchange scientific, educational and cultural experiences with countries worldwide

- To ensure the existence of qualified and professional Saudi staff in the work environment, such as Saudi universities and language academies.

- To raise and develop the level of professionalism among Saudis" (Ministry of Higher Education, 2013, p. 2).

Due to the expansion of the government educational scholarship movement in Saudi Arabia, the advent of the information technology age and the unprecedented effects of globalisation and the global market, most Saudi students now prefer to study English abroad before they enrol on their foundation year at Saudi universities. According to Bersamina (2009) the Kingdom has adopted two methods of improving the quality of its workforce for English language proficiency. The first method is to improve its academic system by integrating English into the school curriculum, and the second is to send thousands of scholars abroad to pursue their studies before returning to their homeland. Although the universities in Saudi Arabia are providing students with a full year of the Academic English Language course during their foundation year, both the government and the students favour studying English abroad, believing that the quality of teaching is better overseas. In light of the aforementioned factors, to help achieve the ministry's goals and provide Saudi practitioners at universities and academic institutions that teach English as a second language in Saudi Arabia, an effective and critical examination of English teaching standards at one of the most well-known foreign universities in the UK, "Leeds Language Centre", will be undertaken as the case study for this research. Various dimensions of language learning and teaching, such as the programme, the

learning environment, and teachers' qualifications and learners' needs, will be discussed.

3.3.1 The Programme and Curriculum in the United Kingdom (Leeds University)

The University of Leeds Language Centre provides a variety of programmes that are tailored to students' individual needs. They are able to take a "General English Language" course, which provides them with fundamental knowledge of English and raises their awareness of British life and culture. Alternatively, they may choose from among a number of the "Academic English Language" courses, which are specifically designed to help students undertaking academic studies at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level. As a component of the current research and based on the class observations, the Academic English Language programme will be reviewed in order to provide sufficiently detailed background information for this case study which concerns Saudi students who study in the UK.

The Leeds Language Centre offers the aforementioned academic courses to international students from all over the world. These students come from a number of different universities, including those in the Arab countries and the Middle East. The majority of the Arab students are from Saudi Arabia (Leeds, 2011). In the meantime, the number of Saudi students who are involved in one of the courses each year in the language centre were between 50 and 70 students in different courses and levels (LLC, 2013). These are seeking to develop not only their academic study skills but also their English language knowledge because the ability to communicate in English increases their opportunities to study abroad or continue their studies at a UK university. Moreover, international students from overseas who are planning to take undergraduate modules that are taught completely in English can enrol in the "General English language" course and acquire fundamental knowledge of the English language. This knowledge will be beneficial to them as it will facilitate their entry to a UK university or enable them to return to their countries and enrol in the international foundation year programme. The participants in this programme study the English language to meet the entry requirements of the professional field they intend to join after completing the academic course. The Academic English Language course offered by the Leeds Language Centre is focused on a topic programme that is related to different issues rather than one textbook to be studied throughout the year. The topics are chosen by the

course director and the teacher at the institution in order to ensure that the selected options are those which are most well suited to the students' needs. All of the components of English language skills (writing, reading, listening and speaking) are closely linked and equally emphasised. Throughout the duration of the course, the speaking skills focus on different topics of common interest or certain subject areas. They are chosen according to the fields of study that the majority of the students will pursue after the completion of the academic course. Additionally, the teaching materials that are used to fulfil the objectives of the course are prepared in-house and are designed to meet the needs of students who intend to pursue their undergraduate studies at the University of Leeds or other institutions (Leeds Language Centre, 2011). Moreover, the quality of teaching at the Leeds Language Centre is impressive compared with the foundation-year language centre offered at Tibah University. All students enrolled in the Leeds course are allocated a personal tutor who provides individual support throughout the learning process and who helps them overcome the obstacles they encounter during their studies, which is an important suggestion for Tibah University in the hope they consider applying it to Saudi students in order to meet their needs.

The English language teaching programmes that are run in the UK and, more specifically, at the Leeds Language Centre depend on the teaching methods that are based on the "resource of learning" (Burns, 1998) rather than focusing on textbooks. The use of different materials that are selected according to students' needs and the act of adapting teaching methods to certain contexts as opposed to generalising the teaching context have proved to be the most effective methods of language teaching in general, and speaking, in particular. According to Burns, a discussion should be undertaken both inside and outside of the classroom setting to effectively address issues related to all sorts of language teaching materials. The main changes within the classroom context should be made to the products that are used, such as film strips, booklets, posters, and compact discs, to meet students' varied learning abilities and stimulate their interest in learning. It is also easier for both teachers and students to adapt to different learning materials than it is to change the entire curriculum to meet learning objectives. Learning a foreign language is a difficult process, and students' learning abilities and needs are integrated with different factors related to learning inside and outside of the classroom setting. However, Burns (1998) argued that changes in how learning takes place are inevitable. This also stands for changes in the curriculum and in the teaching materials, which should be equally emphasised for both the students and the teachers. These

changes shape students and teachers' behaviour towards learning, enabling them to achieve the best language-learning outcome. Consequently, teachers' and students' behaviour towards English language teaching and learning in the language centre will also be discussed due to the dramatic differences that are noticed when compared with the Tibah University context.

3.3.2 Student's Motivation towards English Language Learning

As previously noted and according to the observed classes, Leeds Language Centre aims to teach English to international students, the majority of whom are Arab and, more specifically, Saudi students who represent more than 60% among other international students (LLC, 2013). The focus of this research will be to determine the extent to which Saudi students are motivated to learn the English language and the culture of a native English environment. To undertake an in-depth examination of the attitude of Saudi students towards learning English speaking in a foreign environment, Gardner's social-psychological theory, which examines the effect of motivation on language learning, will be briefly mentioned. Gardner and Lambert (1972) stated that, "success in mastering a foreign language does not only depend on intellectual capacity and language aptitude but also on the learner's perceptions of the other ethno linguistic group" (p.27). This theory would have a tremendous impact on advancing the understanding of the English language learning process of highly motivated students in a native environment. According to Gardner (1988), the motivation of the second language learner is a combination of two important elements. The first is the desire to learn the language, and the second is the attitude towards learning, which is referred to as "motivational intensity". The components of desire and attitude can be used as a key concept in defining motivation. Additionally, Gardner incorporated another important component into his theory. This is the concept of interactive motivation. According to Gardner and Lambert (1959, as cited in Al Zayid, 2012) in their study of the role of motivation in Saudi students' second language acquisition, they describe interactive motivation as a positive disposition that learners have towards the second language group; they have a desire to interact with and even become similar to the members of the second language community. Additionally, according to Gardner (2001) the concept of interactive motivation has two implications. "The first one is the second language acquisition, which refers to the development of near-native language skills and this requires effort, time, as well as persistence. The second implication of this concept, is

that reaching a high standard of linguistic development requires integration into the second language community" (Al Zayid, 2012, p. 28). Nevertheless, the importance of learner motivation when they are in a native environment has an immense impact on the acquisition of the second language. Researchers have explained the role of motivation towards second language learning as follows: "Research shows that motivation directly influences how often students use second language learning strategies, how much students interact with native speakers, how much input they receive in the language being learned (the target language), how well they do on curriculum-related achievement tests, how high their general proficiency level becomes, and how long they preserve and maintain second language skills after language study is over" (Oxford and Shearin, 1994, p. 12). However, motivation towards second language learning is a complex process that is a combination of internal factors related to the learners themselves, such as attitude, anxiety and interest in the course and other external factors, such as the environment, teacher and interest in the classroom.

In explaining how learner motivation works, Williams and Burden (1997) elaborate various stages of the learning process. The first stage is the learner's reasons for pursuing language learning, which could be related to the desire to learn the language or to external factors such as school environment. The second stage entails the factors that motivate the learner to decide to execute a given task, as many individuals have to have a particular motivation for engaging in any task given and to work out their reason for engaging in a particular classroom activity. Third, learners need to sustain the effort needed to complete a given language task. This effort is often influenced by cultural (native or non-native) and social surroundings and how these variables affect the achievement of the learning goal. The reason for mentioning these factors in this context is that Saudi students' enrolment in the King Abdullah Foreign Scholarship programme and their decision to study at overseas learning institutions, such as the Leeds Language Centre, demonstrate that their motivation to learn is extremely high and that their level of speaking proficiency is higher than that achieved in Saudi Arabia, despite the fact that they are able to enrol in one of the intensive academic English courses run by Saudi universities and language academies located in Saudi Arabia. In fact, a number of studies have been conducted by Saudi researchers to examine the influence of studying English abroad on learners' language proficiency. Al Shammari (2007) studied English as a foreign language and learners' attitudes towards language learning and found that

Saudi students are more highly motivated when they are in direct contact with foreign environments or use the computer laboratory than when they are in an English language class at a Saudi learning institution. Moreover, Alotaibi (2004, cited in Alzyid, 2012) conducted a quantitative study to identify language-learning strategies used by Saudi students at the English Language Centre of the Institute of Public Administration in Riyadh. The study also examined language learning strategies relationship to other variables, such as language proficiency level, gender and motivation, and it was found that students show less desire to learn English in Saudi classes taught by Saudi teachers. Alrabai (2010) and Alhuqbani (2009) also found that Saudi students are highly motivated to learn English when they are in contact with non-Saudi teachers or when they are in non-Saudi classes and environments. Finally, Al Zayid (2012) found that students are highly motivated to learn English in intensive English language courses that take place in a native environment based on one of the USA's universities. Also, the outcome of learning English is comparatively successful according to the scores they receive in the final and midterm exams that test their level of language proficiency. However, based on the data collected as a part of my research, the number of students attending the Leeds Language Centre and the direct contact that takes place between me and both students and teacher, Saudi students' performance and speaking proficiency in the language centre classes improved significantly. Their desire to learn the language and their commitment to attending classes is extremely high compared with students' motivation and attitudes towards the language classes run by Tibah University.

3.3.3 The Teacher's Role in Leeds language Centre

As previously indicated, the primary reason for undertaking a comparative critical review of the two institutions is to provide the language centre at Tibah University with a more in-depth knowledge of the most effective methods and strategies of language teaching with a view to developing the standard of language learning and teaching in Saudi Arabia. This will also help students in Saudi Arabia to gain the highest possible level of language competence as they master the four language skills. One significant factor that has a tremendous impact on student performance is the role of the language teacher. The teachers at the Leeds Language Centre are all native English speakers who are highly qualified and experienced in the teaching of English for Academic Purposes. They are also accredited and assessed by the British Council. English teachers play a critical role in the language learning experience because they can either facilitate

learning by offering assistance and encouragement, or they can hinder and demotivate students during the language learning process. It is commonly known that teachers play a crucial role in any educational language context. It is important to mention, in order to provide an accurate comparison between the two teaching contexts, that most of the teachers, whether Saudis, foreigners or native or non-native speakers of English, who are employed by universities in Saudi Arabia have been carefully selected and are supervised by the Ministry of Higher Education. These teachers are selected based on certain standards; for example, they must be holders of an English language certificate whether from a Saudi college or university or from a college or university abroad. There is no emphasis on providing these teachers with training in the form of English language courses, nor is there emphasis on assessment by supervisors from the Ministry of Education. The sole concern is to ensure that they possess an English language qualification that allows them to be English teachers in Saudi Arabia.

Nevertheless, one of the most important factors that were observed throughout the data collection process in the classes attended is that students at Leeds Language Centre are highly motivated to study English language and to be involved in the language class. This is the result of two important elements the teacher's high level of academic preparation and the teaching methodology used in the language class. Specifically, the teacher's level of academic preparation is regularly assessed by his or her supervisor as well as by the director of the language centre. Moreover, the training that the teachers received from the educational institution from which they graduated also has a significant influence. Teachers at the Leeds Language Centre focus more on the use of communicative language skills compared with the grammar translation method, which teachers at Tibah University follow. At Leeds Language Centre, there are language development classes that focus on grammar, social expressions, and pronunciation and vocabulary expansion.

Moreover, the teachers concentrate extensively on the development of students' speaking skills to ensure that they gain the confidence and fluency necessary to communicate using the target language in a variety of both academic and social situations. There is also a separate Communication Skills Development course in which focus is placed on improving speaking skills based on topics that differ each week which is contrary to how Saudis in Tibah University learn English where students seem to miss this opportunity to practice speaking. Additionally, rather than focusing on a set

curriculum plan, there are various lessons that introduce the vocabulary and language required to help students communicate confidently and fluently in English when discussing the topic in question and when faced with situations related to it, and most importantly, according to the students' language needs. (Leeds Language Centre, 2011).

Contrastingly, English language teachers at Saudi universities and colleges speak with a heavy Arabic accent. Moreover, they use the Arabic language during English classes, which results in less interest being shown towards English. The students are less likely to participate in class and to use English, as they are able to rely on Arabic to express themselves whether addressing their colleagues or teacher. Additionally, the methodology used by the English teachers at Saudi universities is heavily reliant on the grammar translation approach, which focuses on literal translation between the Arabic and English grammatical forms. According to Page (2012), the use of the grammar translation method helps English as foreign language (EFL) learners to translate even the most difficult texts from their native language into English. Learners need basic knowledge of the English language in order to familiarise themselves with the text provided. However, direct translation is believed to be an inefficient method of becoming fluent in any language (Richards and Rodgers, 2002). For example, translating a sentence word by word from Arabic to English might not convey the intended meaning. This method also involves less emphasis on other communicative skills, such as listening and speaking. Students who use this method are often unable to hold even the most basic conversation in English because their teacher uses their native language and translates into it from the target language. This causes the student to lose interest in learning the target language. According to Brigham Young University's in *A Methodical History of Language Learning*, "the grammar translation method does virtually nothing to enhance a student's communicative ability in the language". This source also states that the reason the method remains popular is that it "requires few specialized skills on the part of teachers". Finally, Page explains, "While some lessons and target vocabulary might be best taught through this method, overall it plays only a small role in learning English as a whole language" (2012, p. 3). Even at the university level, the grammar translation method is still widely used in Saudi Arabia. Students who are taught using this method are unlikely to take an active role in the classroom as they are always overcorrected by teachers and adhere strictly to the textbooks. It is believed that the use of this methodology by teachers results in a significant loss for students in

terms of the acquisition of the second language, especially speaking skills. This situation is analysed by many theorists, such as Rippa (1971), Richards and Rodgers (2002), Abdullah (2013), and Al-Hazmi (2003). However, according to the learning principles of the aspect of teacher education by Bax (1997), learning is more effective when students are involved with their teacher, are in a relaxed atmosphere that is conducive to learning, and their experience is respected. This leads us to the examination of the negative and positive influences of teaching methodology and the role of the teacher, both of which are crucial factors affecting students' attitudes towards learning a second language. There is a noticeable failure in the learning environment, the teacher quality and the methodology used in Saudi Arabia. Al Ziyed summarised this as follows: "When those who were previously products of this type of learning environment become teachers, history repeats itself in the English language classroom and the end result is lack of success in English language learning" (2012, p. 74).

It is worth mentioning that anxiety and reticence were not a common denominator of Saudi students at Leeds University Language Centre. Consequently, it will not be discussed, as they showed no sign of it. Students were very motivated and enthusiastic to study in the UK, and often obtained scholarships as an incentive to study, which explains their presence in their course and motivation. Interestingly, both groups of students who are the subjects of this research, while still considering the role of the teacher's influence on the teaching process, should recognise that the quality of the English language programme and environment in Saudi Arabia are the key to successful second language acquisition when compared to the quality of these factors in other learning environments, such as the one examined in this case study, which is represented by the "Leeds Language Centre" and should be taken into consideration to improve Saudi students' speaking proficiency. Emphasis should be placed on students' motivation to learn English in Saudi Arabia. Students' positive attitudes towards the educational status of English in foreign language institutions could be used to inform practitioners at the Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia and be the basis upon which they revise the current policy of English language teaching by incorporating certain aspects of the English-oriented system. It is clear from my research and participation in English classes at Tibah University that the educational system in Saudi Arabia for teaching second languages could be reformed. The two most important skills for life are speaking and listening, but apart from one textbook in circulation for only two years

between 2010 and 2012, the Ministry of Education has not produced a course for students that stress the importance of verbal communication. Instead, course books focus on reading and writing, thus causing a myriad of problems, most notably anxiety and reticence when called to practise speaking, which lead to insufficient speaking ability.

Furthermore, student motivation has been compromised by the Ministry of Educations' rigid English curriculum: for their foundation year at university, students must spend many hours in a classroom each day, with the same teacher, trying to get through the strict textbook. Neither teachers nor students are allowed to deviate from the course, causing both a huge loss in motivation. Teachers cannot use their own initiative or introduce topics that might be more relevant to their students' personal lives, and learning English becomes a race to get the textbook finished in time for exams at the end of the year. Speaking is not prioritised at all, in fact, the exams only come in written form, and students are not encouraged to talk to each other in English inside or outside the classroom. The Ministry of Education and the Higher Administration of Tibah University, as well as academic instructors and language teachers throughout Saudi Arabia should be aware of these crucial problems and learning barriers in English teaching, and a process of language learning should be developed that will create opportunities to improve students' communicative abilities, and at the same time allow teachers to provide their own input into their students' learning programmes. In order to show the value and the impact of these learning environmental factors on speaking proficiency, and as one of the crucial objective of this research which aims to test Saudi learners' speaking proficiency, grammatical errors, which are considered to be a strong language feature and a noteworthy sign of measuring speaking accuracy, will be analysed and examined in more detail in the following chapter, among two groups of Saudi students who study in those two different learning environments.

Chapter Four

Data Description

4.1 Overview

In the field of language learning and teaching, the analysis of errors in second language acquisition has become more wide spread in recent years. This is especially the case in regard to students who are in the early stages of learning a second language. The analysis of the errors made by second language learners while they communicate in the target language has received tremendous attention and consideration by researchers, linguists and EFL teachers throughout the world. In fact, in the field of second language acquisition, learners' errors and the source of these errors have, for a long time, been considered controversial.

Speaking is a complex process even when one is doing so in one's first language. Naturally, it becomes even more complicated when speaking in a second language. Researchers have sought to identify the most common errors made by second or foreign language learners in their writing or speaking. Moreover, speaking and writing are considered to be productive skills, where learners use their knowledge of the second language –English in the case of this study– to communicate. Error Analysis provides an in-depth understanding of language learning and enables understanding the source behind these errors in the process of second language learning. This helps researchers and teachers to identify and understand the barriers that students encounter in their efforts to learn the target language. Additionally, it aids with the adoption of appropriate teaching strategies and methods to help raise students' awareness of learning a foreign language, including how to do so more effectively.

For researchers and learners, the investigation of errors, whether they are semantic, syntactic or phonological, and especially the source of these errors, is important and has a significant impact on understanding the level of the language learner. It also helps to determine the sufficiency and appropriateness of the level of second language learners, which is indicated by the proficiency of language use in communication. Language proficiency and especially accuracy in speaking can stand as an obstacle in communicating using the target language. In addition, the meaning of words and the

correct use of sentence structures in the second language can be altered because of the incorrect use of tenses and verb forms. This incorrect use can be a result of various factors, which may include the interference of the first language. Such interference occurs because of the differences between the systems of the mother tongue and the target language.

Second language acquisition has become very important. Learning a second language provides individuals with the ability to communicate more effectively with people from other societies and cultures. As a result, according to Ellis (1997), recent research gives significant attention to the systematic study of how people can acquire a second language and how the language itself can be learnt. Moreover, second language acquisition involves personal characteristics and environmental factors, both of which influence the learning process. These can be counted as the main sources of error production. The evidence presented in the first section provided linguists, practitioners and researchers with the opportunity to learn more about how errors are produced and to discuss why learners make errors, what linguists and researchers can do to help learners produce fewer errors by determining the sources of these errors and, finally, studying whether it is possible for learners to improve their own language proficiency through the self-correction of the errors made while they speak. Such discussions help to draw attention to the areas that require further development. The present study will examine how errors are acquired, which will be advantageous for both learners and practitioners in the field of second language acquisition since it will give a clear indication of the major sources of errors produced by Saudi students. The different sources of errors can be classified according to their importance and consistency, which may aid in the further development of English language learning and teaching. I am particularly concerned and interested in finding out more about Saudis' most common grammatical errors and about the source and classification of these. This will help explain the extent to which the language transfer theory is accepted in the field of second language acquisition and the extent to which the first language (Arabic) interferes with the acquisition of the second language (English).

In this chapter, I will investigate and analyse the most common grammatical speaking errors of Saudi learners in both Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. This will enhance an understanding of learners' second language errors and the source of these. The purpose of the analysis is to find out more about the most common speech errors that Saudi students commit during the second language learning process and to provide

further knowledge regarding the source of these errors. In addition, my aim is to discover the role played by the surrounding environment, i.e.: being in a native English-speaking environment (the UK) or a non-native English-speaking environment (Saudi Arabia), in regard to all the differences discussed previously among them, in order to find out about the influence of exposing students to a sufficient educational input, such as a classroom environment. In addition, I aim to ascertain the influence of the first language on second language acquisition in order to improve our understanding of the speech accuracy of students in a native, versus a non-native, environment and the effects of exposing students to natural second language resources, such as a native community. There is a correlation between Saudi students' environment during speech production and the errors that naturally result from their speech, where we can identify and force the areas of the most common grammatical errors during the learning process. Oral interviews were employed for the collection of data from the students in Saudi Arabia and the UK.

4.2 Research Method

Having explored the various different methods of data collection during my study, I determined that interviews are one of the most common method used extensively for data collection across most fields of educational research. Recently, there is a considerable growth in using interviews as an effective tool for data collection in most educational disciplines and social sciences. Cohen & Manion have grouped interviews into four kinds which include: "the structured interview, the unstructured interview, the non-directive interview, and the focused interview" (1994, p.273). Moreover, unstructured interviews, also known as in-depth interviews, are defined according to Berry as "a type of interview which researchers use to elicit information in order to achieve a holistic understanding of the interviewee's point of view or situation; it can also be used to explore interesting areas for further investigation" (1999.p.2). This type of interviews, which are considered being "qualitative in nature", usually involves asking questions according to a specific context in order to obtain data deemed useful by the researcher. In addition, there are various methods of data collection in qualitative research, including observation, textual or visual analysis (e.g. of books or videos) and interviews (individual or group) (Silverman, 2006). However, the most common method, particularly in the field of error analysis research, is interviews (Johnson, 2009). The qualitative interview has a growing presence in the field of applied

linguistics. This growth has been especially evident in qualitative studies, where interviews are included that aim to investigate participants' identities, experiences, beliefs and orientations (Mann, 2010, p.4). In addition, the interview is embedded in contemporary culture; in fact, it has been said that we live in "an interview society" (Atkinson and Silverman, 1997). Accordingly, my reason for choosing this method is that it enables me to focus on the analysis of the interviews, which will be transcribed. It effectively illustrates both the number and kinds of errors being committed by the students. Moreover, it enables analysis of the voice of interviewees, the repetition of their words and the production of their sentences, which can be managed in a way that illustrates the extent to which the learners have acquired language proficiency. According to Mann (2011), transcripts are quite valuable as appendices or as a supplementary online resource as they help to locate required data. There is no methodological commentary on what semi-structured means in relation to interview protocols. As my aim was to listen to the participants' speech, I followed this method, which is the selection of interviews, as the major instrument for my research. According to May (1991), there are three different kinds of research interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Structured interviews are essentially verbally administered questionnaires. They are based on a list of prepared questions, which the interviewer asks, with little or no variation in the follow-up questions seeking further elaboration and clarification. As a result, the administration of structured interviews is relatively quick and easy and may be suitable for some particular questions when clarification is not required or if there are likely to be literacy or numeracy problems related to the respondents. However, structured interviews are likely to have specific answers and to elicit limited participant responses. It is for this reason that I preferred not to use this kind of interview; the aim of the interview is to listen to the students' speech and encourage them to speak as much as possible. Contrastingly, semi-structured interviews consist of several major questions that help to define the areas to be explored, in this case the grammatical errors committed while students speak, and to allow both the interviewer and interviewees to expand on their ideas in order to provide greater detail and further explanation. For example, open-ended questions (e.g.: 'Why did you choose England for your studies?', 'How did you get your scholarship?' and 'What things are you particularly interested in?) were asked in order to turn the interviews into a kind of conversation between the students and me. I also asked some of the students various follow-up questions in order to expand their answers and to encourage them to talk

more since some of them were extremely shy. As a result of their reticence, I had to ask more follow-up type questions to keep the conversation going. The aim was to hear them speak rather than getting the correct answers to my questions. Robson (1993) states that interviews as a speech genre should contain an introduction, at the beginning of the interview; a warm-up stage; the main body of the interview, which contains the primary content; the cool-off stage, which is a sign to end the interview; and finally, a concluding statement. For the most part, the interviews I conducted adhered to these stages.

I began the interview by giving the students a general idea of its purpose. The interview itself was divided into three sections, the first of which was an informal interview during which the students told me about themselves. In the second part, I asked them to retell a story or describe a television programme they liked or watched. In the third section, we discussed a current issue they had heard or read about recently. To bring the conversation to a close, the interviews were summed up in two or three sentences, which included, for example, thanking students for their cooperation and for taking part in the study.

This type of semi-structured interview provides participants with some guidance on what to talk about, which many interviewers find helpful. The flexibility of this approach, particularly in comparison to structured interviews, gives the students the opportunity to request additional information. It also gives the interviewer the chance to discern the areas that are of the utmost concern so that focus can be placed on these. Encouraging the interviewees to retell a story or a film will enable a broader view of the use of reported speech, which is a difficult aspect of English grammar. According to Woods (2011) the key feature of the semi-structured interview is in the partial pre-planning of the questions, which is illustrated in the interviews I conducted. Semi-structured interviews still allow for replication of interviews with others. Although it is less controlled, it nonetheless provides an opportunity for the interviewees to speak freely. In addition, it can be conducted using various methods, including face to face, which is the format that has been used in the collection of this research data, or via telephone and videophone. The face-to-face interview is still the most accurate in the field of social science data collection, since the interviewer can read the interviewees' body language and facial expressions; and it provides both the interviewer and the interviewee with real time responses according to the situation. Moreover, when

interviews are chosen as the method of data collection, it is beneficial because of the positive and the effective influence of qualitative research, which entails researching linguistics theory or thematic analysis, which make the most of the advantages of the semi-structured type of interview. Woods also explained that the primary advantage of in-depth interviews, including semi-structured interviews, is that they provide substantially more detailed information, which was the case in this research. The aim was to identify the most common grammatical errors, and this data collection method was more effective than others, including surveys. Students might correct themselves when they have written an error, and they may even be able to check their responses and correct them before submitting them; this would, therefore, result in less accurate study findings. Interviews also provide more opportunities to ask spontaneous questions, including about topics that are sensitive for participants and about which they may have difficulty expressing themselves, especially in a second language. My role as the interviewer was to listen to their speech and to note when errors were committed. When it came to the errors I found interesting, and which I had not previously come across, I was able to request further clarification, to listen more in depth and to determine the consistency of the errors. Another advantage of the chosen method was that the students were unaware of their errors because they were speaking English spontaneously and had less control in terms of language use. For example, the students were switching between tenses, which enriched the findings of the research data. Moreover, with regard to interviews as an effective data collection tool, it must be underscored that "the Standardisation of at least some of the questions increases data reliability and make Replication possible, it also provides the ability to ask and to provide a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect information, as some people may feel more comfortable having a conversation with interviewer as opposed to filling out a survey" (Woods, 2011, p. 6).

4.3 Description of the Data

To find a strong basis or language study and to undertake a more in-depth analysis of the language in use, it is the job of the linguist to have a satisfactory attitude towards the use of the second language. Samhoury (1965) explained the descriptive analysis of the study of English linguistics as follows: "As a matter of personal choice the linguist may choose to go beyond the normal intra-lingual comparison of descriptive linguistics to

concern himself with the interlingual comparisons of what has come to be known as descriptive contrastive linguistics" (p.5).

The analysis in this study is based on spoken English. A total of 30 Saudi Arabian students were interviewed, all of whom were at an intermediate level of English. Of these, 15 were students studying English at Tibah University in Saudi Arabia. All the students were females between the ages of 18 and 22. This was in keeping with Tibah University's rule and was due to a cultural issue, which implied interviewing females only, as interviewing males is not allowed in the university campus. Also, students' level of English was based on their teachers' recommendation of levels, since Tibah University does not set placement tests as previously mentioned in chapter three, and students are sorted based on the alphabetical orders of names in the English classes. Accordingly, students who showed an advanced level of English during the interviews were excluded from the data. Additionally, study data was not collected from male students since entering a male university campus is prohibited by law. The other 15 Saudi Arabian students were interviewed at Leeds University. They were a mixture of male and female students enrolled at the Leeds Language Centre, and they all had similar educational backgrounds and all of them were at an intermediate level. Both the students in Saudi Arabia and those in the UK were enrolled in English Language for Academic Purposes courses to prepare them to continue their studies on their foundation (preparation) year, which is the formal name used in Saudi Arabia when all subjects are taught in English. The data analysis was based on almost eight hours of recorded data of students speaking English. The interview was divided into three main sections. The first section entailed an introduction, during which the students were asked to speak about themselves, mentioning issues such as their hobbies, interests and their opinions about studying the English language. The second section was more controlled by the interviewer and entailed follow-up questions geared towards encouraging the students to talk about their studies, the cultural differences between Saudi Arabia and the UK, the system of teaching English and the number of hours of taught English. The aim was for them to speak as much as possible without stopping between sentences. This was done to gather data with a view to identify the grammatical errors they made while speaking. The third section entailed talking about a movie or a book they found interesting. They were asked to describe this in more detail. Retelling the movie or book or turning it into a spoken narrative forced the students to use more complex grammar, such as reported speech and different forms of the past tense. When

students stopped and seemed to be struggling to choose the correct word, I asked further questions to encourage them to speak. Sometimes, I simply asked them to say it in Arabic if they were unable to find the correct English word. I did this with the aim of supporting them and to ensure that they were not influenced by a negative atmosphere resulting from a formal question or tone while the interview was being conducted. Giving the students the impression that their speech is fluent will encourage them to speak more rather than struggling to use English and having negative feelings towards the language as a result. The aim of the interview was to listen to their speech and not to correct them or give feedback on it. However, it is worth mentioning that some students asked for feedback on their level of English and their strengths and weaknesses in this regard. This indicated that some students are highly motivated to speak the language and merely need opportunities to practise it as much as they can.

The eight hours of recorded interviews were more like a conversation between the students and me than a type of formal interview, as the semi- structure approach was adopted and questions were asked based on students` initial answers. The transcript of interviews will be included in the appendix at the end of the thesis. More than 4,500 spoken grammatical errors among the selected students were identified, analysed and classified. Errors which were repeated and committed more than 10 times, among both groups were classified as frequent types of grammatical errors, while others which were committed less than five times were excluded from the data, as they are not significant enough to be counted as the most common deviants among Saudi students in the two groups. In addition, grammatical mistakes that reflect a transfer of Arabic features, or resulted from its influence, were classified according to their consistency and then calculating the average number of errors that was committed by each group. The errors were classified according to the grammatical features transferred and by the most common errors committed among both groups. There were some unique errors that were due to other factors rather than the transfer of Arabic features. These errors will be pointed out later in this chapter. As its title indicates, only grammatical speaking errors will be the focus of this study. Syntactical transfer errors will consequently be discussed in depth. However, there will be no attempt made to compare or analyse the semantic features (lexical or idiomatic), use of vocabulary or phonological features, although these are important aspects of speaking, especially with regard to pronunciation. The analysis would, however, be more complete if both lexical and phonological features

were covered. This is based on the fact that the act of speaking English involves more than merely focusing on grammatical errors. The aforementioned three features represent the foundation of how the English language is acquired; therefore, analysing them would enable a more in-depth understanding and comparison of the two language systems (Arabic and English).

In the process of analysing and classifying grammatical errors which were spontaneously produced by Saudi learners, nine major categories were chosen to represent the specific, important errors commonly made by Saudi learners; the classification of these errors was, initially, based on the comparison between the grammatical structures of the two languages. Certain errors were found in both groups, and some of these errors were assumed to be the result of language transfer and the transference of some Arabic elements to the English language. In addition, some reflect the conflict between the two systems, as students often transfer and overgeneralise the rules of the two languages. Thus, an in-depth analysis of these errors is provided, which is to say, a relationship among the errors spoken by students will be examined in order to provide an area of comparison of the error sources. This will include, for instance, the linguistic differences between Arabic and English, the unconscious development of student errors and the positive and negative interferences, as the role of the second language will be reasonably discussed.

Similar analytical statements have been made within each group participating in this study and for each category of the errors. In relation to each of these errors, sources of second language errors are used to justify the classification, according to the errors. It is reasonable to focus on the use of language according to the system order of English and to make comparisons between the structures of both Arabic and English. For example, the use of prepositions will be compared according to the consistency and number of preposition misused in each group as well as how each use relates to the use of the corresponding preposition in Arabic. Comparing each category will lead to a better understanding of how errors are made. Samhoury justifies the classification of errors by explaining that "because the comparability of such categories in the two languages is only partial, a generalised cross-identification of an item or class of items leads to mistakes of the type we are concerned with" (1965, p. 10).

In order to classify errors, a contrastive feature of each inconsistency between Arabic and English will be identified. A major aim of this analysis is to determine the extent that Arabic as a first language has influenced the speech of Saudi learners. It is also worth saying that these classifications have been established according to their majority and consistency among each group. For students in Saudi Arabia and Saudis in the UK, there are simple, useful categories that have been labelled to be analysed in this chapter; however, the data in this research is still rich with other classifications and different kinds of errors. As well, unique errors may lead to the discovery of other, different errors with different sources. As the structure of the grammatical system of each language is vast, not every language structure will be covered.

However, before mentioning the resulting classifications of errors, it is worth mentioning the famous classification of errors in the field of language study. Richards (1971), in his study involving learners from different language backgrounds, demonstrated different types of errors relating to the production and distribution of verb groups, prepositions, articles and the use of questions. Based on this, he distinguished three sources of errors (as cited in Heydari & Bagheri, 2012, p. 6).

1. Interference errors, resulting from the use of elements from one language while speaking or writing another;

2. Intralingual errors, reflecting general characteristics of learning rules, such as faulty generalisation, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply;

3. Developmental errors, occurring when learners attempt to build up hypotheses about the target language based on limited experience.

Moreover, with improvements in the error analysis of adult learners of a second language, another important classification of errors has been added to the field of language study and error analysis. The classifications aid in understanding the sources of the errors as well as in justifying certain criteria chosen as the main guidelines for error analysis in this context. Though choosing a certain category is not easy, experts have also divided the error sources differently; for example, Schacheter and Celce-Murcia (1977) mentioned that distinguishing between intralingual and developmental errors is rather difficult. Richards (1974) classified errors into two categories according to their causes, which are as follows:

"1. Interlingual errors: these errors are caused by mother tongue interference;

2. Intralingual and developmental errors: this kind of errors occurs during the learning process of the second language at a stage when the learners have not really acquired the knowledge. In addition, errors are also caused by the difficulty or the problem of language itself".
(Heydari & Bagheri, 2012, p. 10).

Additionally, some experts believe that the distinction between intralingual and interlingual errors is not always as clear as is sometimes indicated. They also claim that it is more difficult to identify the various types of intralingual errors described by Richards (1971; as cited in Heydari & Bagheri, 2012). In order to deal with this problem, Dulay and Burt (1974) classified learners' errors into three broad categories:

1. Developmental errors, which are similar to first language (L1) acquisition errors;
2. Interference errors, which reflect the structure of the L1;
3. Unique errors, which are neither developmental nor interference errors.

Moreover, Heydari and Bagheri (2012) who cited Brown, 1994; and also cited in Hasyim, 2002) further classified sources of errors into the following categories:

1. Interference transfer, which is the negative influence of the learner's mother tongue;
2. Intralingual transfer, which is the negative transfer of items within the target language. In other words, the incorrect generalisation of the rules within the target language;
3. Context of learning, which overlaps both types of transfers. For example, the classroom with the teacher and its materials in the case of school learning, or the social situation in the case of untutored second language learning. In a classroom context, the teacher or the textbook can lead the learner to make a wrong generalisation about the language;
4. Communication strategies, which are the conscious employment of verbal mechanisms for communicating an idea when linguistic forms are not available to the learner for various reasons.

Accordingly, there are five main communication strategies (Heydari & Bagheri, 2012, p. 14), namely:

1. Avoidance
2. Prefabricated patterns
3. Cognitive and personality style
4. Appealing to authority
5. Language switch

However, the categories mentioned are not limited to error classification, as the categories chosen to be represented in this case study are implied to have existed prior to the universal classification of errors. At the outset, it is still believed that the most frequent source of errors in second language acquisition, no matter what the first language is, is the transformation of rules from the first language to the foreign language. According to Collins, in his study of error analysis in second language learning, "learners of different L1 backgrounds may face similar types of challenges" (2007, p. 295). Thus, making decisions regarding the classification of errors and the most frequent grammatical errors is not an easy task, especially in speaking, as many language errors can be better focused and analysed in writing. The most frequent errors may differ from one learner to another, regardless of whether it is within the same context, within the same learning input or under individual circumstances.

4.4 The Present Data

In this respect, the data of this research is represented in nine categories identifying the most frequent errors produced by Saudi students. The 30 Saudi students in both Saudi Arabia (Tibah University) and the UK (Leeds Language Centre) had those nine categories in common as the most consistent grammatical speaking errors. The top nine grammatical errors of all the participants according to their frequency are as follows:

1. Unmarked form of verbs
2. Misuse of the verb tense
3. Misuse of articles
4. Misuse of singular and plural
5. Misuse of prepositions
6. Use of sentences without verb
7. Sentences with pronoun copy

8. Third person pronouns

9. Misuse of regular and irregular verbs

The following two diagrams show the grammatical errors according to their frequency, which will be explained and compared among the two groups;
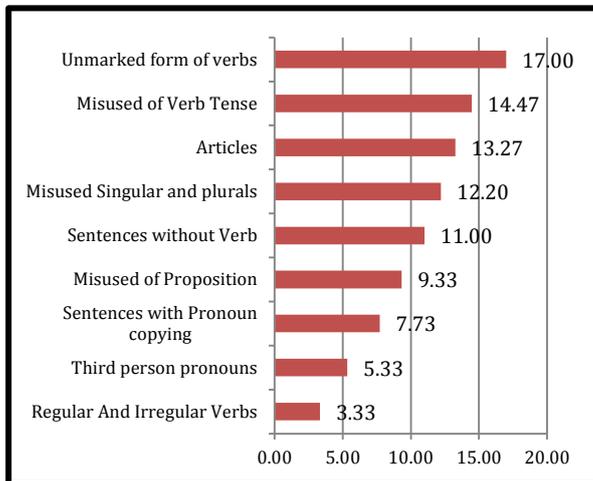
Diagram 4.A: Frequency of grammatical errors by type in UK
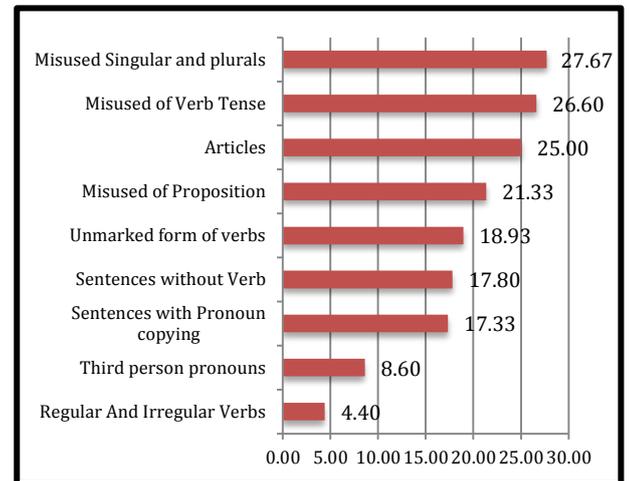
Diagram 4.B: Frequency of grammatical errors by type in Saudi Arabia

The abovementioned categories have been chosen according to the majority of errors committed by students while speaking for 15 to 20 minutes, which is the duration of the interview employed for data collection. In the case of the Saudi students studying in Saudi Arabia (Saudi group), the total number of grammatical errors in all categories was 2,622, with different error sources and different uses of grammatical forms, regardless of the error source. On the other hand, the total number of grammatical errors among the second group of Saudi students in the UK (UK group) was 1,910 in all categories, with no indication of the error sources. The table below illustrates the number of errors and their average in all categories for both groups.

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Students	Unmarked form of verbs		Third person(s) pronouns		Misused Singular and plurals		Regular And Irregular Verbs		Articles		Sentences without Verb		Sentences with Pronoun copying		Misused of Verb Tense		Misused of Proposition	
	UK	Saudi	UK	Saudi	UK	Saudi	UK	Saudi	UK	Saudi	UK	Saudi	UK	Saudi	UK	Saudi	UK	Saudi
1	17	30	5	2	12	17	6	4	8	27	11	21	12	14	19	20	9	17
2	18	22	2	11	14	50	4	3	11	31	8	14	8	19	12	43	5	34
3	18	24	3	6	14	34	3	5	18	25	13	16	10	16	13	25	9	29
4	13	16	11	6	15	32	3	6	16	30	18	22	17	17	12	37	13	25
5	14	11	4	4	13	24	3	3	15	20	18	13	9	4	14	19	6	14
6	22	24	9	16	17	24	4	2	18	27	16	17	11	21	18	32	8	16
7	23	19	8	10	13	25	3	4	14	24	17	16	8	16	17	25	13	17
8	21	10	8	5	22	13	5	5	29	22	12	21	5	16	15	24	19	19
9	17	18	1	7	6	19	3	6	5	24	2	22	0	17	16	23	3	15
10	13	16	4	5	14	23	3	4	17	26	11	14	5	10	18	22	11	16
11	15	18	2	6	21	32	3	6	18	32	7	16	3	18	14	20	15	22
12	17	20	6	12	8	28	1	5	8	22	12	14	10	19	15	26	8	24
13	18	17	8	8	4	27	5	3	7	23	10	20	9	21	13	24	6	14
14	7	19	4	19	3	36	3	6	9	20	5	23	4	30	11	31	7	32
15	22	20	5	12	7	31	1	4	6	22	5	18	5	22	10	28	8	26
Average	17.00	18.93	5.33	8.60	12.20	27.67	3.33	4.40	13.27	25.00	11.00	17.80	7.73	17.33	14.47	26.60	9.33	21.33

Table 4.1: Errors per category for Saudi students in Saudi Arabia and the UK

4.5 Classification of Grammatical Errors

The errors mentioned above have been categorised into nine categories, detailed as follows:

4.5.1 The Category of the Unmarked Form of Verbs
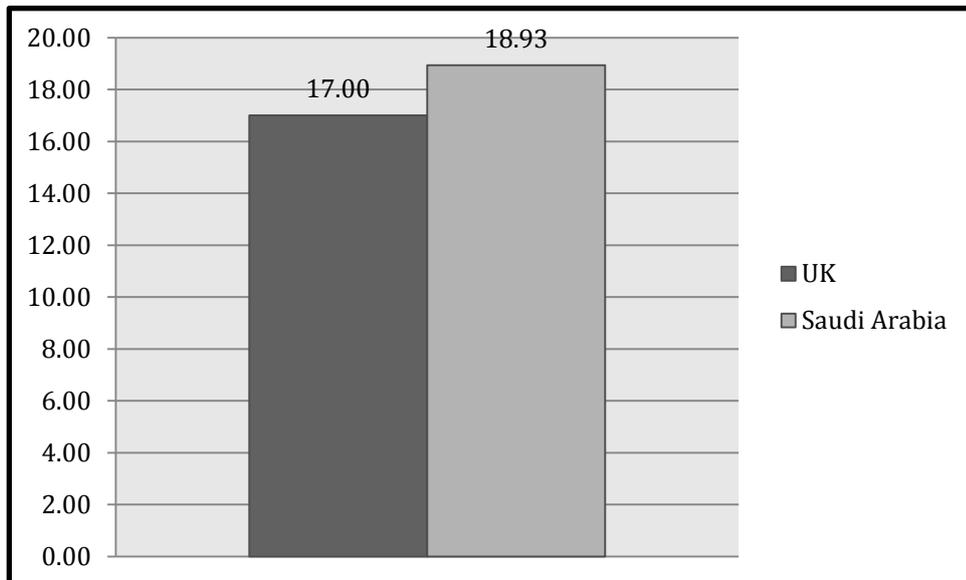
Diagram 4.1: Errors of "unmark from of verbs" for the two groups

To begin with, the unmarked form of verbs was on the top of the list, with almost equal figures for both students in the UK and in Saudi Arabia, as one of the most common

errors over the 15 students who participated in both groups, illustrated in Diagram 1. The learners' major problem was grasping the correct form of the verbs, during their speech, particularly with regard to tenses. Learners generally used the present tense or the infinitive form of a verb, which is the verb in its basic form, instead of using the past or the future tense, and also, the students tend to keep using this kind of tense and apply it to most of the sentences in different contexts, even when they use a description of events or actions in the past or the future. For example, using the unmarked form of the verb when switching in between tenses was significant in most of the uses of the spoken grammatical structures among the 30 students both in Saudi Arabia and United Kingdom. Such as the use of sentences such as "he tell", "she busy", "he tall", in the present tense, or "I study", "I start", "She come" when they described the past tense, or "because I start it" instead of "because I started it". Alternatively, they used the "unmarked form of verb" to describe the future as in "I will be go" instead of "I will be going". Also "I see the every season" instead of "I will see every season". Indeed, this kind of learner errors resulted as a blend of two different structures, using the standard version of the target language, or it might be made as a result of mixing structures learnt in early learning sequences. This may fit, according to Richard (1971), under the "intralingual" errors which reflect the general characteristics of learning the new rules such as, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions and accurate tenses of which rules apply or, moreover it can fit under the "overgeneralization" of errors (George, 1972), when the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of other structures, such as grammatical structure of Arabic, when using the target language in this example, "I will be go" which has the same structure in their native language. However, a discussion of this kind or errors will be analysed more in depth in the next chapter. Consequently, the average number of errors committed in this certain category by the Saudi group was 18.93 compared with 17 for the UK group, meaning this specific error was committed a maximum of 30 times and a minimum of 11 times between the two groups. Though there is not much difference in the use of the unmarked form of verbs, so errors resulting from the use of a verb with no specific tense was not recorded as a significant difference among the groups. However, the consistency of this error has been highlighted in order to determine the reason for its frequency which will be discussed in more detail later on.

4.5.2 The Category of the Misuse of Verb Tenses
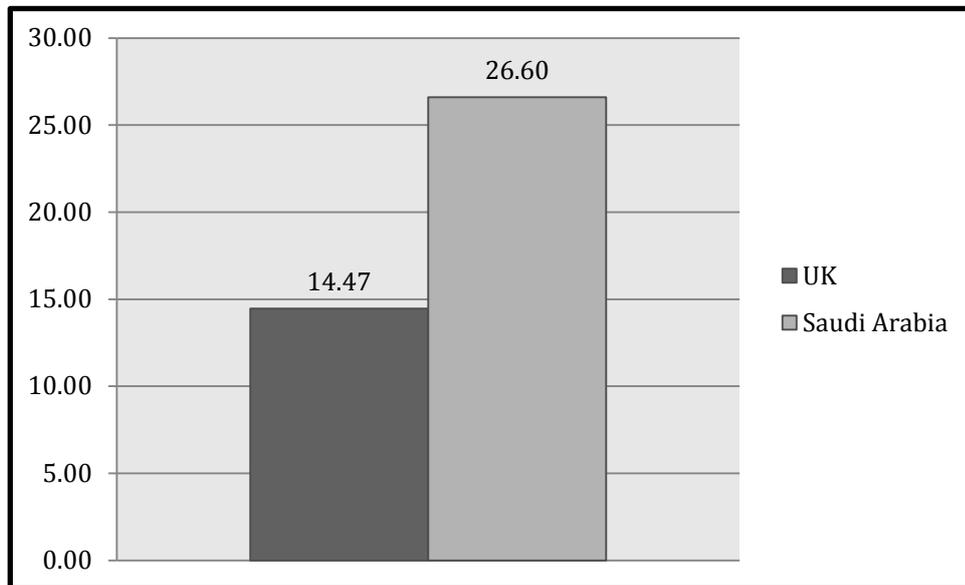
Diagram 4.2: Errors of "misuse of the verb tense" for the two groups

The next category of errors illustrated in the diagram above is the misuse of the verb tenses. In view of the use of universal grammar in the field of second language acquisition and according to the concept of linguistic views of second language learning, "universal grammar", first introduced by Selinker (1972), involves both factors influencing the first language and the independent creative process of learning a second language. This involves learners mixing the two factors to develop certain kinds of errors. The misuse of verb tenses, as illustrated in this figure, appears to be a significant example of using universal grammar. As a matter of fact, many students were unable to construct meaningful correct verb forms according to the ideas they wanted to express, due to the overuse of the simple tenses of verb forms, as mentioned in the first category "the unmark form of verb", which resulted in frequent errors when students used different kind of verbs form. For example, the frequent use of the present continuous tense instead of using the past tense: "I am studying English two year ago", instead of "I studied English two years ago". And vice versa, using the past tenses instead of the present tense, such as "I found a lot of Arab here" instead of "I find a lot of Arab here".

More examples will be given in the next chapter in order to identify an explanation for the reasons causing this error, as identification of errors is straightforward and un-ambiguous: classification of the errors is not, particularly in spoken language.

In fact, the misuse of verb tense was committed an average of 26.6 times in the Saudi group and was the second most frequent error among the nine different categories after misuse of the singular and plural, which recorded an average of 27.67 errors for the same group. The high rate of this error is expected in all second language learners. Students in the Saudi group committed this error a minimum of 20 times during the recorded interview and a maximum of 43 times, which is surprisingly high compared with the students in the UK group. The latter recorded an average of 14.47 errors where they committed a minimum of 10 errors compared to a maximum of 19 errors during the 15 student interviews. This indicates a significantly lower figure in contrast with the Saudi group.

4.5.3 The Category of the Misuse of Articles
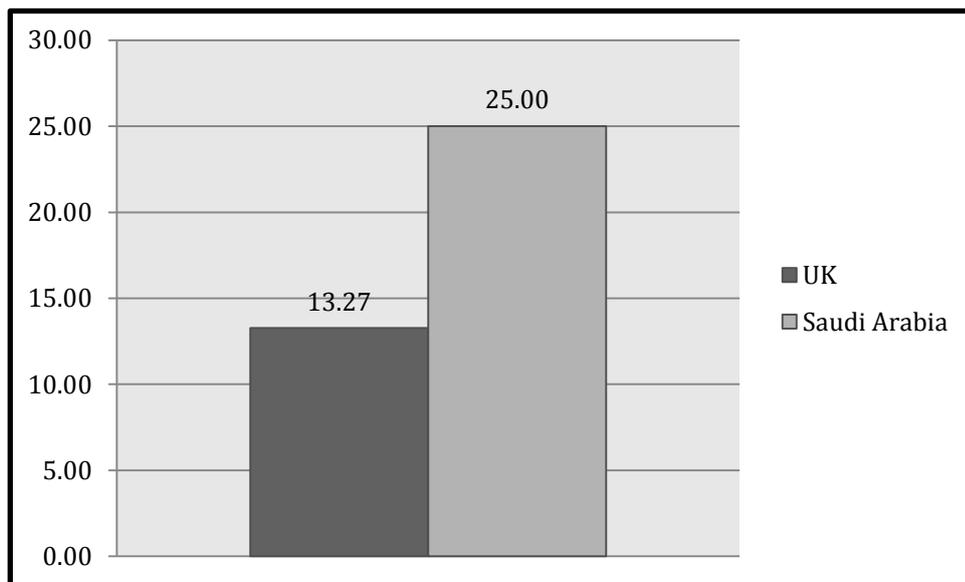
Diagram 4.3: Errors of "misuse of Articles" for the two groups

The third category illustrated in terms of grammatical error classification is the misuse of articles, one of the most common grammatical errors encountered between the two groups. Article errors were more frequent and obvious than other types of errors in both students in the Saudi and UK groups. In fact, in English language, it is known that abstract words referring to ideas, attributes, or qualities are used without the article 'the' to refer to that idea, nouns or attributes etc. In Arabic, however, such abstract words are preceded by a definite article equivalent to 'the' in English. Thus, errors related to the

misuse of article 'the' or 'a' occurred in different contexts in this case study. For instance, students in both groups tend to say the following in many situations: "I think a most difference is the weather" or "a English movies" or hesitation between "a... the husband" instead of saying straight away "the husband" when they refer to someone. However, according to the recorded interviews, there was a significantly high percentage of students committing this error. In particular, the students in the Saudi group, where the average number of errors committed among the fifteen students was 25, with a maximum of 32 errors committed during 15 minutes of speech and a minimum of 20 errors. This, surprisingly, indicated the highest number recorded in the data collected in terms of maximum and minimum number of errors committed, which means the Saudi group scored the highest rate of error. On the other hand, the average number of errors committed among the UK group was 13.27, as recorded among the fifteen students. This represents more than half the number of errors committed in the Saudi group. Articles were misused a maximum of 29 times and a minimum of 5 times among the UK group.

4.5.4 The Category of the Misuse of Singular and Plural
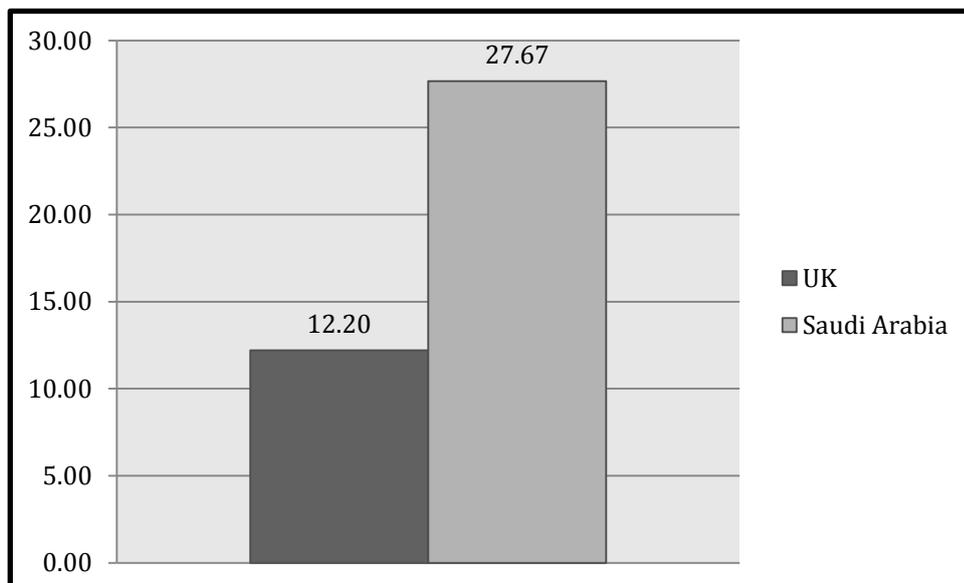
Diagram 4.4: Errors of "misuse of singular and plural" for the two groups

Likewise, the fourth category of errors, considered as another significant error in both groups, is the misuse of the singular and plural, which was committed by all students in the two groups without any exception. Students in this study are having problems differentiating between the singular and plural when they speak. In other words, one of the most common errors was related to the misuse of singular and plural such as "for six year", "I live for 2 year", "they were five girl", or "I watch lot of movie"; which occurred significantly among all students of the two groups with no exception. As a matter of fact, most second language learners, not only Saudis or Arabs, are unable to determine whether a specific English word is singular or plural based on its form alone (Diab, 1997). Some words that end with the plural form 's' are actually singular in number, whereas others indicate a singular or plural number while maintaining the same form. Faced with this complexity of the English number in using the grammatical structure with its forms, it is quite natural that students rely on the literal translation from their native language Arabic when determining, especially in speaking, whether a certain English word is singular or plural.

However, the average number of singular and plural misuses during each student's speech was recorded as highest among the Saudi group, with the average number of errors committed in this category being 27.67 compared with 12.20 among the UK group, which indicates that the average number of errors for the UK group was lower than half of the Saudi group. This also means that the Saudi group committed this error a maximum of 50 times and a minimum of 13 times. On the other hand, the frequency of producing this error among the UK group was recorded as a maximum of 22 times and a minimum of 3 times. Nonetheless, the most significant difference in the error averages explored between the two groups will be discussed in more detail to emphasise the different error sources.

4.5.5 The Category of the Misuse of Prepositions
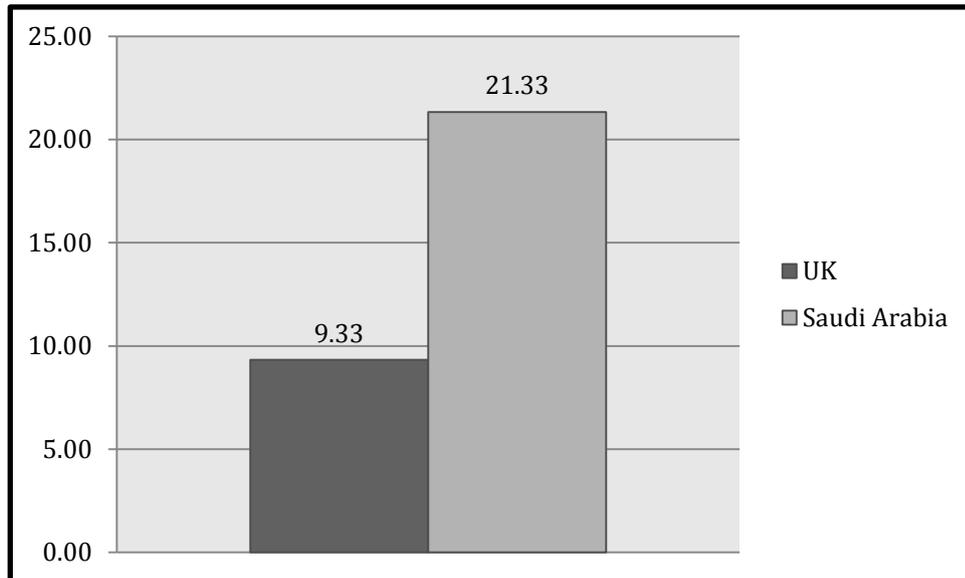
Diagram 4.5: Errors of "misuse of prepositions" for the two groups

Accordingly, another category to be illustrated as one of the most significant grammatical errors is the misuse of prepositions among all 30 students who participated in this study. Actually, prepositions are considered one of the biggest foes of second language learners, and especially Arab learners. This category undoubtedly fits as one of the most controversial grammatical errors, particularly for Saudi learners represented in this study. Based on the results, Saudi students rely on transferring the structure of propositions used in Arabic to judge the appropriate use of prepositions in English. Transference occurred when students confused different propositions in different situations or when they are not aware of using the correct function of English propositions. For instance, the prepositions 'at', 'on', 'at' and 'in' in the following sentences, produced by students in both groups, indicate place with subtle differences. "She is in the university" instead of "she is at the university" and "my sister complete Ph.D. for Mathematics" instead of "in Mathematics". Or, "when I am in home" instead of "when I am at home", which indicate that students are not aware of the accurate use of English propositions and due to this lack of language knowledge they rely on using the Arabic functions instead, to convey their meaning. However, "prepositions seldom have a one to one correspondence between English and Arabic. An Arabic preposition may be translated by several English prepositions while an English usage may have

several Arabic translations" (Scott and Tucker, 1974:85, as cited in Diab, 1997). Prepositional use in both English and Arabic is interesting as some English prepositions have an equivalent in Arabic and some do not. Consequently, identifying the instances when learners are committing this kind of error was not difficult. According to the data collected in this study, the total number of misused prepositions between both groups was 484, as recorded during the interviews of all students, with no exceptions. This number is quite high when compared with other kinds of errors represented. Furthermore and interestingly, the average number of errors committed between the two groups was very different. The misuse of prepositions resulted in an average of 21.44 errors among students in the Saudi group, which dropped to more than half of this average to only 9.33 errors among the students in the UK group. The latter group committed this error a minimum of 5 times and a maximum of 15 times. In contrast, the Saudi group showed significantly higher figures, with a minimum of 14 errors and a maximum of 34 errors committed by all of the 15 students participating in this study.

4.5.6 The Category of the Use of Sentences Without Verbs
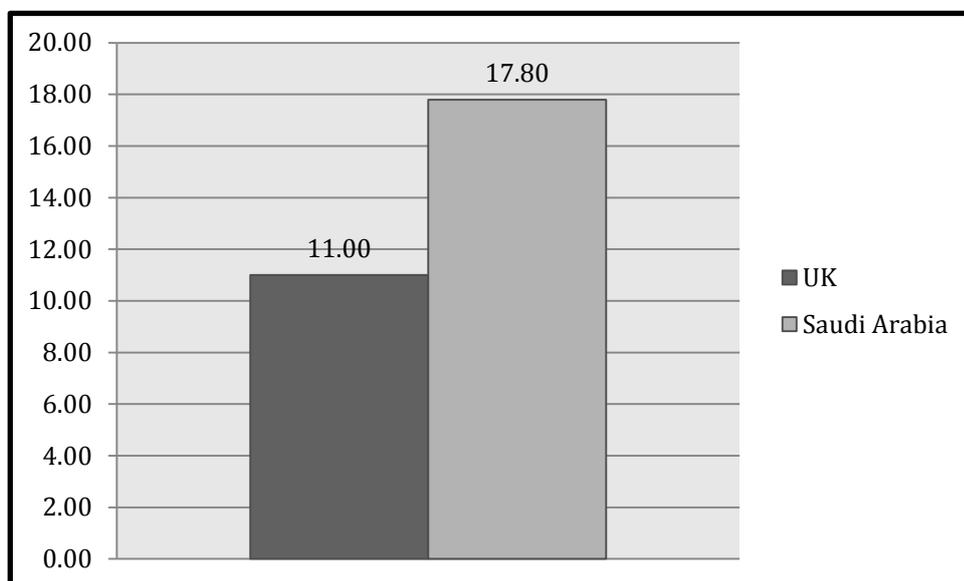
Diagram 4.6: Errors of "use of sentences without verbs" for the two groups

The sixth category, which is the most frequent grammatical error for this study, is the use of sentences without verbs, illustrated in Diagram 6. As a matter of interest, before conducting this study, collecting the data and completing the interview, this particular category was not considered, even from my own experience as a second language learner or as an English language teacher. This type of errors is closely related to the ignorance of rule restrictions. According to Hasyim, ignorance of rules fits under the classification of overgeneralisation errors made by second language learners, which is defined as "the generalization of deviant structures was the failure to observe the restriction of existing structures, that is, the application of rules to context where they did not apply, which is again, the type of generalization of transfer, since the learners were making use of a previously acquired rule in a new situation", (Hasyim, 2004, P. 47). For example, neglecting the use of the verb "to be" was common among most of the students, such as "there lots of bus" instead of saying "there are lots of buses" or "in my country no car" instead of "in my country there are no cars"; most students produced sentences such as "he busy" or "it good" instead of "he is busy" and "it is good". However, it was noticeable that all thirty students who participated in this study committed this error at least 5 times between both groups. In regards to the Saudi group, the average number of sentences constructed without any type of verb, whether a main or an auxiliary verb, was 17.8. To put it differently, each student in the Saudi group committed this error at least 14 times, indicating a high rate of error in comparison with their counterparts studying in the UK. The latter group had an average of 11 errors resulting from using sentences without a verb, with a maximum number of 18 errors and a minimum of 5 errors while the interviews were in progress. In other words, though the committing of this kind of error was surprising, the figures in this study show that the number of times this specific error is committed is almost double among the Saudi group.

4.5.7 The Category of the Use of Sentences with Pronoun Copy
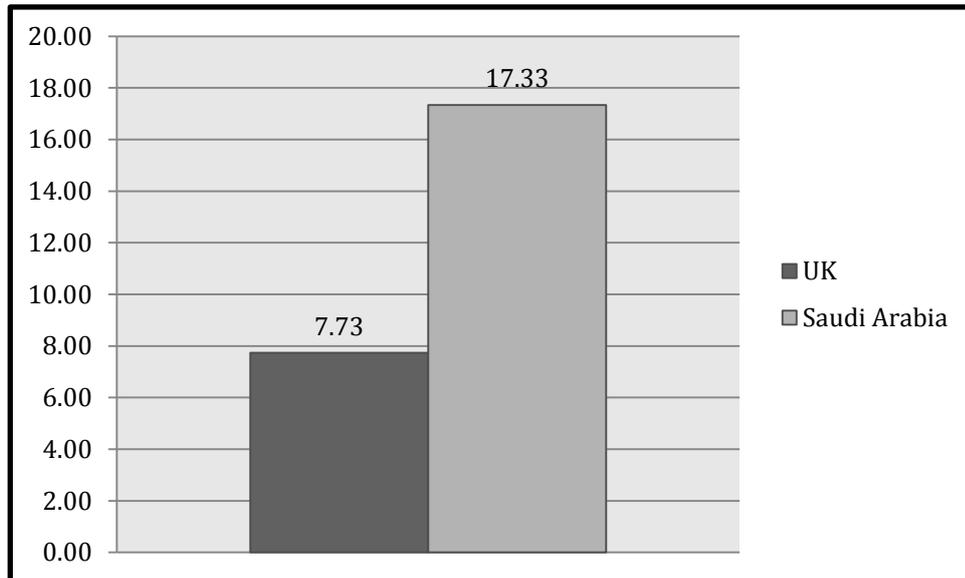
Diagram 4.7: Errors of "use of sentences with pronoun copy" for the two groups

Another key point in this study and another category similar to the previous grammatical errors, is the use of sentences with pronoun copy; see Diagram 7. Interestingly this kind of error often occurs when students use literal Arabic translations in English, where the influence of Arabic is clearly evident. For example, some students tend to say 'the man he knocked on the door' instead of "the man knocked on the door", or "the girl she carry the bag" instead of "the girl carried the bag", which indicate that students were able to use personal pronoun correctly but they applied the rule inappropriately when it was connected by a conjunction to another noun or pronoun. However, classifying and choosing this error was also quite interesting as students in both groups committed this error quite frequently. The average number of errors committed by the Saudi and UK groups was 17.33 and 7.73, respectively. The difference between the two groups was quite unexpected. As can be seen from the figures given, the number of errors committed by the UK group was only a third of that committed by the Saudi group. In other words, the maximum number of times this error was recorded among the UK group was 17 times with a minimum of 3 times recorded in the same group. In contrast, the Saudi group repeated this error a maximum of 30 times during the same period, which, in other words, is two thirds more than the previous group. Markedly, the minimum number of times this particular error was committed

among the same group was recorded as 4, which is quite similar to the minimum number of errors committed by the UK group. It is important to realise, from the figures given, that among the 30 students chosen to represent a sample of this study, all committed this kind of error, which developed during their language learning, especially in terms of grammatical errors committed during speech.

4.5.8 The Category of Third Person Pronouns
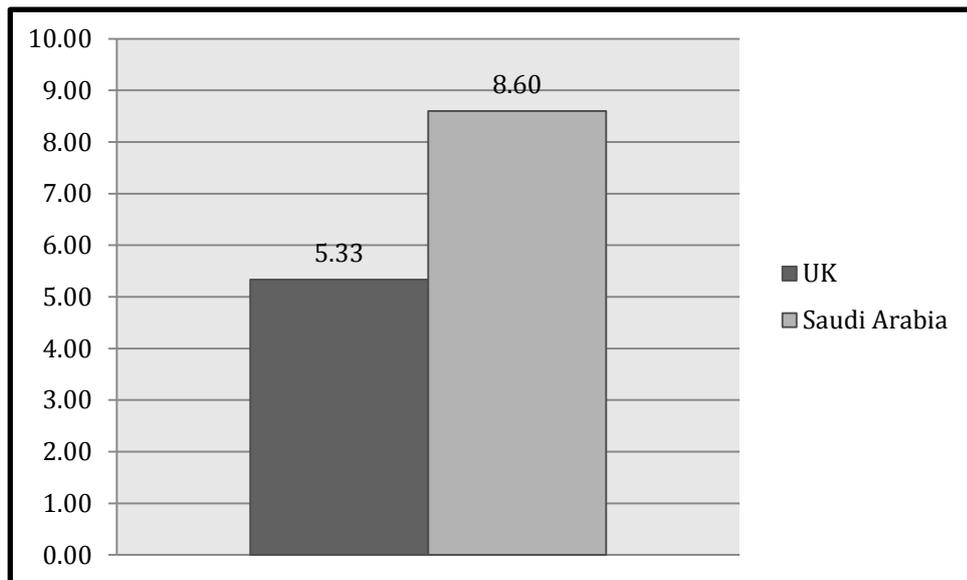
Diagram 4.8: Errors of "Third person pronouns" for the two groups

The next category of errors, which is illustrated in Diagram 8, and which was highly noted among the two groups, was the use of third person pronouns. In English pronouns can fit into two categories: I, he, she, it, one (singular personal pronouns in the subjective case) and: we, you, they (plural personal pronoun in the subjective case). Third person pronouns are usually marked for gender in the singular: he and she, him and her, his and hers, himself and herself. The "third person pronoun" errors were committed by all students of both groups. For example, the use of "he is" or "his" or "him write" instead of "his writing" was recorded repeatedly among the two groups. Or "she teaching" when referring to "her teaching". As well as "I spoke to his" instead of "I spoke to him". Students mostly hesitated when applying the use of "third person pronouns", which resulted in a large number of errors. Although the average number was not as high as the rest of errors, the consistency of this kind of the grammatical feature indicates that there is a problem in acquiring such grammatical forms and

applying them when using the target language. Not using third person pronouns correctly while speaking among all students might be interpreted as the false hypothesis about the structure of the target language, which occurs when the learners do not fully understand a distinction between the different rules in the target language. This fits again under both "Interference errors", where such grammatical structure exists in their native language, and "Intralingual errors", where students develop these types of errors due to lack of knowledge of the rules which must be applied in the "target language". However, the average number of errors committed in this category among the Saudi group was 8.6 compared with 5.33 for the UK group, as indicated in Diagram 8, there was a difference of 3.3 errors. This also means that Saudi students studying in the UK are more consciously aware of this error. This type of error was recorded as being committed a maximum of 16 times and a minimum of 2 times for the Saudi group. Alternatively, the maximum number committed by the UK group was recorded to be 11 times with a minimum occurrence of once. More explanation and discussion about the sources of this type of errors will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.5.9 The Category of the Misuse of Regular and Irregular Verbs
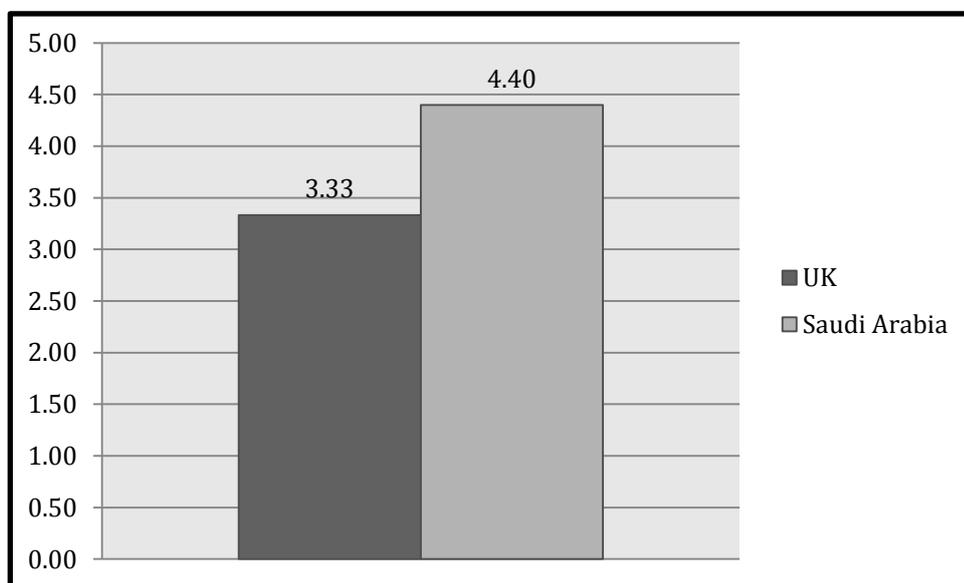
Diagram 4.9: Errors of "misuse of regular and irregular verbs" for the two groups

Finally, the last category to be illustrated and noted is the misuse of regular and irregular verbs as illustrated in Diagram 9. In fact, the recorded number of errors

committed in this category was quite surprising in both groups. There was a limited number of English regular and irregular verbs that students used while the collection of this data, for example, "make, learn, teach, read, take, and grow". Saudi students frequently misused the regular and irregular forms of these verbs while they spoke as the Arabic grammatical system does not have this variation of verbs, yet English does. For example, Saudi students tend to use "teached" instead of "taught", "maked" instead of "made", and "growed" instead of "grown". Though at this stage of the process of student learning, is could not be described as a plausible explanation for grammatical errors in second language learning, because knowledge of regular and irregular verb forms is not a specific source of difficulty for students at this level. Yet it is in line with general language ability which results in "overgeneralization errors", when students apply the rule of the past tense with –ed at the end of each verb used, and "interlingual errors", as Arabic has no similar syntactic form which applies for this specific context, or it could even fit in "developmental errors", which simply explain them as errors that are similar to errors during first language acquisition in early learning stages.

Accordingly, the total number of errors committed between the two groups was only 173 out of the 4,532 errors recorded in this study, which includes all errors and all students, whether in Saudi Arabia or in the UK. The average number of errors for students in the Saudi group was 4.40 errors whereas the average number of errors committed by the UK group was 3.33, with a minimum of 1 time recorded by one of the students in the UK group and a maximum of 8 errors committed by students in the Saudi group. Nevertheless, these grammatical errors were distinct in both groups and, as a result, they have been included in this study as the most frequent speaking errors noticeably committed by Saudi students in order to find out their sources.

To sum up, the figures and numbers mentioned above were the most significant and frequent grammatical errors made by the students in both groups, in Saudi Arabia and the UK. All categories will be analysed according to their source in the next chapter. Moreover, some errors which have been classified in this study did not fall into the categories mentioned. There are some unique errors such as the use of the "perfect tenses" which were almost completely neglected by students in Saudi Arabia, as only 3 out of the 15 students were found to use the past or the present perfect tense. Whereas all the 15 students who study and live in the UK used this particular tense in different

occasions and regularly, with its different forms, such as the past, present, or future perfect tenses, which will be discussed in details later on.

In this respect, the next chapter will deal mostly with the sources of these errors and the causes of grammatical errors committed by Saudi learners in two different environments and contexts. Furthermore, and because of the early emphasises on grammatical speaking errors produced by the Saudi learners, it is necessary and helpful to clarify their sources and the causes behind them not only for practitioners and linguists, but also for the Arab language learners. The grammatical structure often implies different elements, especially when comparing two languages. Moreover, defining accurately the elements of the English language grammar structure, in particular, the grammatical elements of speech, has always been a problem for learners, as students are not always able to define the different forms of grammar, as it is in written forms of the language when they use it to communicate. However, further analysis will be discussed in depth in order to provide a better understanding of these errors, which will be helpful in this particular context, as the findings of this study. This will provide strong support for the claim that interference from the mother tongue, and other sources of errors, is a problem which influences not only Saudis but also Arab students' spoken language proficiency.

Chapter Five

Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

Based on the review of the data collected during this research, various grammatical errors were found to be committed by two groups of Saudi students in their speaking. The sources of these errors will be examined in order to identify English grammatical features that were most commonly problematic for Saudi students. Results for the students in Saudi Arabia and in the UK were compared across each grammatical category to create an accurate assessment of the error sources, occurring due to either factors relating to the learning environment or the influence of the first language. Nine categories have been classified in both groups according to their consistency. These types of errors were classified as follows: unmarked form of verbs, misuse of the verb tense, misuse of articles, misuse of singular and plural, misuse of prepositions, use of sentences without a verb, sentences with pronoun copy, third person pronouns, and misuse of regular and irregular verbs. Reviewing these errors will allow for a critical justification of why they occurred. Indeed, they will be identified and described in each group in order to provide a valuable understanding of the difficulties faced by Saudi students while learning English. In this chapter, the major findings of this study will be discussed with the intent of accepting or rejecting the linguistic theories of learner errors and their sources, particularly first language transfer theory.

5.2 Grammatical Errors Committed in Speaking by Students in Saudi Arabia and the UK

This study involved a thorough analysis of the data collected from a group of Saudi students. These students live and study in Saudi Arabia and still study at Tibah University in the foundation year where this research was conducted. In order to further understand Saudi speakers' grammatical errors in speaking, and to investigate additional sources behind committing these errors, another group of Saudi learners studying in the UK was used as a case study. A comparative analysis will be provided in this section in order to create an appropriate understanding of the most frequent classifications of

grammatical deviations that Saudi students encounter in speech. Errors will be discussed and ordered according to their consistency during students' speech.

5.2.1 The Unmarked Form of Verbs

The following section discusses the unmarked form of verb which is the first category to be analysed among Saudi students. This type of error will be identified, as well as the possible sources behind committing this error. The major findings will be highlighted for each group and compared when relevant.

5.2.1.1 Errors by Students in Saudi Arabia

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the unmarked form of verbs was a very common and significant grammatical error among Saudi students, not only for those who study in Saudi Arabia but also for students studying in the U.K. In fact, this means that the above-mentioned error is made regularly by both groups. First of all, a definition of unmarked form of verb is given by the Dictionary of English Grammar, Penguin, 2000: "The unmarked form" is the 'ordinary' or 'basic' form, while the marked form differs from the first in containing extra material or in being confined to special contexts such as, suffice, prefixes, passive, etc". Indeed, in terms of linguistics analysis the unmarked form of verbs was first examined in the 70s by scholars working in the sociolinguistic field of second language acquisition. This was marked by work from Richard (1970) and Corder (1974), who first introduced the concept of "intralingual and developmental errors" in second language learning processes and stated that "this kind of error occurs during the learning process of the second language at a stage when the learners have not really acquired the knowledge. In addition, errors are also caused by a difficulty or a problem in the target language itself" (Heydari & Bagheri, 2012, p. 1584). Moreover, and according to Richard (1971), errors produced by learners can sometimes reflect a general characteristic due to the difficulty in language learning such as a lack of knowledge when it comes to the new language rules or a failure to apply them in certain learning circumstances. In addition, these kinds of errors might occur when second language learners attempt to build their own rules and hypotheses regarding the target language, which can result in errors due to the lack of language exposure and experience. In order to understand more about the source of such grammatical errors, some examples were chosen to represent this type of errors for further justification of

why this type of errors occurred. For instance, certain errors were highlighted in the data when students moved to the second part of the interview used for collecting the data for this research, which was almost a general discussion about students' study, family and life. Consider the following examples in Table 1. As we are analysing unmarked form of verbs, we are concentrating on this type of errors in the examples provided and not dealing with other types of errors that might occur in the sentences.

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the "unmarked form of verb"
A	My sister take her Ph.D.	My sister takes her Ph.D.
B	I am study in the intermediate course	I am studying, or I study, (in) the intermediate course
C	He live near my city or go	He lives near my city or goes
D	She visit another city	She visits another city

Table 5.1 (SA) examples for "unmarked for of verb"

The use of the infinitive form of the verb in all of the previous sentences reflects a gap in knowledge when it comes to using the correct form of grammatical tenses and rules, particularly when they must be applied to a certain context. For instance, example (A), "my sister take" instead of "takes", or example (B), "He live" instead of "He lives", and so on in example (C) and (D), illustrated in the Table(1). It is true that these kinds of errors could be explained according to the "intralingual and developmental errors" as they obviously reflect a lack of knowledge or difficulty in the target language itself. However this was not the case for those students who had been studying English for at least six years and had been sufficiently exposed to the language. Thus, with regard to a possible explanation for these errors, it is possible to argue that they could be due to first language interference. For example: in the Arabic language, the sentence structure should include a "sentence agreement" which can be described as the following: "Arabic verbs agree with their subjects in person, number and gender (Scott & Tucker, 1974, p. 83). Hence, Saudi students made lots of errors in using the correct form of the verb and few performed well with agreement as they use the same Arabic patterns and apply them to their use of the English structure where more verb-subject agreement is required. More examples of this type of error are found in these sentences: "because my sister start it" instead of "because my sister started it", in the past tense, or even

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"because my sister starts it", in the present tense. In addition, the same error occurred in the following sentences: "the teacher encourage her students" instead of "encourages" in the present tense, or "encouraged" in the past tense. Moreover, sentences such as "she skip to the important things" were used instead of "she skips" for the present meaning or "she skipped", for the past tense, etc. Students tended to use the unmarked form of the verb on many occasions when describing whether actions took place in the present or in the past. In fact, the use of agreement of sentences errors occurred not only in subject–verb sentences but also when it came to the adverb or the adjective which should agree with the noun they use to modify. For example: "my sister like to watch other kind of movie" was used instead of "my sister likes to watch other kinds of movies". This also led to another type of error with singular-plural forms, which will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Diab (2010) explained this type of error as the following, "In English, few adjectives show agreement in number with the nouns they modify. Other adjectives are used to modify singular as well as plural nouns. In Arabic, however, the situation is different. Adjectives agree in number with the nouns they modify" (2012, p. 4). In other words, using a simple form of the verb without paying attention to the tense used in the sentence, or even to the agreement between verb and subject which results in using the unmarked form of the verb, can be interpreted as a lack of knowledge of rules according to the explanation of the "intra-language errors". Thus, it may be the case that these types of errors are often made by students, although they learn English in two different environments with different and sufficient levels of exposure to the English language, with particular groups of students studying in S.A. Thus, one can argue that within the concept of "interlanguage errors" which first was proposed by Selinker (1972), an explanation of these kinds of errors can be described as the following, "the speech of the second language learner is, instead of being composed of a series of errors or deviations from a correct standard, is in fact a rule-governed system that begins at the beginning whenever one attempts to express meaning in the target language (Selinker, 1992 p. 31). Perhaps in this way, a better justification of this type of error with the unmarked form of verbs in Saudi learners' speech can be seen as a result of "interlanguage errors".

Accordingly, Adamson (1988), in describing the learners' errors in this context stated that learners rely heavily when they communicate using the structure of their first language and gradually move from using a simple structure to a more complex one throughout their language learning process. Adamson assumed that "language

acquisition researchers have used implication hierarchies in one form or another to display interlanguage patterns. These implicational hierarchies claim that interlanguage structures can be arranged along a continuum so that learners will first use structure x, then structure y, and so on. A hierarchical arrangement of interlanguage structures forms a continuum ranging from simple to complex…" (1992, p. 9).

Indeed, this argument is supported by the present study, and by the number of errors highlighted, specifically the 464 errors committed by the 30 students during 10 minutes of speech and an average of 18.93 errors among the same group. This could well be indicative of a strong structure transfer from the Arabic language into English structure. As the learners were not in the early stages of language learning, they should have had enough knowledge regarding the structure of the English language, particularly when it comes to following simple structural rules like the agreement between noun and subject–verb sentences, where in English language the subject of the sentence should agree with the verb in gender and number. Misusing this agreement will lead to errors such as using the unmarked form of verbs in sentences produced by learners.

5.2.1.2 Errors by Students in the UK

According to existing data and analysis of grammatical errors found in current studies, the use of unmarked verbs was one of the highest significant errors committed by Saudi learners in the UK, compared to other grammatical errors when analysed in terms of accuracy of English speech production. Though this group studied in a different environment and were exposed to completely different methods of English language input, and studied different curriculum and entirely different teaching strategies, language production in terms of the unmarked form of verbs remained roughly the highest in terms of grammatical errors. Students in both groups recorded the same average number of errors with unmarked verbs despite the students having studied in two different learning environments. The average number of errors committed under this category in the UK group was 17, in comparison to 18, 93 for students in Saudi Arabia, indicating a slight difference of approximately 1.93 among the two groups. See Diagram 1.
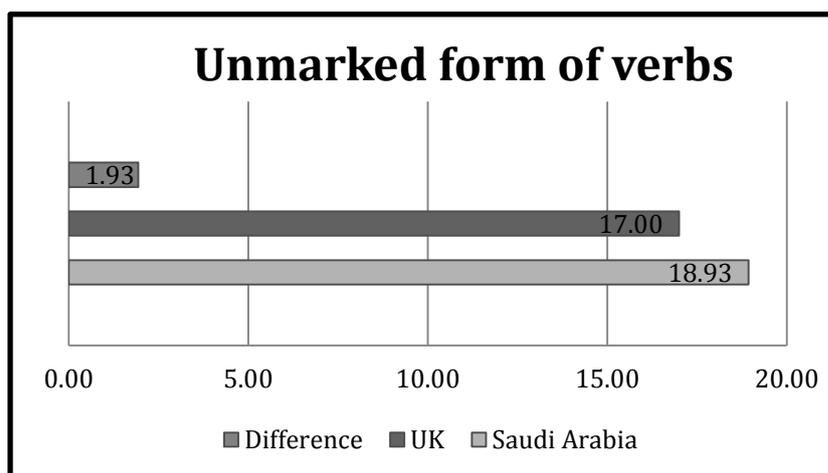
Diagram 5.1 the difference of "unmarked for of verb" amongst the two groups

Overall, learners in the UK group produced nearly the same type of errors as their counterparts in Saudi Arabia. Richards (1974) claimed to discover the source behind this type of errors, stating that learners may build their own assumptions of language structure and fail to apply the rules of the new language due to a lack of knowledge or insufficient exposure to the target language. This has been identified earlier in this section as the learner's intra-language stage, defined here as "this kind of error occurs during the learning process of the second language at a stage when the learners have not really acquired the knowledge" (Richards, 1974, p. 19). In this particular case, however, the intra-language explanation cannot fully be considered a major factor affecting student performance in the target language. Before discussing the possible sources of this specific type of errors, consider the following examples in Table 2, taken from the students' interview data for the U.K group in the second part of the interview related to students general discussion during their speech

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the "unmarked form of verb"
A	First, when I <u>come</u> here	First, when I <u>came</u> here
B	There is some women <u>notice</u> me	There is some women <u>noticed</u> me
C	I <u>study</u> English last year, <u>I improve</u>	I <u>studied</u> English last year, <u>I improved</u>
D	I <u>decide</u> to come here, to complete study	I <u>decided</u> to come here, to complete study

Table 5.2 (UK) examples for "unmarked for of verb"

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In the examples given above, such as example (A) when "I come" instead of "came", where students tend to describe the verb in the past tense. As well as this, in example (B), the verb "notice" instead of "noticed". Respectively, in example (C) and (D), with the verb "study" instead of "I studied" or "decide" instead of "decided". In fact, the students tend to use the simple form of verbs, such as the infinitive, and apply them across the different tenses. Unlike the previous group, learners in this case study have studied in a native environment and been exposed to a sufficient number of language learning strategies; therefore, the intra-language explanation cannot fully account for this particular deviation. One possible explanation is that unmarked verb errors significantly affect Saudi learners' oral production in English due to the high number of verbs as well as related grammatical features unique to English. Consequently, as the linguistic features of Arabic differ from English both at the surface and in underlying structure, a close observation of individual speakers of Arabic when using English reveals a significant pattern of errors. Students often depend on the structure of the Arabic language when producing English sentences; errors as those shown above are commonly due to mother tongue interference. Until recently, this type of error variation was thought to be a result of regular learner performance that could happen randomly in any language learning stage (see BaSaeed, 2013; Al-Saidat, 2010; Abu Ghararah, 1990; Noor1996; and Scott Tucker, 1974). According to Noor, "this may mainly be due to the intrinsic difficulty of the English language since the absence of the verb (which is usually finite) from the sentence, or even changing the form of the verb to non-finite created difficulty for the learners" (1996, p.1448). This theory contributes significantly to explaining the source of Saudi learners' errors in this particular category. In summary, the students' excessive use of the unmarked form of verbs provides a good example of first language transfer among both groups regardless of the differences between the learning environment, such as the English curriculum, teaching strategies and the comprehensible input the students were exposed to, previously discussed in Chapter 3. However, this study revealed an average of 1.98 differences in the total number of errors between the two groups as illustrated in Diagram 1 above. Errors with the marked form of verbs indicate that the Saudi students in this study still use elements of their first language, in this case the grammatical structure of Arabic, and transfer them in their production of spoken English. This is important in terms of second language acquisition, particularly with regard to the rejection of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis and the role first language plays in the learning process. In contrast

to the above hypothesis, Muzurkewich's proposal (1985, cited in Hamdan, 1994) on the acquisition of verbs states that errors with the marked form of verbs in second language learning result from the process of building knowledge of the new language. Learners acquire simple forms of verbs first before gradually acquiring more complex forms, a process that has been accepted for some time, and this natural progression creates errors that result from the learners' intralanguage development rather than mother tongue interference. Cook (2007) cited Chomsky (1981), proposing:

'Hence we may expect to find a continuum of markedness from core to periphery. The distinction does not, however, entail that core unmarked grammar is necessarily learnt first. We would expect the order of acquisition of structures in language acquisition to reflect the structure of markedness in some respects, but there are many complicating factors; e.g. processes of maturation may be such as to permit certain unmarked structures to be manifested only relatively late in language acquisition, frequency effects may intervene, etc.' (p.4).

Nevertheless, this could not totally contribute to the findings of this study, in terms of use of the unmarked form of verbs, as the interference of first language plays a major role. To some extent, this does not entirely support Muzurkewich's hypothesis that the natural process of language acquisition in early language learning is to first acquire simple and easy forms of grammatical elements that differ from the first language before acquiring more complex ones, which are similar to their native language, neglecting the role that the first language has on the level of second language performance.

5.2.2 Misuse of Verb Tenses

The following section will discuss Saudi learners' grammatical errors, in terms of misusing verb tenses. Three different classifications according to the tenses of verb will be highlighted for further analysis among the two groups of students in Saudi Arabia and the UK. The group of students selected in Saudi Arabia will be discussed first:

5.2.2.1 Errors with the Misuse of Verbs by Students in Saudi Arabia

The correct use of verb tenses is a somewhat problematic area to analyse. According to the data available to us, a high percentage of Saudi students in this group mixed different forms of verb tenses. Almost every student in the Saudi Arabia group

committed this error at least 20 times throughout their speech. In fact, the nature of the task given to them shed more light on these types of grammatical errors. These tasks involved general speaking and the use of the different kinds of questions in order to elicit more details regarding what they wanted to describe, particularly when they attempted to retell a story or a film they liked. The problem relating to verb tenses seems very clear in this part. Students were switching between tenses even when they had the opportunity to correct themselves. For example, during the interview and particularly in the second part of the interview, which was more formal than the first part, students were asked to retell a story or a film they like. The aim of this formal part was to listen to their spontaneous speech without further discussion and interruption from my side as an interviewee. In fact, some students were able to stop for two or three seconds and correct themselves during their speech, which is considered in this case as a mistake and a good sign of the process of learning and not an error. Unfortunately, some students were not able to recognise their speaking errors and continued committing this type of errors using the incorrect tense of verbs they used. However, this said, any errors in tense which students were able to correct themselves were excluded from the data, as the major concern of the present study is to determine which types of errors, not mistakes, are considered a problem in oral production of the English language. In total, three different types of grammatical errors in verb tenses were recorded as follows:

5.2.2.1.1 Misuse of Past Tense

Errors with misusing the past tense were an alarming area to be focused on for Saudi students' speech. This type of errors was found to be more frequent in the second part of the interview as mentioned earlier. Students almost had some independent and free speech in this part, without further discussion by my side. As a result, it was found that the more production of sentences, the more errors were recognised in term of misusing the past tense of verbs. However, Table 3 illustrates some examples chosen from the data, in order to highlight some of learners' errors which will be discussed in this category. Consider the following examples:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the "Past tense"
A	Last year I had Diploma and <u>come</u> here to complete a degree	Last year I had Diploma and <u>came</u> here to complete a degree
B	She was good, she <u>try</u> to explain the new words	She was good; she <u>tried</u> to explain the new words.
C	I visited London three times ago, after I <u>finish</u> my study	I visited London three times ago, after I <u>finished</u> my study

Table 5.3 (SA) examples for "misuse of past tense"

Other type of misuse tenses of verbs selected to be discussed among this group is errors with the present tense.

5.2.2.1.2 Misuse of Present Tense

Students tended to switch between different present tenses such as mixing between present simple and continuous as illustrated in Table 4:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the "present tense"
A	I am <u>study</u> English from the intermediate school	I am <u>studying, or I study</u> English from the intermediate school
B	I think I am <u>improve</u> my English skills	I think I am <u>improving, or I improve,</u> my English skills
C	I am <u>work</u> very hard for this dream, but my goal was medical college	I am <u>working, or I work</u> very hard for this dream, but my goal was medical college

Table 5.4 (SA) examples for "misuse of present tense"

In addition to the above illustrated errors with the present and the past tense, a similar type of errors occurred with the use of the future tense:

5.2.2.1.3 Misuse of Future Tense:

The following examples explain some of the students' errors when it came to the future tense, with many of them mixing up the present and the future tense in the third part of

the interview when students were asked to talk about their future plans, such us the selected examples in Table 5:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the "future tense"
A	I set front of the TV, I'll be online	I'll set front of the TV, I'll be online
B	I don't have a choice now, I'll be in the chemistry, (referring to an academic department).	I don't have a choice now, I'll choose, or I'll go to, the chemistry, (referring to an academic department).
C	I think the world will be very bad these day, is very bad now.	I think the world is very bad these days, or the world will be very bad, is very bad.

<div align="center">Table 5.5 (SA) examples for "misuse of future tense"</div>

In fact, this type of grammatical error is indicative of a real problem faced by Saudi students in this specific group, something which was particularly evident when students were asked to describe in detail a story or film they had seen in the second part of the interview. Indeed, they felt under pressure talking alone for 4 to 5 minutes without further questions from my side. According to the literature, misuse of the verb tenses by second language learners has been divided into two main categories; either the misuse of verb tenses which results in errors like those of "tense sequence: where learners of English may use present simple with past simple tenses particularly with compound and complex sentences" (Hashiam, 1996, p. 4). Such as, example (A), Table 3: "Last year I had Diploma and come here to complete a degree". The student in this example used both the present simple and the past simple, when the student's intended meaning was to describe an event happened in the past, which was clearly described using the phrase "last year" at the beginning of the sentence to talk about the past. In addition, in example (B), Table 3, a student said: "I visited London three times ago, after I finish my study". The beginning of the sentences indicate that the student intended to describe an action that happened in the past, expressed by the phrase "three times ago", although the structure is still incorrect with the use of "ago", it is not the type of errors we intend to discuss in this point. The major concern is the incorrect use of the two verbs in the same sentence, the past "visited" and the present "finish" used in the same sentence, resulted in errors with "tense sequence" as explained above.

The other type of errors with the use of verbs in sentences is described in the literature as "tense substitution", where learners substitute one verb tense for another (Hashiam, 1996). For instance, in Table 4, examples (A) and (B), "I am study English from the intermediate school" instead of "I am studying English" or "I studied English", where the student substituted one tense into another, in this case, using the simple present instead of the continuous tense, leading to this grammatical error. Respectively, example (B): "I think I am improve my English skills" instead of "I am improving my skills" if the student' intention was to use the present continuous, or "my skill is improved now" if using the passive voice to produce a correct English tense in this sentence. This led students to use different types of verb tenses when they produced a different structure of sentences as indicated in the examples given above. Indeed, the errors in the tense sequence appeared to be incorrectly used when students expressed a description of action happening at two different times. This was illustrated in the examples in Table 5; example (C): "I think the world will be very bad these day", this sentence reflects a vivid image of students' error in mixing the present tense and the future tense when they wanted to describe an action which will happen in the future. Indeed, tense sequences was identified as a problem for students and resulted in such errors. In addition to this, students also mixed the present simple with the present continuous tense when wanting to express something in the present tense, thus leading to major errors described as tense substitution. In fact, according to Hashiam (1996), Scott & Tucker (1974) and El-Sayed (1983), Arab learners tend to face this problem with tenses when they express themselves in English, as expressing an action using a verb in Arabic requires the use of only one tense. This is in contrast with the English language, where the use of two different tenses can be used in one sentence, as Arabic does not have this kind of language structure. Indeed, this type of error can be clearly identified as "negative transfer", with students following the same pattern of their first language, Arabic.

Furthermore, and according to Scott & Tucker (1974) in their study of "Errors analysis and English-language strategies of Arab students", Arab students may use different types of verb tenses in writing as a result of following the structure of the Arabic language. In the case of Arabic, this justifies, to a certain extent, the fact that Saudi students follow Arabic structure when it comes to this type of error. This kind of error and the mixing of verb tenses in one sentence by Saudi students can be described as a

kind of negative transfer from Arabic language, especially when students used a complex structure of tense and tried to compound two different tenses such as when using the future tenses. This is illustrated by the example given above, as well as certain examples such as describing an action with two verb tenses. Furthermore, another important point to be discussed in this context, the simple present and the present continuous which can arise due to intra-language errors such as in the following sentence, produced by a Saudi student in the first part of the interview, when students were asked about their interest and hobbies and which was meant to lead to further discussion about their hobbies to encourage them to speak further. Let us consider the following sentences: "I loved to read, I love to write and I actually I write poems in Arabic". Indeed, more complex sentences reduce the influence exerted on the student by the Arabic structure. This is likely an example of overgeneralisation errors, namely intra-language transfer, as each student tends to build his or her own rules by using the English grammatical structure in sentences. Referring to this example in particular, it could be seen as in a surface analysis as a result of interference from L1, as English verbs are inflected according to time (tenses), as is the case in the previous examples.

This contributes to Selinker (1972), in using the term "fossilization" which basically refers "to the tendency of many learners to stop developing their interlanguage grammar in the direction of the target language" (Khansir, 2012, P.1030). In other words, the example above provides an acceptable justification of Selikner's (1972) description of learner's errors in terms of over-generalisation; "overgeneralization of the target language linguistic materials: some elements of the learner's interlanguage may be the product of overgeneralization of the rules and semantic features of the target language" (cited in Khansir, 2012. P.1030). In contrast, and according to the view of Beach, when it comes to error analysis, in the English language and in terms of students' errors, some of these verbs which remain unchanged could be interpreted as cases of past tense errors: "there were conclusively several factors contributing to the errors that were identified including the interference of students' native language, lack of vocabulary and overgeneralization of some grammatical rules" (Beach, 2012, p. 24), which contributes to justify the student's error in the previous example mentioned. However, according to Saudi students' errors in terms of misusing the tenses of verbs used in this particular context, some errors were clearly due to the interference of their first language, which was as a result of a lack of knowledge that lead students to rely on the

structure of Arabic more than using the structure of the target language, such as using both the past and the present in the same sentences, which would be acceptable in Arabic to some extent. On the other hand, the switching between more than one tense in the previously discussed examples, are likely to be linked to the theory of "intra-language" which considers errors in tense switch a sign of overgeneralisation of errors. Richard, (1971) described "intra-language transfer" as the negative transfer of features within the target language itself, as students were aware of the use of different tenses during their production of the target language but failed to apply them correctly. In other words, this type of errors was a sign of the incorrect generalisation of English rules they have already studied and known, influenced by the surface structure of their native language. The second part of the "misuse of verb tense" category will discuss Saudi students' error in the UK as a comparative group in order to find more linguistics justification of this type of errors.

5.2.2.2 Errors with the Misuse of Verbs by Students in the UK

The second common grammatical error made by Saudi students in the UK in this study, deals with the correct form of the verbs in oral production. Although Saudi students in this group have been exposed to a native environment and experienced multiple learning situations and different learning and teaching strategies with different English curricula, accuracy with verb forms was still seen to be a major source of difficulty for students in this group, particularly when speaking. In comparison to the students studying in Saudi Arabia, Saudi students in the UK reported an average number of errors approximately half than that of the other group: 14,47 was the average number of errors made by students in the UK, compared with an average of 26,16 for the group in Saudi Arabia, with a difference of 12.13 between the two groups. Diagram 2 highlights this difference in the average number of errors linked to the misuse of verb tense. Despite the low average of errors for students in the UK selected in this case study, the number of individual errors committed is still significant. In order to discuss these errors in more detail and shed light on the most common patterns in this particular group, errors in verb tense have been divided into the following three categories: past, present and future tenses.
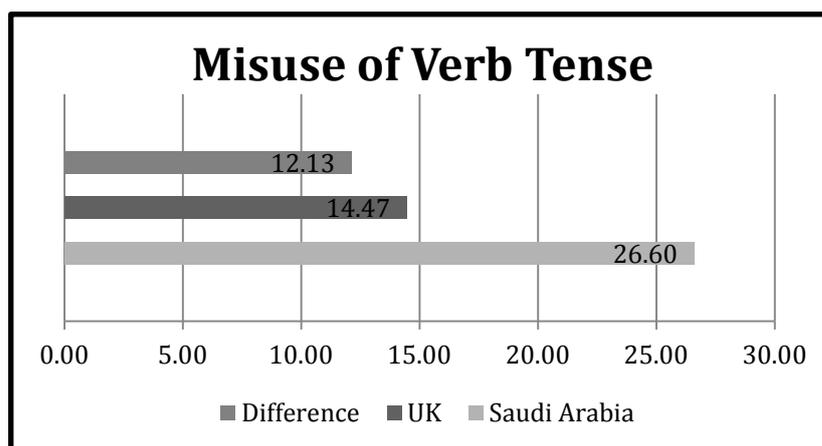
Diagram 5.2 the difference of "misuse of verb tense" amongst the two groups

5.2.2.2.1 Misuse of Past Tense

As evidenced by the data, students in the UK group selected in this study tend to have difficulty putting the verb into the appropriate tense when describing an action in the past, in particular mixing the simple past tense with the past perfect. This is contrary to the Saudi students in Saudi Arabia, whose difficulties lay in mixing tenses when using complex sentence structure, as detailed in the earlier sections. Consider the following examples illustrated in Table 6:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the of "Past tense"
A	When I have <u>arrive</u> here, I <u>finded</u> I can't understand people	When I have <u>arrived</u> here, I <u>found</u> I can't understand people.
B	First time, when I came here, I have <u>work</u> hard to learn it.	First time, when I came here, I have <u>worked</u> hard to learn it.
C	Some women noticed me, while I have <u>wait</u> my queue.	Some women noticed me, while I have <u>waited</u> my queue.

Table 5.6 (UK) examples for "misuse of past tense"

The sentences above demonstrate significant progress in learning compared with the group of students in Saudi Arabia, as the latter, were only able to produce full sentences with less complex structure, as they relied remarkably on the simple form of verbs in sentence construction rather than using a combination of different verbs with different tenses in one full sentence. For example, the failure to use relative clauses with a combination of uses of the past continuous and the past perfect. Such as example (A), Table 6, where the student used the past perfect "when I have arrive" and continued with the same tense "I finded I can't understand". Moreover, example (B) shows

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another instance of mixing tenses such as "First time, when I came here, I have work hard to learn it". It is linked but the student failed to use the correct form of verb used in these sentences. On the opposite side of language competence, students in the UK were able to describe actions that happened in the past, and attempted to combine the simple past with the past perfect in order to express themselves more accurately. The use of both the verb tense and the perfect tense, regardless of correctness in the above mentioned examples, is generally considered a positive learning sign, though despite the learners' progress and experience in a native environment, the issue of using the tense sequence correctly is still an obstacle. In this regards, Brown (1980, as cited in Hasyim, 2002), explained this type of errors as errors due to a lack of communication strategies: "it is obvious that communication strategy is the conscious employment of verbal mechanisms for communicating an idea when linguistic forms are not available to the learner for some reasons" (1980, p.4). Additionally, James (1998, as cited in Heydari, 2012), in his study of error analysis, showed the different types of learners' errors relating to omission, over-inclusion, miss-selection, disordering blends; "blending arises when two alternative grammatical forms are combined to produce an ungrammatical blend" (2012, p.7). Consequently, the learners' conception of wrong hypotheses, in this case of Saudi students in this particular group, about the rules of English language, as a result led to incomplete rule application, and students tended to commit this type of error. However, one might call a type of errors "under-generalization" (Heydari, 2012), as the learners do not use all the rules they learnt throughout communication due to a lack of practice, or not applying the rules, which again relates to students' intra-language errors. Other types of tense errors will be illustrated with more examples in the next section.

5.2.2.2.2 Misuse of present tense

Students in the UK group tended to shift between the present simple and the present continuous, creating similar error situations to the Saudi students in Saudi Arabia in this study; the difference was only in the number of errors not with the type of errors in this particular part with the misuse of the present tense. One important finding should be highlighted in this part related to errors with the present tense. Students in the UK who took part in this study, often mixed the above two tenses, namely the "past and present" with the present perfect tense which indicates they have moved gradually to a higher level by using more variety of English tenses as well as more complex ones, in

comparison to their colleagues back in Saudi Arabia. However, Table 7 illustrates some of the examples extracted from students' transcribed interviews, in which the majority of these examples were found to be more frequent in the second part, the formal part of interviews, when students had more independent speech about their hobbies and interests while living in the UK. Let us consider the following examples illustrated in the table:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the "present tense"
A	I am interesting here in Leeds, to what they have of culture	I am interested here in Leeds, or Leeds is interesting to what they have of culture
B	I have prefer something here, also, I preferring my family in SaudiArabia	I have preferred something here, also, I prefer my family in Saudi Arabia
C	If someone, a women, have covering his face	If someone, a women, have covered her face or is covering

Table 5.7 (UK) examples for "misuse of present tense"

A close examination of the above errors indicates a remarkable sign of language acquisition in terms of using the correct grammatical structure in sentences; students are able to use more complex sentences in terms of using different tenses, and different forms of oral production, such as the use of both the form of sentence and question in the same sentence produced, illustrated with the use of "what" in example (A). For instance, students in the above examples described actions in the present tense and combined them with the use of the present perfect continuous which was indicated with the use of "have" as a sign of applying the rules of the "perfect tense" regardless of the accurate form of verbs used in theses sentences. See example (A), Table 7: "I am interesting here in Leeds, to what they have of culture", or example (B) "I have prefer something here, also, I preferring my family in Saudi Arabia". The use of the present perfect and the present continues, in the above mentioned examples, were almost non-existent in the sentences produced by the students in Saudi Arabia. Knowing the rule of the "perfect tense" usually occurs in a more advanced level of language competence as the simple forms of language structure are usually acquired before the more complex ones in language learning process. These results lend supports to the argument of Kim, who holds the "assumption that second language learners follow similar developmental

patterns to those found in children's L1 acquisition" (Kim, 2001 p. 5). Additionally, the significance of this type of error gives a vivid sign of students' linguistic competence. Myles (2011) stated in regards to the learners' errors that "some errors can be evidence of a more advanced linguistic system than the equivalent correct form of learning process" (2011, p. 12). Thus, Javidan (1980, cited in Heydari, 2012), in his study of learners source of errors, reported that "the general difficulty order found in his study was in many ways similar to the orders reported in other L2 studies for adult ESL learners indicating that adults follow a natural and similar sequence in learning the grammatical structures of English and also that the structural difficulty order might be universal for all adults learning a second or foreign language" (2012, p. 7). This indicates an attempt by Saudi students in this specific group to apply what they have learned and acquired from being in a native environment, as well as exposure to various learning situations, which can be illustrated in the above given examples. Indeed, the influence of the different learning environment seems to have a positive impact on Saudi students in the UK in this case study. The learning and teaching strategies, the curriculum and the practice of the communicative approach which those students have been exposed to, help improve their level of spoken English in two different ways. The first one, which is clearly examined in this case, was the reduction of the number of errors produced in terms of misused verb tenses. The second significant impact was the use of more complex structures and tenses in oral production. However, students still produced several errors despite this; the sources of which will be discussed in further sections in this chapter. The third type of errors in this category deals with the future tense and will be presented in the next point.

5.2.2.2.3 Misuse of the Future Tense

Several students' errors when using the future tense were identified in the last part of the transcribed interviews. In particular, this type of errors was highly recognised when students were asked to talk about their future plans at the end of discussion. Examples are collected from the students in this group. Table 8 illustrates some students' instances of errors when using verbs in future tense.

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the "future tense"
A	I will go back to my home, <u>I complete</u> my study, I will have study master	I will go back to my home, <u>I'll complete</u> my study, <u>I will study</u> master, or <u>I have to study</u> master degree.
B	When <u>I have finish</u> my master, I will go back to Saudi Arabia, <u>I will still teaching</u>	When <u>I finish</u> my master, I will go back to Saudi Arabia, <u>I'll start to teach.</u>
C	I think<u>,</u> <u>I'll have watch film</u>, then <u>reading</u>, then <u>will taking</u> the last lesson	I think<u>,</u> <u>I'll watch a film</u>, then <u>I'll read</u>, then <u>I'll will take</u> the last lesson

Table 5.8 (UK) examples for "misuse of future tense"

The sentences illustrated in Table 8 indicate a combination of different tenses produced by students to express the future tense, all indicated by the use of the verb "will", which demonstrates that students are attempting to use the future tense with its different use in this particular context. Example (A) above demonstrates the use of three different future tense structures, beginning with "have finish", then the simple future "will go back", and the future continuous "I will still teaching". Students' errors in these examples indicate the intra-language stage of the language learning process, a fundamental type of student developmental error. This suggests that the errors result from a failure to apply the rules correctly, which refers to the "negative transfer of language items within the target language and occurs generally in the rule learning stages of the language" (Richards, 1992, p. 22). These errors are indicative of the Saudi students' failure to correctly acquire and apply the rules of different verb tenses in appropriate situations.

The errors with the future tense as shown in example (B), Table 8, "I will back" and "I will still teaching", indicate that students neglected the role of the verb " be", required in order to produce a correct English sentence, and relied instead on the structure of Arabic by using literal translation. The errors in the previous examples occurred when students used complex compound sentences, and also after being exposed to a sufficient learning environment and having had the opportunity to communicate more in a native environment. For example, Saudi students in Saudi Arabia committed errors when creating complex compound structures such as the present simple and present continuous; the group of students in the UK attempted more complicated ideas after receiving native exposure to the language. The latter group produced an extra level of

language complexity, represented by the use of different tenses such as the simple, continuous and perfect tenses, which resulted in additional language errors. However, being in a native environment, and being exposed to different learning and teaching strategies, as well as having the chance to use the communicative approach during classes as mentioned in chapter three, Saudi students in the UK in this study, show a prominent improvement in the level of complexity of English used, compared with their counterpart students in Saudi Arabia; but have not yet fully acquired the language to the extent that enables them to use it accurately. Saudi learners' errors in this group, specifically with the examples illustrated with the future tense above can be clearly justified as errors resulting from the context of learning. In other words, it supports the analysis of Brown (1980) in terms of learners' errors, in which this type of errors can be classified under "intra-language", which possibly occurs due to the learning context. He identified it as follows: "this overlaps both types of transfer. For example, the classroom with the teacher and its materials in the case of school learning or the social situation in the case of untutored second language learning. In a classroom context, the teacher or the textbook can lead the learner to make wrong generalization about the language" (cited in Heydari & Bagheri, 2012, p. 3)

English verbs agree with the subject when using different tenses; tenses should also agree with the verb and its various forms, as is the case in Arabic language. Moreover, switching between tenses in the same sentence is acceptable somehow in certain contexts in Arabic, such as sentence (C), Table 8: "I think, I'll have watch film, then reading, then will taking the last lesson". The use of more than one tense in expressing future plans, indicates a strong example of transfer from Arabic structures, as this switching between tenses is acceptable in Arabic, but cannot be applied in English structures. Accordingly, following the same patterns from Arabic and transferring them into English resulted in errors in such cases. Additionally, it is evident that, "the systems of time sense in the two languages concerned, i.e. English and Arabic, are very different (Al-Bouq, 1988, cited in Noor, 1969, P. 3). It could be argued that tense errors are the result of a failure to apply the rules correctly as explained by the theory of intra-language transfer; however, evidence suggests that the structure of the Arabic language has a much larger role in interfering with the production of English by second language learners. The errors in the above examples are unlikely to be the result of intra-language errors alone; analysis showed clear signs of Arabic language interference even when students produced sentences of higher complexity such as the case of examples

produced by Saudi students in the UK, which is more obvious in oral production than in written form. Dusková suggests that these errors may be attributed to the "pressure from all of the other ending-less forms" (1969, p. 7), which is to some extent considered to be true in this context. Students in this case study appear to sit between the developing stages of English language learning; some errors have already been corrected and improved, but students are still in a state of partial production competence when attempting more complex structures. This resulted in more first language transfer errors than in the developmental stage, which in this particular case created simpler errors in the use of different verb forms. In summary, and as a significant counterpoint, Saudi students in the UK showed distinguished improvement in terms of verb misuse. Although the average number of errors in this group declined by almost half that of the Saudi Arabia group, indicating possible development in the learning process, as discussed earlier, the errors were the result of the communicative strategies that students followed in their spoken English. The Saudi students studying at the Leeds Language Centre were exposed to a native learning environment, and errors were found to be due to their intra-language development. They created their own rules independent of both Arabic and English, as some elements were clearly identified when students developed more complex sentences requiring advanced verb formation.

Nevertheless, not all errors discussed in terms of misusing the verb tenses regarding the UK group were found to be due to students' intra-language issues only, some students demonstrated interference of Arabic grammatical elements in the absence of new English grammar structure systems such as in the examples illustrated with errors in the future tense for this group. Selinker (1972) described this type of learning strategy as "Strategies of Second Language Communication where some elements of the inter-language may result from specific ways people learn to communicate with native speakers of the target language" (cited in Khansir, 2012, p.3). Despite this, however, a number of errors were determined to be the result of the developmental process and defined by Keshavarz as "errors caused by the mutual interference of items in the target language, i.e., the influence of one target language item upon another" (1994, p.107, cited in Shekhzadeh & Gheich, 2011). However, additional analysis will be required for further explanation of learners' language errors among both groups.

5.2.3 Misuse of Articles

Following the unmarked form of verbs and the misuse of verb tenses, students in both Saudi Arabia and the UK represented in this case study found the use of English articles another problem when producing English sentences during their speech. In the following discussion, grammatical errors with articles from the two groups will be analysed.

5.2.3.1 Errors with Articles by Students in Saudi Arabia

As a matter of fact, almost every student in this particular group committed this type of error at least 22 times during approximately 12 minutes of speech. This indicated that Saudi students have a real problem when it comes to the correct and appropriate use of English articles. In reference to English language grammar, the use of articles is divided into two main types: definite and indefinite articles. These articles are considered to be adjectives, as they are usually used before a noun in English language. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the definite article refers to the word "the" as it is indicative of something specific. The definite article is usually used in front of a noun when we as hearers or readers know exactly what nouns are being referred to, such as "the sky is very clear today". On the other hand, the indefinite articles usually refer to the use of "an" and "a", when a hearer or reader does not know what is being referred to, indicating something unspecific, such as "a student in a class". However, more examples in both cases will be illustrated in the following section. Therefore, errors will be classified according to those two types among the two groups for further analysis;

5.2.3.1.1 Definite Articles

These types of grammatical errors were noted as being one of the most common errors among Saudi students studying in Saudi Arabia. Indeed, this particular type appeared typically when students started to describe the incidents of the event they wanted to describe in detail or when they narrated the story of a film or a book they liked during the final stage of interviews. Students tended to describe particular nouns as definite due to the fact that they had not referred to them previously in their speaking context and as such assumed that the interviewer knew what they were talking about. This made their sentences a little awkward when listening to their recorded speech. For example, "when I was in class" or "we should tell teacher about it" without referring to which class or

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which teacher, or even giving a brief description later on, in the sentence of what they are referring to. However, more examples will be illustrated in regard with different types of definite article errors, as students tended to commit two types of errors in this particular grammatical category.

5.2.3.1.1.1 Definite Articles Deletion

Students who were guilty of this error would delete the definite articles from the sentences, and produce full sentences with no mention of articles, such as in the following examples highlighted in Table 9:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "definite articles deletion"
A	Since I was in second grades	Since I was in the second grade
B	I was in primary school	I was in the primary school
C	I was in sixth grade	I was in the sixth grade

Table 5.9 (SA) examples for "definite articles deletion"

These kinds of errors were most noticeable among students as they produced specific sentences with no reference to articles or when speaking about something they had already mentioned, as when they talk about second grade, they talk about the second grade in the intermediate level in the previous sentence, as well as for example (B), in which student already described which primary school student means. Also, example (C), explain the same type of errors "in the sixth grade from elementary stage" in which student went to, as using definite articles is needed in theses specific sentences to convey the correct meaning, as illustrated in the previous example with suggested correction of these errors. The second type of error committed with definite articles is:

5.2.3.1.1.2 Definite Articles Redundancy

This error refers to the type of sentence employed by students when using articles to define nouns which are already definite, such as the following examples in Table 10:

Example	Incorrect In English	Suggested Correction In English of "definite articles redundancy"
A	It was the only choice here in the Madinah	It was the only choice here in Madinah
B	Teacher encourages her students to speak in the English language	Teacher encourages her students to speak in English
C	I'll go to the other city	I'll go to another city
D	I have been visited the London	I have been visited London

Table 5.10 (SA) examples for "definite articles redundancy"

As reported in the literature review, Arab students tend to refer to nouns with both types of articles; they are either definite or indefinite. According to Hashiem, (1996), who observed these kinds of errors among Arab students in their study of grammatical errors in English writing, said errors are to "be attributed to the negative transfer from mother tongue since Arabic marks nouns in some linguistic contexts of English language as definite"(p.18). In the examples given above, for instance, in sentence (A), Table 10, one of students referred to the definite noun "Madinah" with definite article "the", such as "It was the only choice here in the Madinah". Defining the definite noun in this case resulted in errors with definite articles redundancy, which means students used definite articles when it is not necessary to be used in the sentence, as the nouns in English language is already defined. The same type of error occurred in the previous sentences given in the table; for instance, example (B): "Teacher encourages her students to speak in the English language", "English language" again in this sentence is already a definite noun phrase which does not needs an article in English, and so on, respectively, in example (C) "I'll go to the other city" instead of, "I'll go to any other cities" or "I'll go to another city", in which the student means in this particular sentence that she will go to any other city around her, without defining which city she would go to in this context. In this case defining the indefinite nouns is considered to be incorrect in

English, and lastly (D): "I have been visited the London". However, this study reported definite articles as the most important type of error due to first language interference. Saudi students in this group committed the most frequent errors, with definite articles also appearing to be most problematic; even more so than indefinite articles. This could also be related to their interlanguage system, as the Arabic language clearly has this kind of structure, which will be discussed in more detail for further analysis in the following section. The other type of error with articles is the indefinite article which appeared to be less common among this group.

5.2.3.1.2 Indefinite Articles

With this type of error students tended to substitute definite articles with indefinite ones, particularly when they were trying to use one complex sentence followed by another, as seen below in Table 11:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "indefinite articles"
A	My city always sunny and warm, I see a rains	My city always sunny and warm, I see the rain
B	I take a ride, I went around London, in a sea	I take a ride, I went around London, in the sea
C	"The husband put a camera" and then the same line "the husband put camera"	The husband put the camera" and then the same line "the husband put the camera
D	I want to study in an outside country	I want to study outside this country, or abroad.

Table 5.11 (SA) examples for "indefinite articles"

The literature reported that the deletion of indefinite articles is most common among Arab learners, and it is definitely an example of first language interference (see Scott & Tucker, 1974; Willcott, 1974; Asfoor, 1978; Beck, 1979; Al-Kasimi et al., 1979; Kharma, 1981; El-Sayed, 1983; and Noor, 1996). "Arabic marks nouns as definite or indefinite by the presence or absence of the article, errors of omission of the indefinite article in English are, attributable to mother tongue interference" (Scott & Tucker, 1974, p. 18). On the other hand, if we compare the definite and indefinite articles for this particular group, Saudi students tended to have more problems with definite articles than the indefinite ones. As shown in the first examples, students tended to literally

translate the structure of Arabic and use it with the English nouns, such as examples in Table 10, sentence (D): "The London", and example (C): "the other city", are instances of defining the nouns in indefinite contexts as discussed above. Indeed, these examples of definite article errors in the previous section indicated a lack of knowledge regarding the structure of English among language students, and that these students tended to transfer Arabic elements and use them in the structure of English. On the other hand, with regard to indefinite article errors, these are likely to be less common than errors with definite articles, as per the data. In fact, students seemed to be aware of the English language structure, as demonstrated in Table 11, example (A): "I see a rains" and (C), "an outside country", where students had problems with the use of "a" and "an". Indeed, these were used in contexts which cannot be considered as entirely inappropriate, although it seemed to make for awkward reading. For instance "an outside country" in the fourth example (C) uses the indefinite, but still indicates that students are using their intra-lingual knowledge of English and must apply, which leads them to use it incorrectly in this particular context. In addition to this, as in example (C), students used the indefinite article in the same sentence twice, e.g.: "put a camera" and then "put camera". This could indicate that students are in the process of acquiring the correct English language structure but find themselves in a situation where they cannot use it accurately. Indeed, this is the case with the use of "a" in sentence (C): "The husband put a camera" and then in the same line "the husband put camera", which can be considered correct if they had refered to it previously. It is also the case with the second "a", in the same example, which they have deleted from the sentence as they overgeneralised the rule of articles of omission having applied it twice in the same sentence. This could be overcome through certain kinds of practices, and by raising students' awareness of these particular errors. Moreover, some errors with articles found in the data collected in the transcribed interviews, could not be identified as definite or indefinite as certain nouns in English require indefinite articles but require no article in Arabic, such as "the something go beneath him in the room". Indeed in this example, the noun "something" requires no article either in English or in Arabic. This kind of error fits into the category of "unique errors" committed by learners, with the source of such errors would be difficult to identify. However, more errors with articles should be represented for the second group; the Saudi students who study in the U.K in this case study. They will be discussed to provide valuable analysis and comparative sources of errors as it is considered to be the major concern of this research.

5.2.3.2 Errors with Articles by Students in UK

After discussing errors with articles for the group of Saudi students in Saudi Arabia in this case study, errors with articles will be presented for the second group accordingly. It is worth mentioning, according to the data, errors with articles found to be the third most frequent category of errors committed by Saudi students in both Saudi Arabia and the UK. The average number of misused articles for Saudi students in the UK was determined to be 13.27, compared with the average of almost 25 of the number of errors in the Saudi Arabia group. In other words, the difference in the average number of errors with articles comes up with 11.73 among the total number of errors, as illustrated in Diagram 3. However, while the average number of errors was half that of the Saudi Arabia group for the students in the UK, misuse of articles remains a significant grammatical issue to be tackled due to its consistency and diversity in this particular group.
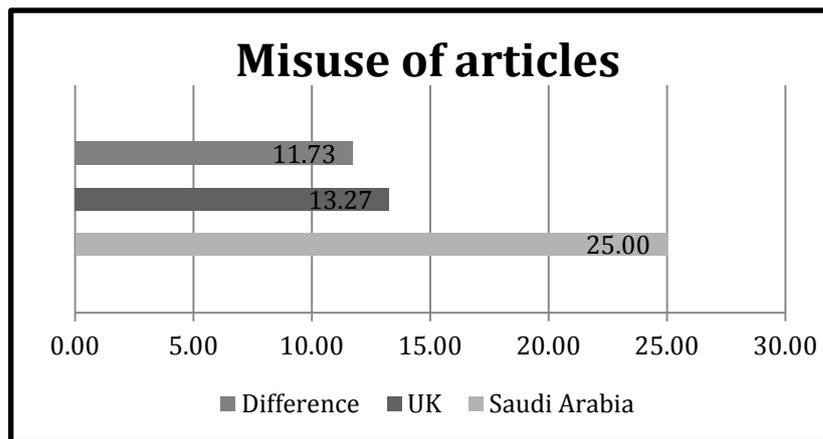
Diagram 5.3 the difference of "misuse of articles" amongst the two groups

In this section, errors with articles have been divided into two main categories, definite and indefinite, according to the frequency of errors across these two specific classifications.

5.2.3.2.1 Definite Articles

As mentioned earlier in the previous section of errors with articles for the first group, students in Saudi Arabia introduced in this study, errors with definite articles are more common than errors with indefinite articles for the group of students in Saudi Arabia.

These students appear to use definite articles less frequently in general and emphasise the use of 'the' in most sentences rather than using other types of articles. Generally, the students in Saudi Arabia faced difficulty with articles primarily in the form of deletion or redundancy. This may not be the case for Saudi students studying in the UK, as the average number of errors was only half that of their colleagues in Saudi Arabia, as Diagram 3 shows above; this indicates improvement in the case of Saudi students' language development in the UK group. Nevertheless, it is the errors in the use of articles in conjunction with abstract words which have been identified as the most significant type of errors made by students in the UK. Abstract words in English according to Diab (1997), usually refer to ideas, attributes, or qualities which are able to be expressed in English language structure without requiring the use of definite articles such as 'the'. However, consider the following examples shown in Table 12:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "definite articles"
A	All the life, there is organised	All life, there is organised
B	You can keep the time, for yourself	You can keep time, for yourself
C	The every shop close at 6.oclock	Every shop close at 6.oclock

Table 5.12 (UK) examples for "definite articles"

As the given examples indicate, students tend to use the definite article 'the' with abstract words, which is an acceptable grammatical structure in Arabic to use throughout oral production but this is not the case in English. Thus, errors with the following sentences such as (A): "the life", instead of "life"; (B): "the time" instead of "time"; and (C): "the every shop" instead of "every shop", are definitely an instance of errors occur due to first language interference. Students in this specific case with definite articles are literally translating the meaning and the structure of Arabic language into English which results in producing this type of errors. "The life", "the time" and "the every shop" convey correct meaning in Arabic as they stand with the use of articles in these examples, but they do not convey an appropriate meaning in English. Furthermore, students also attempted to specify abstract words using the article 'the', thus restricting broad concepts to a particular instance. This is usually expressed in English using a prepositional phrase such as 'for', 'to', and 'of', but is not the case in

Arabic (Kinneavy and Warriner, 1993, cited in Diab, 1997). Consider the following examples highlighted in Table 13:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of articles
A	There are a lot of <u>the interest</u> here in the U.K	There are a lot <u>of interests</u> here in the U.K
B	<u>All the countries</u>, and the geographic of these countries of the world	<u>All countries</u>, and the geographic of these countries of the world
C	See a lot <u>of the difference</u>, between Saudi Arabia and this country	See a lot <u>of difference</u>, between Saudi Arabia and this country

Table 5.13 (UK) examples for "definite articles with abstract phrase"

These examples use the definite article 'the' before identifying an abstract phrase, such as in example (A), Table 13: "There are a lot of the interest here in the UK", instead of "lots of interests". As well as sentence (B): "All the countries, and the geographic of these countries of the world", instead of "all countries"; and so on in example (C): "See a lot of the difference" instead of "lots of differences". These sentences are produced by students in order to express possession by a particular place, object or person. On the other hand, the Arabic language only specifies abstract phrases when they are followed by a name or a noun phrase to identify them. The errors in the above examples represent a distinguished type of error with definite articles not observed on a large scale among the group of students in Saudi Arabia; a small number of errors with abstract nouns were found in oral production, but not consistently enough to count as a trend among this particular group. Analysing the recorded data on the use of definite articles among the two groups reveals that the major source of errors in this particular category is difficult to determine. The primary source for the group in Saudi Arabia is "interference errors … resulting from the use of elements from one language into another while speaking" (Richards 1970, cited in Heydari and Bagheri, 2012, p. 7). This was obvious as previously discussed, yet this was not the case for the group in the UK. This type of error can come in line with what Schacheter and Celce-Murcia (1977, cited in Heydari and Bagheri, 2012) argued when explaining that "the distinction between intra-language and interlanguage errors is not always as clear-cut as it may sound" and that "it is

obviously more difficult to identify different types of intra-lingual errors" (2012, p. 2). Indeed, in the case of my students, this type or errors was considered to be an example of both intra-language, which is related to the negative transfer within the target language itself, English in this case, and interlanguage errors, rather than considering these errors as absolute evidence of the interference of their mother tongue. In other words, students in this stage have used the structure they learned of English language, but fail to apply it accurately. They relied instead on the structure of Arabic language defining these abstract words as one of the communicative strategies they used in order to deliver the meaning, neglecting the correct use of structure. Khansir (2012) described this type of errors as follows: "Strategies of Second Language Communication: some elements of the inter-language may result from specific ways people learn to communicate with native speakers of the target language" (P.1030). However, more details of errors with indefinite articles will be discussed in the following section.

5.2.3.2.1 Indefinite Articles

The second type of article to be discussed among this group is indefinite articles. Students in the UK group tended to commit errors by substituting definite articles with indefinite ones, or deleting indefinite articles in cases when they were necessary. No specific sections of the interview gave rise to more errors for Saudi learners in the UK; this is in contrast to the Saudi Arabia group, where errors with indefinite articles appeared most frequently in the second part of the interview, when they were asked to retell a story or a film. Further discussion will be provided for the following examples: deletion and substitution.

5.2.3.2.1.1 Deletion of Indefinite Articles:

The following examples in Table 14, will be discussed in detail as instances of Saudi student errors with the deletion of indefinite articles in this case study. Errors are highlighted as follows:

Example	Incorrect In English	Suggested Correction In English for "deletion of indefinite articles"
A	There is <u>lot of</u> interest in here, when I go to any another city	There is <u>a lot of</u> interest in here, when I go to another city
B	And also women here, we can <u>drive car</u>	And also women here, we can drive <u>cars or, a car.</u>
C	It was <u>such accident</u>, women were there	It was such <u>an accident</u>, women were there

Table 5.14 (UK) examples for "deletion of indefinite articles"

The above examples exhibit errors with inappropriate deletion of indefinite articles. Students in this group produced this error in oral speech during the 'describing events or retelling stories' part of the interview. The interesting point for these examples is that the structure used by students cannot be attributed to either the use of English structure or that of Arabic. For example, the deletion of the indefinite article "a", in example (A) in Table 14: "there is lot of interest" instead of " a lot of interest", indicates no sign of Arabic interference, as even in Arabic, it is not acceptable to produce a noun phrase without defining it, either with definite or indefinite articles. Students omit the articles in these particular sentences due to a misuse of rules of the new language and a sing of failure to understand the rules of indefinite articles. The same errors apply to example, (B) in the same table: "And also women here, we can drive car" instead of "a car" or in plural form without the use of articles "cars", and (C): "It was such accident" instead of "an accident". Errors with incorrect deletion of indefinite articles occurred due to the production of speech chunks. Strangert, (2004), explains this as follows; "'Chunks' is chosen as a neutral term to reflect the status of these units (referring to the speech sequence), as the result of combined linguistic-prosodic and cognitive processing. That is, chunks have lots in common with, but are not identical to, syntactic, semantic or prosodic constituents" (Strangert, 2004, p.1).

In other words, second language learners sometimes stop producing words in the speech sequence, as they start rethinking what they have said, restarting, pausing, or even paraphrasing the sentences, which makes them repeat their speech and resulting in some errors due to their cognitive processing. Errors with this type of speaking process cannot always be traced as there are part of the cognitive language processes which differ from

one situation to another, meaning that students committed these errors outside of issues with their interlanguage or intra-language ability.

Studying and living in a native English environment, with a different English language curriculum, compared with their colleagues in Saudi Arabia in this study, provided the UK group with the opportunity to practice their speaking in a freer environment, which gives the impression of fluency rather than focusing attention to the rules of their L1 and L2 systems. This comes to support Habermas' (1979) explanation of this type of error, who stated the following: "Communicative competence involves communicating in accordance with that fundamental system of rules that adult subjects master to the extent that they can fulfil the conditions for a happy employment of sentences in speech utterances" (p.10). However, the second type of errors with indefinite article among the UK group that will be discussed is the substitution of indefinite articles.

5.2.3.2.1.2. Substitution of Indefinite Articles

While errors with indefinite articles were not as common as errors with definite articles in the UK group, the average frequency of this particular type of error is high enough to be worthy of deeper analysis. According to the data, 10 students out of 15 in the UK group substituted indefinite articles with definite ones at least 8 times during their speech. See the following examples illustrated in Table 15:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English for "Substitution of indefinite articles"
A	You have not studied the English course before	You have not studied an English course before
B	I will be studying in the laboratory	I will be studying in a laboratory
C	I need to get the book to read	I need to get a book to read

Table 5.15 (UK) examples for "substitution of indefinite articles"

The subtle difference between the use of the definite article 'the' and the indefinite articles 'a' or 'an', as highlighted in the examples above, seems to be a problematic issue among the UK group. In fact, a quick surface exploration of these sentences might result in them sounding correct when they are heard, but not when written. For example, in sentence (B), in Table 15, the student was not referring to a specific laboratory by

saying "I will be studying in the laboratory", as he was speaking in general about it without mentioning the word previously in any sentence, but he still defines it with the article "the". In addition, example (A) in the same table: "You have not studied the English course before" also indicates an error with the definite noun "English" using instead "the English", though in English it is more common to use "an English". Although students have definitely come across the correct use of this article, they are still not sure what to use in this particular context. The same case applies in example (C) respectively: "I need to get the book" where the student used the definite article "the" instead of the indefinite "a" when referring to an unspecified book, as in the standard English structure the sentence should be "I need to get a book" in this context. However, in reference to the literature, Al-Kasimi et al. (1979) noticed that Arab learners usually commit errors with substituting indefinite articles with definite articles, as he attributed the source behind it to the mother tongue interference, as students literally translate the meaning from Arabic into English. Noor, additionally added, that this type of errors made by his Arab students "may mainly be attributed to hypercorrection the learners follow with this structure", (1996, p. 19). Indeed, a deeper analysis to these particular examples, produced by Saudi students in this particular group, attempts to diagnose the source of such errors. However, it indicates that learners have begun to use an appropriate level of English according to the sufficient input they have received, but fail to apply these rules correctly. In other words, students did not neglect the rule of using articles in their language use, they are aware of using proper articles in their sentence to clarify the meaning, but they misuse the correct form of articles in this context, which does not completely agree with the assumption of Noor and Al-Kasimi who linked this type of errors to the strong influence of the mother tongue. On the other hand, Heydari & Bagheri, assumed the source of these errors to be "items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. (2012, p. 7). In addition, Richards (1970) explained this type of error as follows, saying that the learner may "derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language" (p.6). In this case, the second analysis of Richards (1970) attributes the sources of Saudi learners' errors best with the substitution of the indefinite with definite articles. Accordingly, Heydari & Bagheri, classified this type of grammatical errors as false hypotheses, which derived from students' intralingual ability about the system of

the new language, stating that "a false hypothesis can be described when the learners do not fully understand a distinction in the target language" (2012, p. 2).

In summary, the findings of the sources of errors with articles in this case study varied from one group to another. For Saudi students in Saudi Arabia, the source of errors with definite articles was connected to their interlanguage due to the heavy transfer of Arabic elements into English, which was affected by their learning environment and the insufficient input they are exposed to as discussed in Chapter 3. Similarly, although the number of definite article errors decreased for the group of Saudi students in the UK, their errors in this specific category were also a result of their interlanguage system, although they had been exposed to a different environment as previously discussed above. Consequently, the source for both groups was the same. However, some errors with definite articles generated by students in the UK were the result of their intra-language, as selected examples illustrated the role of their first language in shaping their production of English. Errors with indefinite articles in the UK group indicated the students' use of their communicative ability in order to deliver their intended meaning in English. This supports the theory of intra-lingual or developmental errors, according to Richards (1970, cited in Abi Samra, 2003, p.6), who defined them as "items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the target language. The learner, in this case, tries to derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language." Contrastingly, the majority of errors with indefinite articles for Saudi students in Saudi Arabia were discovered to be due to their interlanguage source. Indefinite articles proved to be a problematic area where students relied heavily on the structure of their first language, although they did produce some developmental errors as a sign of the natural learning process that takes place in the cognitive process of learning a foreign language.

5.2.4 Misuse of Singular and Plural Nouns

The fourth category will be analysed for all Saudi students in this case study is errors with singular and plural nouns. Errors will be highlighted among both groups and divided according to their consistency in the following two classifications;

5.2.4.1 Errors with Singular and Plurals for Students in Saudi Arabia

The first most frequent kind of error among the group of Saudi students studying in Saudi Arabia is the misuse of singular and plural. In this particular category, and according to the data and the number of errors calculated, Saudi students committed the highest number of errors in all categories and among the two groups. One student from this group committed the same error almost 50 times during 15 minutes of speech, although this number of errors was not included among all errors and all students in both groups. The minimum number was quite high compared with other types of errors but was less likely to be the least. It was almost committed at least 13 times by one of the Saudi students in this group. The English noun is defined as "a word that is used to name any person, animal, thing, idea, state, or quality" (Russell, 1993, p. 16). In addition, according to Scott & Tucker, who analysed syntactic errors, singular and plural noun errors can be defined as the following: "singular nouns which should have been plurals, singular nouns incorrectly marked as plurals, incorrectly formed plurals, and non-count nouns used with the plural marker" (1974, p. 22). As a result, student errors in this category will be divided into two main types in order to identify the source of these errors. These types are as follows:

5.2.4.1.1 Errors with Plural Nouns

With this type of error students tend to mark plural nouns with singular forms. Many Saudi students in this group committed the same type of errors when facing problems with the plural form of singular nouns in English. For instance, Table 16 illustrates those errors as the following:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English for the "plural nouns"
A	I think this is more successful than <u>reading book</u>	I think this is more successful than <u>reading books</u>
B	To skip the <u>important thing</u>	To skip the <u>important things</u>
C	She try to explain the <u>new word</u>	She try to explain <u>the new words</u>
D	For the <u>all university</u>	For the <u>all universities</u>

Table 5.16 (SA) examples for "plural nouns"

From the previous errors in the above examples, it is obvious that Saudi students experience difficulty when it comes to changing singular nouns into the correct plural form in English. First of all, it would be useful to point out that English is "an

inflectional language, in which prefixes or suffixes play a significant grammatical role" (Fromkin & Rodman, 1998, as cited in Jing, Tindall & Nisbet, 2006, p. 5). These prefixes and suffixes play a major rule in formatting the nouns and verbs, such as adding an "s" to change the singular form to plural such as "student" in singular, and "students" to make the plural form. According to the literature, during the early stages, or at intermediate level, most ESL learners of English face difficulty in correctly forming and using English grammar in terms of forms. This results in a reliance on their prior knowledge in order to form the components of the English language structure. Mohamed, Lian & Eliza (2004) have pinpointed that the misuse of singular and plural forms is one of the most common grammatical errors in English writing among Chinese students. Moreover, Diab, (1997), in her study of syntactic errors in writing for Arab learners, Diab (1997) stated that one of the most frequent grammatical errors related to the incorrectness of forming the singular and plural nouns among her students. According to the data, Saudi students in this group were unable to determine whether certain forms of English words were singular or plural. Indeed, errors with singular and plural were found to be commonly produced in the two parts of the interview, the formal and the informal one, as there were no specific parts during the interview where this type of error could be particularly traced. However, as illustrated in the examples, students often simplified the nouns without using the "s" at the end of the words, even though the rule of adding "s" to make singular forms plural is far from new, such as in example (A), Table 16, the student said "I think this is more successful than reading book" instead of using the plural form "books". Moreover, in example (B), the student's error was with using the incorrect form of plural nouns as follows: "To skip the important thing" instead of "things", in which he refers to more than one thing in the context of this sentence. As a matter of fact, students in this particular group have been studying the rules of forming singular nouns into plural since commencing their English studies in school, which means they have studied this grammatical rule for six years at least. However, in order to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon among Saudi students, it is worth mentioning that students literally transfer the element of meaning in Arabic (their L1) into English and so they do not entirely use this form of the rule in the English language. This could be explained more by discussing the following examples; in sentence (D): "For the all university", the student tended to produce errors with singular nouns instead of using plural forms, as a result of their annexation of the Arabic understanding of meaning. In other words, the sentence "for

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all university" is an acceptable use of structure in Arabic, as the student refers to the word "university" by using "all university" which indicates the meaning of "the whole university" instead of simply saying "For the all universities". Although using the word "university" in its singular from indicates that they are transferring the meaning from Arabic rather than the rule. In Arabic we can see "the all university" although for this particular context, students unconsciously transferred the meaning into the rule of English language not Arabic, thus resulting in such types of errors by using the singular form of nouns instead of the plural form. In this regard, Dulay, Burt, & Krashen suggested that "there are two possible ways of describing the term 'interference'. One is from a psychological perspective, which suggests that there is influence from old habits when new ones are being learned. The second is from a sociolinguistic perspective which describes language interactions which occur when two language communities are in contact" (1982, p. 8). The second term of interference in this quote, supports the source of students' errors misusing the plural nouns by providing an appropriate justification of transferring the meaning and form from Arabic into the new rules of language they learn. However, this type of singular and plural misuse will be explained in more detail so as to establish the reasons why students commit this type of error.

5.2.4.1.2 Errors with Singular Nouns

With regards to these types of errors, students tend to face difficulty when it comes to certain English nouns, as they are unable to determine whether these words are singular or plural. For example, they substitute certain plural nouns with the singular form, as seen in Table 17 below:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English for "singular nouns"
A	The teacher give us a lot of homeworks	The teacher give us a lot of homework
B	After finishing the foundations year	After finishing the foundation year
C	The story has a lot of informations	The story has a lot of information
D	There is a competitions	There is a competition

Table 5.17 (SA) examples for "singular nouns"

In the above mentioned examples, in sentences (A), (B), (C), and (D), respectively, students treated the nouns "homeworks", "foundations", "informations" and "competitions", as singular and needed the suffix for the plural(s) to be added in order to change the form of theses nouns into plural, although they already referred to a plural meaning. The nouns above are used in their plural forms in this context, according to the form they would have been used in Arabic but not in English. In other words, these different nouns are usually used as plural when expressed in Arabic. The English language, on the other hand, uses both the singular and plural forms for the same nouns, such as in example (C) where "information" indicates both the plural and singular. Yet in Arabic, the same noun can be used in the two different forms of nouns, the singular and the plural, to indicate "one information" for singular or in plural "more than one information". Consequently, students in this case, rely strongly on their Arabic structure to form the plural nouns of these words. Although this is in accordance with the different contexts and according to the subject-verb agreement, such as the "verb to be/auxiliaries" (is, are, etc.). "Some words that end with the plural forms are actually singular in number, whereas others indicate a singular or plural number while maintaining the same form" (Kinneavy & Warriner, 1993, pp. 712,972), such as in example (D), when the student says: "there is a competitions", where the errors in agreement between the subject and nouns resulted in this type of error. Due to this specific context, students seem to be unsure of the plural and singular forms, as they treated the singular form as a plural noun and vice versa. Indeed, they relied on both the structure of forms and meaning of the Arabic language, such as example (A): "The teacher give us a lot of homeworks" instead of "a lot of homework". For both the agreement with the auxiliary "there is" in example (D) and the singular noun "homework" in example (A), errors in this sentence represent a good instance of negative transfer from Arabic language in both form and meaning. In addition, another type of error appeared to be significant among students in this group, as they occasionally tended to simplify the rule in English which is due to their intra-language knowledge of English rather than interference of Arabic. Table 18, sheds light on some examples that illustrate this type of error due to students' intra-language:

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Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English nouns
A	To the <u>highest level</u>	To the <u>highest levels</u>
B	There are not any good <u>college</u>	There are not any good <u>colleges</u>
C	I continue my <u>study</u>	I continue my <u>studies</u>
D	I think in the three <u>semester</u>	I think in the three <u>semesters</u>

Table 5.18 (SA) examples for "nouns"

A possible explanation behind this type of error is that students know, to some extent, the rules of the singular and plural forms in these particular contexts, but due to the lack of knowledge, students simplify certain grammatical rules as a result of focusing on communication strategies. For instance, in example (A), student said "to the highest level" instead of "the highest levels", when she attempted to describe the levels of English language left to be achieved in their English course which she is undertaking by pointing to more than one level in this context. Respectively, example (B): "there are not any good college" instead of "colleges", where the beginning of the sentence indicates a plural form needed to be used, the student start with the auxiliary "are" to point out to a plural noun form. Moreover, examples (C) and (D), misusing the plural nouns in the words "semester" and "study" instead of "semesters" and "studies", when students produced errors using the singular instead of the plural in these cases. However, this type of error may happen particularly when students try to communicate in English, as their focus is on delivering the message without paying attention to applying the rules correctly and accurately. Due to the overgeneralisation of rules, errors appear to take this form of inaccuracy, and particularly when used by this group of Saudi students. In this regard, certain researchers, such as Jain (1974) and Tan (1978), have attributed grammatical errors such as the above as a source of overgeneralisation of errors, which justifies the reason behind committing this type of errors by Saudi students in this case study. They stated that "over-generalization and a simplification strategy on the learners' part, means that in order to simplify things, learners often sub-categorise certain countable nouns as uncountable nouns and vice versa. Thus, the respondents' failure to mark plural countable nouns could probably be due to a subconscious learning strategy employed by them to lighten their memory load when managing new English data input" (cited in Mohamed, Lian, & Eliza, 2004, p. 86). Nevertheless, more errors with singular and plural nouns will be discussed among the group Saudi students in the UK for further analysis.

5.2.4.2 Errors with Singular and Plurals for Students in the UK

Similar to the group of students in Saudi Arabia represented in this study, the fourth category of errors committed by the group of Saudi students studying in the UK is the misuse of nouns in terms of both the singular and the plural forms. As with other categories, while this are the fourth most frequent type of error made by Saudi students in the UK, the total average number decreased by more than half when compared to the group in Saudi Arabia. They committed an average of 27.67 errors of this type, with a high number of students committing these errors consistently, in comparison to the average of 12.20 errors made by Saudi students in the UK, with a difference of 15.47 in the average number of errors in this particular category. Diagram 4 illustrates the average number of errors for each group, as well as highlighting the difference among them. Errors with the use of singular and plural nouns were recorded to have declined after exposure to a native English environment among the UK group
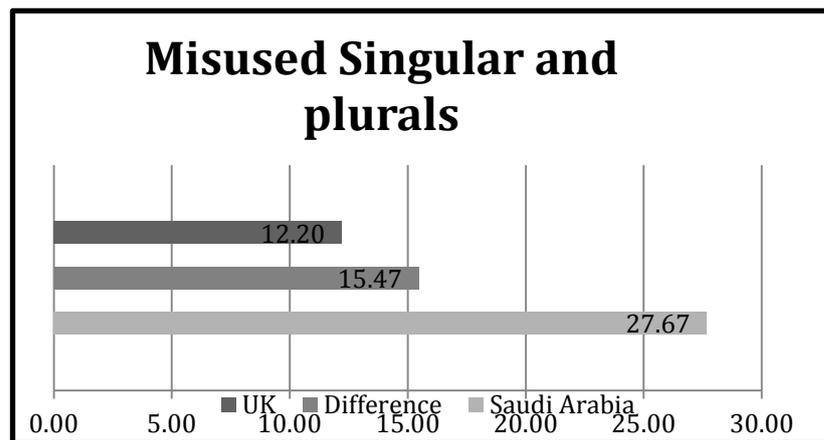
**Diagram 5.4 the difference of "misuse of singular and plural" amongst
the two groups.**

However, errors with singular and plural nouns should still be discussed in order to diagnose and identify their different major sources, as well as to point out the reasons why some learning errors disappear while others persist. Accordingly, two categories will be discussed with regard to this particular classification of errors: plural and singular.

5.2.4.2.1 Errors with Plural Nouns

As mentioned earlier, students in Saudi Arabia in this study faced difficulty with using the correct method of changing singular nouns into plural nouns. Despite the noticeable reduction of the total average number of errors in the UK group as shown in Diagram 4, the problem with this particular category of grammatical errors has not disappeared entirely. The participating students studying at the University of Leeds committed the following errors during their oral conversation. Table 19 highlights some examples of those students' errors:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English for the "plural nouns"
A	There is no public transport in SA, like buses, taxies, and <u>train</u>	There is no public transport in SA, like buses, taxies, and <u>trains</u>
B	I used to play football, three <u>time</u> a week	I used to play football, three <u>times</u> a week
C	The people, and the religions, and the <u>habit</u>	The people, and the religion, and the <u>habits</u>

Table 5.19 (UK) examples for "plural nouns"

In fact, what distinguishes the above examples from similar errors with plural nouns made by students in Saudi Arabia is that students in Leeds in this study have had exposure to sufficient input of English language in a native English context, as well as exposure to a different English language curriculum, and had the opportunity to practice the language inside the classroom by using the communicative approach, and outside, in a native English environment. Saudi students in this case understood the grammatical rules of singular and plural nouns and applied them correctly in some parts, but have failed to acquire them completely and cannot reproduce these rules without certain errors. Tackling the source of these kinds of errors is a complicated matter. If students were able to apply the rules correctly and accurately in some cases but still made errors with the same nouns, the same rules and in the same sentence, what caused them to produce such errors? For instance, when applying the rule of plural nouns in example (A): "buses, taxies and train", the first two nouns in a row were changed to the plural, but the third was not. The same error occurred in the second sentence, example (C), in the same table: "The people, and the religions, and the habit" instead of the "habits".

The question then becomes why the rule of the changing from singular to plural was not applied to the third noun as it was applied correctly in the first place. A possible justification for these errors could be related to the phenomenon of "language transfer and fossilization" (Lu, 2004, p.2). Fossilization is defined as follows: "A linguistic form, feature, rule, etc. becomes permanently established in the inter-language of a second-language learner in a form that is deviant from the target language norm and that continues to appear in performance regardless of further exposure to the target language" (Lu, 2004, p.2). In other words, the similarities between the structure of both Arabic and English led to the application of rule of plural nouns partly into English but not yet fully acquired.

In other cases, a particular feature of the second language may be temporarily derived, rather than permanently, from a feature of the native language, in this case English and Arabic respectively. Errors with plural nouns in this particular case study demonstrate that students have a false sense of second language concepts and rules, which are not totally acquired before being applied to the new language system. The justification of these kinds of errors is based on the relationship between the two languages, and also with regard to language transfer and fossilization, which is related to many factors: student desire, motivation, and the environment where second language learning takes place. Selinker and Lakshmanan (1992, cited in Lu, 2004), wrote that multiple factors affect these errors; when more than one source of language learning factors work together in addition to the first language, there is "a greater chance of stabilization of interlanguage forms of errors leading to possible fossilization" (p.2). Lu concludes with the following: "Language transfer is a necessary co-factor in setting multiple effects. Once a structure is fossilized, it may not become open to destabilization through consciousness raising strategies when multiple effects apply" (2004, p. 2). In other words, these types of errors exist in students' conception about the new language rules. In case of plural nouns, students appear to understand the rules, but due to their further exposure to the target language, and acquiring new elements of the new language, errors continue to appear to rely on the first language structure, regardless of the amount of exposure to the target language, as a result of fossilisation, which is represented in the native environment that students are in.

Thus, it is extremely important to understand the source of learners errors, both interlanguage and intra-language due to different factors that may cause grammatical

errors especially in oral production. In this regard, errors with singular nouns will be discussed as well, in order to create a vivid image of Saudi learning errors in the UK group.

5.2.4.2.2 Errors with Singular Nouns

When examining the different types of errors with singular and plural nouns among students in Saudi Arabia and the UK, few differences were found in the errors regarding singular nouns specifically. Saudi students in the UK produced the same kind of errors with singular nouns as the Saudi Arabia group, although the average number of errors was significantly reduced in comparison. Consider the following examples highlighted in Table 20:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English for the "singular nouns"
A	I have don't enough a free <u>times</u>	I don't have enough free <u>time</u>
B	There is a lot of <u>informations</u> in the course	There is a lot of <u>information</u> in the course
C	I study in the intermediate <u>stages</u>	I study in the intermediate <u>stage</u>

Table 5.20 (UK) examples for "singular nouns"

As shown in the examples above, students in the UK made similar mistakes in comparison to the first group. The incorrect form of singular nouns, in examples (A): "a free times", (B) "a lot of informations", and (C) "in the intermediate stages", respectively, are meant to exist in the plural form without adding 's' to the end of these nouns. It is normal in English for some words to indicate both the singular and the plural form without adding 's' to distinguish one form from the other. However, this particular type of error made by Saudi students involves erroneously adding the plural 's' to English words that use the same form for plural and singular, when students' meaning in these particular instance tend to describe them as singular nouns not plural. A conceivable justification of this type of errors is, that errors with singular nouns occur because Arabic has different forms for both singular and plural nouns that may be distinguished with certain suffixes or prefixes to indicate the number.

These errors arise regardless of the level of native English exposure, as the errors with singular nouns were made by both groups in a consistent fashion; this supports existing literature (see Ridha, 2012; Diab, 2004; Noor, 1996, Scott& Tucker, 1974). The argument is that Arab learner errors with singular nouns usually result from the complex differences between the two languages, causing them to transfer this specific grammatical element from Arabic and apply it in their English language production.

However, a remarkable conclusion for both groups can be stated as follows: as previously discussed, although the average number of errors with singular and plural nouns showed a great difference, declining by almost half for Saudi students in the UK, the source of the errors was similar. The major difference among the two groups was in the quantity, not the quality, of errors. The reduction in number is a sign of learning improvement taking place for Saudi students in the UK, but the key finding of this particular grammatical element is that in term of singular nouns, the major source of errors for students in Saudi Arabia was due to the differences between the structure of Arabic language and English. On the other hand, the source of errors with singular nouns was identified to be the same for all students in both groups; other factors related to the learning atmosphere, for example the amount of practice and the exposure to a native environment in addition to the perceived distance between the two languages, play an important role in reducing the number of errors for students in the UK. Errors with plural nouns for the group of students in Saudi Arabia largely demonstrated the influence of Arabic on their oral production, although some students produced errors as a result of their intra-language.

Nevertheless, the above mentioned cannot completely explain errors with plural nouns made by Saudi students in the UK. Errors with plural nouns were difficult to define accurately in terms of their source, but were found to be a type of developmental error due to the fossilization of rules by Saudi students as mentioned previously. Students in this particular group have been exposed to high levels of language input due to the native environment; thus, the distance between the two languages was narrowed, but students still committed errors with plural nouns. These occurred in the production of sentences of a complexity higher than those made by their colleagues in Saudi Arabia. Learning a language takes place over a long period of time, and when in a native environment as with this case study, students formed correct sentences overall, but

produced plural nouns incorrectly in a consistent fashion. This transitional stage for the Saudi learners in the UK was described by Nemser (1971) as the "approximate system" of the target language, defined as one type of students' intra-language errors. This looks not only to the specific errors produced but also to the current forms, such as the complex sentences created by students in this case, in order to determine the learners' progress in this particular category. As mentioned earlier, this type of error has been explained as an error of performance due to the students' fossilization of the new rules of English they acquired naturally in the native environment.

5.2.5 Misuse of Prepositions

According to the findings of this study, grammatical errors with the use of prepositions fall in the middle of overall speaking errors by frequency for Saudi students in both Saudi Arabia and the UK. The following sections will discuss different types of errors with prepositions for each group.

5.2.5.1 Errors with prepositions for students in Saudi Arabia

In fact, errors with prepositions are considered to provide one of the remarkable findings among grammatical errors for all Saudi students in this case study. Prepositions appear to be in the middle of the list of grammatical errors, as a source of difficulty for Saudi students in Saudi Arabia. As a matter of fact, the number relating to errors with prepositions was quite surprising, as each student had committed this type of error 14 times during 15 minutes of speech in the recorded interviews. Before beginning to analyse the errors which occur with the use of prepositions, it would be useful to point out that English prepositions are considered to be a source of difficulty not only for Saudi students but for all learners of English. As Pittman (1966) described, "prepositions have earned a reputation for difficulty if not a downright unpredictability". In addition, Takahaski (1969) stated that the "correct usage of prepositions is the greatest problem for learners of English" (Lakkis & Malak, 2000, p. 5). Moreover, in English, prepositions are considered to be one of the most important parts of spoken language, even more so than writing (Alayesh, 2012). In light of this, huge emphasis was placed on establishing the source of this type of error in the case of Saudi students. With regard to this, Show (1986, p. 220), stated that "there are sixty

words that can be used as prepositions in English. Most of them show relationship of direction, location and time and some can show a relationship of exclusion" (1986, p. 220).

Additionally, Chalker pointed out that the following prepositions are the most frequent when it comes to the use of spoken English, namely: "at, by, for, from, in, on, to and with" (1992, p. 217). In addition, Al-Haidari (1984) and Meziani (1984) stated that English prepositions which indicate the following categories are the major source of difficulty for English learners, specifically for Arab learners. These are prepositions which indicate, time, destination, cause/purpose, and recipient/target.

However, in reference to the literature, errors with prepositions are divided into three types, namely errors with omission or deletion, substitution and redundancy (see Scott & Tucker, 1974; Noor, 1996; Meziani, 1984). Examples for each of those classifications will be highlighted individually in the following discussion. Errors with omission appear when learners use sentences with a deletion of the preposition, thus resulting in sentences without prepositions. Substitution occurs when learners substitute one preposition with another. Finally, there are errors of redundancy, which indicate the use of unnecessary prepositions in the production of English sentences. Scott & Tucker described this as the following: "Omitted means a word was left out where necessary. Substituted refers to the use of a wrong word. Redundant means that an unnecessary word was put in or that two or more words were used where only one was required" (1974, p.16).

However, the first two types which are errors with omission and substitution will be illustrated with more examples and analysed in more detail as they are shown to be the most frequent types of error in this case study. Indeed, they were even more frequent than redundancy of preposition, which appeared to be less common among Saudi learners. Omission of preposition as the first classification of errors will be discussed to provide a valuable analysis of Saudi learners' errors.

5.2.5.1.1 Errors with Preposition Omission

With this type of error, Saudi students tended to omit some English prepositions when attempting to produce sentences in English. As a result of certain similarities between Arabic and English in both structure and prepositions, students tended to use English prepositions correctly when there was an equivalent in Arabic. As well as this, errors seemed to be obvious when there was no direct equivalent in Arabic for the English preposition. In this regard, students in these categories seemed to produce some errors when they literally transferred the structure of Arabic into English in terms of preposition use. Noor (1996) described it as "one-to-one correspondence" between the uses of the English preposition into the use of Arabic prepositions. The following examples in Table 21 highlight some of students' errors with preposition omission:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "preposition omission"
A	I <u>want stay</u> here	I <u>want to stay</u> here
B	Her father did not <u>agree let</u> him	Her father did not <u>agree to let</u> him
C	I don't <u>agree the</u> concept	I don't <u>agree with the</u> concept
D	It is like 16 <u>hours English</u> language classes	It is like 16 hours <u>English of language</u> classes

Table 5.21 (SA) examples for "preposition omission"

Indeed, the omission of the prepositions "to, to, with, of" respectively in sentences (A), (B), (C) and (D), according to the examples given above in Table 21, indicated that students are literally transferring the structure and the use of prepositions of Arabic into English, as these sentences, with their current structure, are correctly used in Arabic, although this is not the case in English. It is an acceptable structure in Arabic to say "I want stay here" without using the preposition "to", but it is not English. This sentence should be said as follows "I want to stay here" as an appropriate use of English prepositions. The same case applies to the rest of sentences, such as in example (B), "her father did not agree let him" instead of "to let him", as this sentence indicates the transfer of meaning from Arabic into English in terms of the preposition used. However, the main distinguishing feature between errors with prepositions was in the use of the preposition "to" which seemed to be the most frequent error rather than other

preposition-related errors such as "from, with, of, and, in, as, to" as some of them mentioned in the above examples. This indicated that each student in this group faced difficulty when attempting to correctly use "to". Indeed for every single student, 4 out of 10 errors with prepositions related to the preposition "to". However, an example of "negative transfer" definitely appears to be linked in this section to the role of the first language (Arabic) on the production of English sentences with prepositions. Students in this case, seemed to rely on the structure of their native language more than using the rules of English they learn. However, more examples will be discussed in terms of the use of prepositions for further analysis in the following classification:

5.2.5.1.2 Errors with Preposition Substitution

In relation to errors with preposition, other type of errors with preposition substitution arise beside the errors of omission in the case of Saudi students. According to what has been mentioned in the literature and previous studies related to errors with prepositions, "preposition substitution" seems to be a source of difficulty for English language learners in general, regardless of their language level. Indeed, this kind of errors can be briefly described as a grammar-related error when students replace the use of a preposition with another in certain contexts. English prepositions, particularly with errors of omission, are examined in writing in these studies (see Pittman, 1966; Zughoul, 1973; Dandan, 1968; Abu-Gahrarah, 1989; Noor, 1996; Lakkis & Malak, 2000). However, the findings of these studies indicated that most Arab and non-Arab learners face difficulty with the correct use of prepositions, as replacing one preposition instead of another is an alarming area to be focused. In this case study, and according to the data, Saudi students recorded errors with prepositions as a result of replacing one preposition with another, thus leading to inaccurate English sentences. The following examples were found equally in both parts of the interviews recorded, the formal and the informal one. Errors are illustrated in Table 22:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "preposition substitution"
A	I study programming <u>in this university</u>	I study programming <u>at this university</u>
B	I can't remember what the name <u>was for English</u>	I can't remember what the name <u>was in English</u>
C	To cut classes <u>to two hours</u>	To cut classes <u>into two hours</u>
D	He always explain <u>it for him</u>	He always explains <u>it to him</u>

Table 5.22 (SA) examples for "preposition substitution"

In the examples above, the incorrect use of "in" as illustrated in example (A), Table 22, is rather frequent amongst Saudi learners in our study, particularly when the context is one which sees the word "university" used as a noun in the production of English sentences, as is the case, for instance, in sentence (A). Surprisingly, errors with the preposition "in" instead of "at" were repeated 60 times with both words "university and college" out of 278 errors with prepositions and among the 15 students in this particular group. The replacement of the preposition "in" instead of "at" indicated that interference from the Arabic language is the major source of these types of errors and in this particular context. In Arabic, the correct use of the preposition is to use "in" when it is followed by nouns to indicate places instead of "at" in the English language. Indeed, students seem to be unfamiliar with using "at" in such particular contexts and rely instead on using the literal interpretation of the Arabic preposition when they communicate. On the other hand, the incorrect use of the other prepositions such as "for" in sentence (B) indicated that students use neither the Arabic structure nor the English structure in the production of such an error. The use of "for" in the second example is incorrect both in English and Arabic. When students use their intra-language structure, in this case "English", they tend to develop their own rules and build on their own unconscious development for the new structure of the English language, which is possibly considered a positive sign of learning to use the new language structure rather than yielding to interference from their mother tongue, Arabic.

Alternatively, in the third and the fourth examples, (C) and (D) respectively, incorrect use of the prepositions "to" and "for", in these particular sentences, appeared again due to interference from the Arabic language. The use of the preposition "to" seemed to be

literally translated from the Arabic language preposition and was used as an equivalent in English. In addition, the phrase "cut into" is quite commonly used as a whole chunk of speech in the English language, and is something which students should have been familiar with as they have already studied at least six years of the English language. However, when it came to applying this to oral production, students instead seemed to find it easier to rely on the use of the Arabic prepositions instead by saying "cut it to" instead of "cut it into". Indeed, they unconsciously uttered English in order to give the impression of fluency. Respectively, the same explanation was given for the errors with the preposition "for", which is illustrated in the fourth sentence (D), as some students again used the transferred preposition from Arabic and applied it incorrectly, instead of using the English preposition, saying "explain it for him" instead of "explain it to him". However, more examples of errors with preposition will be discussed in order to find an accurate analysis of reasons that justifies this type of errors.

5.2.5.1.3 Errors with Preposition Redundancy

Nonetheless, errors with prepositions in this study continue to identify a third type of errors in line with the first two types discussed above. The literature reported that with this specific classification of preposition-related errors defined as preposition redundancy, learners, somewhat unusually, face difficulties as they may use unnecessary prepositions in some English sentences, thus leading to inaccurate production of the English language as a result of "negative transfer" from first language, (see Noor, 1996, Scott & Tucker, 1974; Al-Kasimi et al., 1979; Mehdi, 1981; El-Sayed, 1983; Meziani, 1984). With this said however, Saudi students did not seem to fit into this category, as according to data, only 4 out of 15 students used unnecessary prepositions in some sentences which resulted in language errors. Error with preposition omission and substitution were identified to be more frequent in this particular group. However, it is worth mentioning the type of errors with preposition redundancy as it represents another significant occurrence of different types of unique language errors, which fit thoroughly under this source of error. Consider the following examples shown in Table 23:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "preposition redundancy"
A	I want to complete my study in programming and <u>to computer</u>	I want to complete my study in programming and <u>computer</u>
B	My class mates <u>in inside</u> the community college	My class mates are <u>inside</u> the community college
C	The course divided <u>in into</u> two semester	The course divided <u>into</u> two semesters

Table 5.23 (SA) examples for "preposition redundancy"

Indeed, the use of "to" in the first example (A): "in programming and to computer"; and "in" in the second example (B): "My classmates in inside the community", and sentence (C): "The course divided in into two semester", respectively, represent an example of using an necessary preposition in oral production, which could well fit into the "unique type of errors", according to Heydari & Bagheri, who defined these as "errors that are neither developmental nor interference which resulted from incorrect instruction of the language" (2012, p 8). This type of error was not a common occurrence among Saudi students in this particular group, thus giving the impression of fluency and that the constant oral production of English by students could be a better and a more accurate explanation rather than the interference of first language as mentioned in the literature. Although, example (B), in the use of the preposition "inside" in this specific sentence, "my classmate in inside" indicates to some extent the interference of Arabic into English. This sentence in relation to its Arabic meaning does not match the student's meaning of Arabic into English, as she used the preposition "inside" nearly in its Arabic use, not English. However, more examples of errors with preposition will be illustrated for the second group of students, who study in the UK represented in this study, thus to sustain more analysis of their sources.

5.2.5.2 Errors with Prepositions for Students in the UK

According to the data and as mentioned earlier, grammatical errors with the use of prepositions fall in the middle of the overall speaking errors by frequency for Saudi students who study in the UK. The number of preposition errors among this particular group was recorded at an average of 9.33 and, as with other categories, the average number of errors with prepositions in the UK group decreased significantly from the

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21.33 errors made by the students in Saudi Arabia, which indicated with 9.6 of difference in the average number of errors as illustrated in Diagram 5. Saudi students in the UK showed a great improvement in this particular category. However, more analysis will be given in order to examine the type of errors with prepositions among this group.

Misused of Prepositions
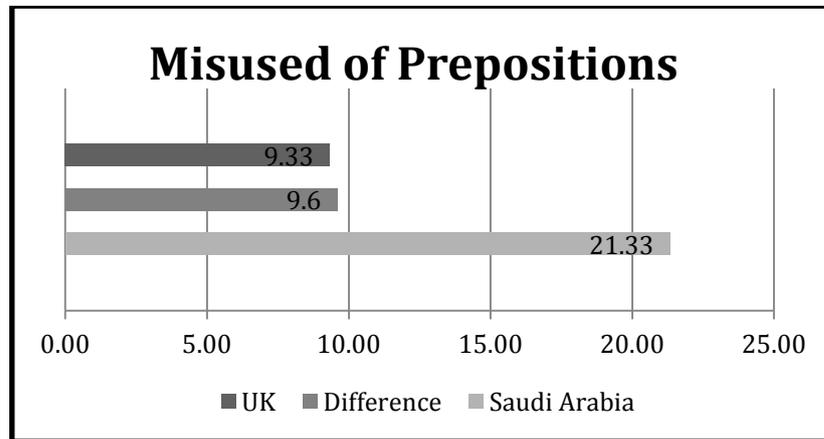
Diagram 5.5 the difference of "misuse of prepostions" amongst the two groups

Errors in prepositions have been divided into three main classifications: omission or deletion, substitution and redundancy. The Saudi students in Saudi Arabia recorded more frequent errors with the first two types, namely errors with omission and substitution, and fewer errors with redundancy. However, according to existing literature by Al-Haidari (1984), Meziani (1984) and Lakkis and Malak (2000), English prepositions of time, target, and purpose/cause appear to be the most problematic for native Arabic speakers who have been in an English environment. In the light of this, a deep analysis of these errors in their three classifications will be performed for the UK group.

5.2.5.2.1 Errors with Preposition Omission

In this specific category, Saudi students tended to omit the prepositions required for accurate English language production when there was no equivalent to that particular preposition in Arabic. As discussed earlier, Saudi students in Saudi Arabia made the majority of errors with this particular type using the preposition 'to', as they literally transferred the structure of Arabic into English. However, this is not the case with the other group; students in the UK produced the same number of errors but with more

variation regarding the specific preposition they committed errors with. Consider the following examples in Table 24:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "preposition omission"
A	I don't have time <u>following the</u> news	I don't have time <u>to follow the</u> news
B	But, here <u>I have depending</u> on myself	But, here <u>I have to depend</u> on myself
C	I will <u>start study</u> degree master	I will <u>start to study</u> degree master
D	I have little <u>bit English</u> language	I have little <u>bit of English</u> language

Table 5.24 (UK) examples for "preposition omission"

In the previous examples, prepositions were omitted as follows: (A) 'to', (B) 'to', (C) 'to' and (C) 'of'. Students in the UK showed a tendency to omit them in their oral production rather than using them incorrectly, which could be viewed as a sign of language learning cognitive process. According to the data, the level of the spoken language in terms of correct use of prepositions was much higher in the UK group compared with their colleagues in Saudi Arabia, especially regarding the quality of errors committed. As we can see from examples (A): "I don't have time following the news" instead of "to follow the news", and (B): "I have depending on myself" instead of "I have to depend on myself", indicate that students tended to use the present continuous by adding '-ing' to the verb and deleting the preposition; the correct form is 'to' followed by the infinitive form of the verb, i.e.: "to follow" or "to depend". A surface analysis of these examples in oral production could give the impression of accuracy and fluency in speaking, but a deeper look requires the use of the prepositions 'to' and 'of' in the examples given above to produce accurate English sentences. A literal translation from Arabic to English has been performed in these particular examples, resulting in a negative transfer from Arabic to English; Saudi students were confused when deciding which preposition to use, and thus preferred to use the sentences in the present continuous and omit the preposition entirely instead of using them incorrectly. This is often the case when an English structure does not have an

equivalent in the speaker's first language. This view is supported by many studies done on the use of prepositions by Arab learners (see Noor, 1969; Scott and Tucker, 1974; Al-Kasimi et al., 1979; Meziani, 1984). In fact, and according to the examples given, Saudi students in this case study, and as a result of being in a different learning environment, and been exposed to different learning strategies and curriculum, compared to their colleagues who study in Saudi Arabia, have developed different type of errors, using different tenses as a result of using communication strategies. Errors indicate that students were able to use the language fluently but not yet accurately. They have neglected the use of required preposition and focused instead on the meaning of these sentences, which left them transferring the meaning but not the form from their native language (Arabic) into English resulting in the deletion/omission of the required prepositions. However, errors with preposition omission were not found to be alone among this group, other different types of errors were found to be problematic which will be analysed in the following sections.

5.2.5.2.2 Errors with Preposition Substitution

As mentioned earlier with regards to errors with preposition substitution, discussed among the group of students in Saudi Arabia, studies related to errors with prepositions show that preposition substitution is a common source of difficulty for English language learners regardless of their language level, including the Saudi students in Saudi Arabia in this case study. Meanwhile, errors substituting prepositions by Saudi students in the UK occurred more than other types of English preposition errors such as omission or redundancy. One of the significant findings of this study, and according to the data, was that the majority of all students in both groups committed more errors substituting one preposition for another on different occasions over two different parts of the interviews recorded for the purpose of analysis. The following sentences in Table 25, highlight some of the students' errors with this particular type.

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "preposition substitution"
A	I have been <u>here, for, since</u> one years	I have been here <u>for one</u> year or/ a year.
B	I try <u>for learning English</u> for six month	I try <u>to learn English</u> for six months
C	I <u>could for learn</u> English, for native speakers	I <u>could learn English,</u> <u>from</u> native speakers
D	I have weekend <u>for walk</u>	I have weekends <u>to walk, or spend the</u> <u>weekend walking</u>

Table 5.25 (UK) examples for "preposition substitution"

Saudi students in this group had difficulty using the prepositions 'for', 'since', 'from', and 'to'. The distinction between 'for' and 'since' should be considered a special case for this group, as it was not found in the group of students in Saudi Arabia. Since the UK students have been exposed to a different learning environment, and had the opportunity to be in a native English community, as they have learnt the rules of using time prepositions such as 'since' and 'for', the students appeared to be confused when deciding which particular preposition to use. In example (A) the student used the two prepositions 'for' and 'since' in one sentence, by saying "I have been here, for, since one years" instead of "I been here for one year" or "since (a particular date)", which indicates that students know the rule but fail to apply it correctly. In addition, the Arabic language does not have the same distinction between 'since' and 'for', with no equivalent meaning to their use in English. Although students in both Saudi Arabia and the UK were taught how to use these prepositions in general, they did not learn how to use them in specific situations. This resulted in the group of students in Saudi Arabia barely using them at all, and students in the UK being confused on how to use them correctly. Moreover, example (B) "I try for learning English for six month" represents another instance of a transferred element from Arabic into English. The preposition "for" in this sentence indicates the use of the same meaning in Arabic, as the student meant that he/she is studying English in order to learn, which led to an error with both meaning and form transferred from Arabic into English.

Thus, when different prepositions such as 'for' and 'since' were used in different contexts, only 4 out of 15 students in this group knew how to use them correctly. This is evident from the data in this study; a literal translation from Arabic to English for the particular preposition 'for' led to a positive transfer when students used it correctly in sentences with the same meaning such as in example (A): "I have been here, for, since one years"; and a negative transfer from Arabic illustrated in example (B): "I try for learning English" with the use of the preposition "for". On the other hand, when the meaning of 'since' or 'for' did not match what students were used to in Arabic, errors with prepositions occurred as a result of negative language transfer. This supports the view of Alayeash (2012), who stated that "although, both English and Arabic prepositions are polysemous words which have different meanings, it appears that students know only common meaning which is more popular and known than other meanings. Therefore, we find that when the same errors reoccur they are often related to a specific Arabic preposition usage" (p.1751).

Consequently, errors with preposition substitution among the two groups can be concluded with several findings. First, in this particular classification omission and redundancy were the most common errors across both groups correspondingly. The current data revealed that the majority of students who participated in this study committed the highest number of errors in preposition substitution. The sources of error with preposition substitution, were identified to be in most cases the result of first language transfer, either positive or negative, as discussed above. The difference that distinguishes the group of students in Saudi Arabia from their counterparts in the UK is that the latter, has used more variety of prepositions in this context, represented by the use of "for" and "since", due to the exposure to a different learning environment. Preposition redundancy as the third classification of errors with prepositions represented in this study will be discussed in order to provide an accurate comparison among both groups.

5.2.5.2.3 Errors with Preposition Redundancy

In relation to errors discussed with prepositions in the Saudi Arabia group, Saudi students often used extra prepositions when only one was necessary, as a result of errors of negative transfer. This tendency continued with Saudi students in the UK, as learners in this group produced unique errors with prepositions, using them in the wrong place or overusing them in the sentences examined. However, the data indicated that less number

of errors were found among this group in comparison to the group in Saudi Arabia. The following examples have been chosen for further analysis, illustrated in Table 26:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of "preposition redundancy"
A	I arrive in airport in London	I arrive to the airport or/ to the airport in London
B	It is first language for to this people	It is the first language for these people
C	He decided to send me to England to study for English	He decided to send me to England to study English

Table 5.26 (UK) examples for "preposition redundancy"

As seen from the above mentioned examples, students tend to use prepositions unnecessarily or excessively. 9 students out of 15 committed this type of error with prepositions in multiple contexts. The third sentence, example (C), "He decided to send me to England to study for English", involves another instance of literal transfer of meaning from Arabic into English, which resulted in using more prepositions than required to produce correct English language. These errors are in line with what is reported in the literature, which indicates that, in some particular cases, "the redundant use of English prepositions by Arabic speaking learners is considered to be a sign of negative transfer from Arabic" (Noor,1996, p.10). See also Scott & Tucker, 1974; and Abu Ghararah, 1989.

Interestingly, close translation from Arabic to English does not always give the same meaning in terms of preposition use, and negative transfer which cannot be generalised across all of the examples given. In sentences (A), "I arrive in airport in London", and (B), "It is first language for to this people", the intended meaning of this particular oral production does not provide correct usage of prepositions in either English or Arabic. This relates to the students' intra-language development. Saudi learners attempted to develop their knowledge about English and produced their own utterances, related neither to their first language system (Arabic) nor to the rules of the new language (English). This led to the above errors despite their living in a native English environment and developing sufficient knowledge about the systems of English. According to Cohen and Olshtain (1981) in their study of intra-language issues, this

should be read as a sign of positive language development rather than a sign of failure. These errors can be easily tracked by the educational practitioner in order to develop more efficient learning strategies; unfortunately, not all types of errors can be predicted, particularly in oral communication. However, according to the findings with the misuse of prepositions among all students in this case study, the sources of errors varied in their consistency and type, both within and between the two groups. For Saudi students who studied at Tibah University, and as a result of the different factors affecting the learning environment and the sufficiency of their language input, and the lack of practice, different sources were found according to the various types of errors.

 Errors with prepositions have thus been divided for both groups into errors of omission, substitution and redundancy. For Saudi students in Saudi Arabia, the most common source of errors was negative transfer from Arabic language, particularly with regard to preposition omission, but the majority of students also committed this type of error across the other classifications of preposition, as discussed earlier. Substitution errors occurred due to the absence of the new language rules, this led students to unconsciously rely on the system of their first language due to their lack of knowledge of these new prepositions, replacing them with the ones which that already existed in their first language. The third category in the Saudi Arabia group is errors in preposition redundancy, occurring as a result of using communicative strategies and described as neither developmental nor interference. This type of error was the least common among this group but still significant, indicating that students were in a stage of focusing on communication, that is on delivering the message, rather than paying attention to the rules of either their first or target language. Learners at this stage accessed their intra-language ability, which is considered a sign of significant learning development since their focus is on using the target language rather than relying on their first language.

On the other hand, although the findings fell into the same classification of preposition errors as the Saudi Arabia group, students at Leeds University, made errors less frequently in this particular category than their colleagues as illustrated earlier in this section, with different sources of errors as well. In regard to errors with preposition omission, analysis indicates that students committed them due to negative transfer from Arabic, similar to their colleagues in Saudi Arabia, but with the lowest frequency among the different types of preposition errors. Conversely, the majority of errors were with the substitution of prepositions, making it a significant category for analysis among this group as they occurred due to both negative and positive transfer from their first

language. In this case, students were able to differentiate between systems from their first language prior to the application of rules from the target language when there was an equivalent of the same preposition in both languages. This is evidence of positive transfer, but in instances when the element in their first language differed from that of the target, they used it inappropriately, leading to a negative transfer of certain prepositions as discussed earlier. However, the source of errors with preposition redundancy was found to be the result of their intralanguage; as students developed their knowledge about the new rules they experienced in the native environment, they concentrated on their ability to express themselves more fluently with less concern about accuracy. Doughty (1972) interpreted this phenomenon as the following: errors may occur when a learner is studying a language in a new environment, but they are accustomed to a different variety of local English. In this case they require the language for a different purpose, resulting in a focus more on communicating with the target language rather than applying the rules accurately. This type of errors is similar to the first group: a positive sign of learning development as students use the target language without the elements of their first language interfering. In conclusion, errors with prepositions for both groups provided a significant area of interest as the findings represented were due to varying sources and represented the effects of different factors on the oral production of English for Saudi students. To conclude, not all types of preposition errors are due to issues related to first language interference as different types led to different sources of errors among the two groups.

5.2.6 Use of Sentences without Verbs

Based on the data of this study, another category of errors among Saudi students in both Saudi Arabia and the UK, and indeed one of the most frequent errors, was the category of grammatical errors in using sentences without a verb. In this section, errors will be discussed individually among each group and then compared accordingly.

5.2.6.1 Errors in Using Sentences without Verbs for Students in Saudi Arabia

In fact, it was quite interesting to discover that Saudi students in this group produced these kinds of incomplete sentences in oral production of the English language. While the average number of errors was only 17 among this group, which is not particularly high in comparison to other highlighted types of grammatical errors, each student committed this error at least 13 times during their speech. Indeed, it is possible to infer

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from this that omitting verbs from sentences is an area of difficulty which should be pointed out in this case study.

Based on the literature, similar studies have found that some English learners, especially in their early stages, face difficulty in applying the rule of English copula: "Copula(tive) is a term used in grammatical description to refer to a linking verb, i.e.: a verb which has little independent meaning, and whose main function is to relate other elements of clause structure, especially subject and complement" (Tahir, 2009, p. 3). This is close to the classification of errors with verb-formation (Noor, 1996, Scott & Tucker, 1974; Beck, 1979; Al-Kasimi et al., 1979; Kambal, 1980; AI-Muarik, 1982; El-Badarin, 1982; Abu Ghararah, 1989). Alternatively, this is quite common for English learners, and according to these studies learners delete the English copula as a result of their intra-language, and particularly learners with low language proficiency. However, two types of errors in verb-less sentences have been highlighted in this particular group, namely sentences without a verb, and questions without a verb; both of which will be discussed in more detail. "There many teachers' instead of saying "there are many teachers" in statement form. Or "what you planning to be in future?" In question form. The deletion of the auxiliaries in these sentences represent an instance of Saudi students errors when using sentences without referring to a particular verb, they are either auxiliary "helping" verbs or main verbs. However, errors will be analysed according to a different classification in this part. The first classification that will be discussed, is students' production of errors with sentences without a verb.

5.2.6.1.1 Production of Sentences without a Verb

The most significant type of error within sentences is the application of the verb "to be" rule. Saudi students tend to either delete the verb "to be" in some sentences when it is considered a main verb, or delete the verb when it is used in a sentence as an auxiliary verb, particularly when they are used in different tenses. Accordingly, each error will be discussed separately and will be examined throughout more examples. The first type of errors will be as follows.

5.2.6.1.1.1 Deletion of the Verb "to be" as a Main Verb

In fact, errors with the deletion of the verb "to be" as a main verb were traced among all parts of the interviews conducted. There was no specific part during the interview to enable us to determine if errors were produced more in the informal part, which was more structured, or in the formal part, when student had more independent speech. However, instances of errors with the deletion of verb "to be" as a main verb are highlighted in Table 27 to analyse some student errors in this specific classification.

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of the verb "to be" as a main verb
A	I can't remember, <u>they many</u> writers	I can't remember, <u>they are many</u> writers or there are writers
B	Like if <u>we beginners</u> in the class	Like if <u>we are beginners</u> in the class Or as if we were beginners
C	When <u>we small</u>	When <u>we were small (when we were little)</u>
D	<u>There no</u> other university in Madinah	There <u>is no</u> other university in Madinah or there are no other universities

Table 5.27 (SA) examples for "verb "to be" as a main verb"

As can be seen from the above examples, students produced incomplete sentences of English and deleted "to be" verbs such as (A) "are", (B) "are", (C), "were", and (C) "is", respectively. Students in this case produced sentences which contained only nouns, without any form of verb in these sentences, though the use of verbs are considered to be main verbs in the previous sentences. However, there may well be a simple explanation behind these errors if we compare the structure of Arabic with the structure of English in these specific examples. We find in neither the deep structure nor the surface structure of Arabic use of the verb "to be". Following the structure of the above mentioned examples, such as example (A): "they many writers" instead of "there are/ they are writers"; or (B): "we beginners" instead of "we are beginners"; or (C): "when we small" instead of "when we were small"; and finally (D): "there no other university" instead of "there are no other universities". We found that students are unfamiliar with the use of this type of verb in their first language, which as a result led them to follow the same patterns of their native language. It was also evident that students were

literally transferring the structure of Arabic language into the use of English in terms of form in the above mentioned sentences. As in Arabic the form of this grammatical rule is not to use it, which is not possible in English, and which caused this kind of negative transfer. However, illustrating the other type of the verb "to be" will give a more profound explanation of the source behind committing these errors.

The other type of error which occured with the verb "to be" is omitting it when acting as an auxiliary verb in certain sentences.

5.2.6.1.1.2 Deletion of the Verb "to be" as an Auxiliary Verb

As a matter of fact, the deletion of the verb "to be" in oral production of English was more frequent in this group, and more so when they used it as an auxiliary verb than as a main verb. More specifically, and according to the data, Saudi students in this particular group tended to produce this error when using more complex sentences, especially when they used sentences with more than one relative clause, or when using different tenses in the same sentence. Consider the following examples illustrated in Table 28:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English with verb "to be" as an auxiliary verb
A	We having the same different average	We are having the same different average or we have
B	I hearing you	I am hearing you
C	We speaking a lot, last year	We were speaking a lot, last year
D	When I saw some people in the university, they speaking English	When I saw some people in the university, they were speaking English

Table 5.28 (SA) examples for "verb "to be" as an auxiliary verb"

According to the examples given, the omission of the verb "to be" as a helping verb, appeared to be more frequent when it comes to the use of sentences which required a present continuous tense. The change between two tenses in one sentence, such as the present and past, led students to focus on picking the correct tense while neglecting the key rule of the auxiliary verb "to be". This type of error was more frequent in the second part of the interview, as one of the questions during the interviews was about their opinion of the English course at Tibah University on the foundation year, and if

there was any difference in terms of focusing on a particular language skill rather than another, between the two academic terms. However, errors were found to be most frequent in students' responses to these questions as they needed to use more than one English tense in the sentences produced. For instance, in example (A) in Table 28 the student said: "We having the same different average in each term" instead of "we are having" or "we have". Also, example (B): "I hearing you" instead of "I am hearing you", or "I can hear you", as well as examples (C) and (D): "We speaking" instead of "we are speaking", and "they speaking English" instead of "they were speaking", respectively. The deletion of the auxiliaries in these sentences represents another instance of students transforming the rules from their native language into English. As these sentences stand they are acceptable in Arabic structures, yet not in English. Students are delivering the intended meaning correctly in Arabic when translated, but not quite accurately in English, such as in example (A): "we having", in which the student in this context described what marks they had at that moment, as she is talking about their marks during the interview. In fact, the same case was repeated in example (B): "I hearing you", where the student described what was happening in that particular moment, to describe an action which takes place in the present continues. Using this type of tense which describes continuous action is acceptable to be used in Arabic in this particular context but not in the case of describing an action in English. However, this can lead one to conclude that the verb "to be" was omitted, whether required in a sentence as a main verb or as an auxiliary verb, due to the fact that students relied on transferring an element of the Arabic language into English. The errors appeared to be more frequent when students used more complex sentences with different verb tenses, thus leading them to unconsciously delete the verb "to be" in oral production of the English language. However, the deletion of the verb "to be" did not appear to be omitted only in sentences, but also when students attempted to form certain questions. This will be discussed more in the following section.

5.2.6.1.2 Deletion of the Verb "to be" in Questions

The second part of the category relating to errors using sentences without verbs appeared to be extended among students of this group when they attempted to form questions without verbs. Examples are illustrated in Table 29 for further analysis:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English verb "to be" in questions
A	You still studying in the UK?	Are you still studying in the UK?
B	You waking up, at 6 o'clock in the morning?	Are you waking up, at 6 o'clock in the morning? Or, Do you wake up at 6?
C	What you planning to study?	What are you planning to study?
D	You in the second year?	Are you in the second year?

Table 5.29 (SA) examples for "verb "to be" in questions"

In fact, finding examples to use as questions for this particular kind of data was not easy to follow or choose. Indeed, the method of collecting this data took the form of interviews, with students supposed to answer questions rather than form them. With this said, it was quite interesting to find some forms of questions included in the context, as certain students were reporting some kind of event or incident which required them to form questions. The errors committed fell under the category of errors with the verb "to be". For instance, sentence (A): "you still studying?" instead of "are you still studying?", and sentence (B): "You waking up, at 6 o'clock? instead of "do you wake up at 6 o'clock?", and (C): "what you planning" instead of "what are you planning to do?", and (D): "you are in the second year?" instead of "are you in the second year?". The deletion of the verb "to be" or auxiliaries in these sentences indicates that students did not pay any attention to the use of the rules of the verb "to be". Although they have studied this rule since they started studying English in school for at least 6 years, and it is represented in the English curriculum across all stages as one of the most frequent grammatical rules to use in the structure of English language appropriately and to learn how to use the English grammar related to this category. Sentences in English are basically constructed with the use of verbs and nouns in any simple form along with its different shapes of phrases. Consequently, neglecting the use of such important grammatical rules indicate that students in this case did not fully acquire the system of

English language and as result, are still relying on their Arabic structure and expressing these utterances according to how they really are in Arabic and not English. However, the above mentioned examples regarding the questions formed by students indicated that certain students transfer the structure of Arabic language into English in questions along with errors in sentences discussed earlier. The verb "to be", an auxiliary verb in this specific context, was deleted due to interference from their mother tongue. This error fits under the interlanguage errors category. Indeed, this contradicts the assumption of Noor, who assumed in his study regarding the omission of copula and auxiliary for Arab learners that the deletion of verbs is considered to be a source of students' intra-language rather than interlanguage errors. "This may lead Arab learners, particularly those of low proficiency in English, not to use or delete the verb be from such English" (1996, p. 7), as the transfer of both Arabic meaning and form into the use of English structure appear to be significant among the above mentioned examples. However, the second group of students in this case study will be discussed as well in order to provide a well-adjusted analysis of errors for both groups in regard to their consistency and source.

5.2.6.2 Errors in Using Sentences without Verbs for Students in the UK

Another indispensable category to be analysed in the UK group is the use of sentences without verbs. In this case, the average number in this particular category for students in the UK did not differ significantly from the average number of errors for the Saudi Arabia group. The latter's errors were recorded with an average of 17,80 in comparison to the average of 11 for students in the UK, which left a difference of 6.8 in the average number of total errors in this category. Diagram 6 illustrates the difference in the number of errors among both groups.
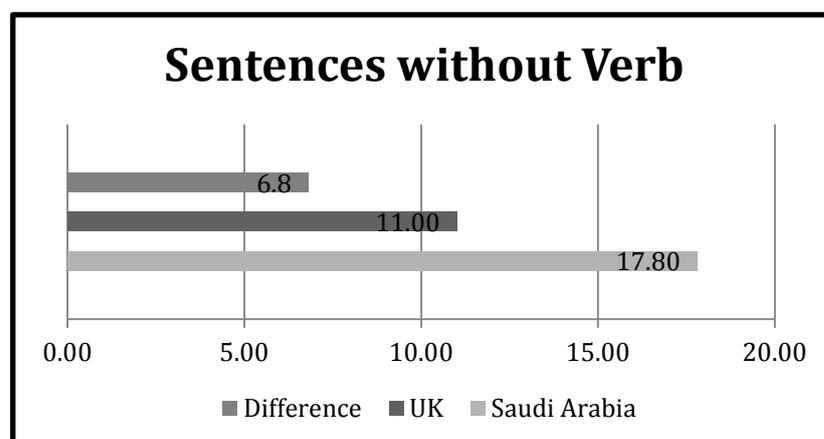

Sentences without Verb

- 6.8
- 11.00
- 17.80

0.00 5.00 10.00 15.00 20.00

■ Difference ■ UK ■ Saudi Arabia

Diagram 5.6 the difference of "sentences without verb" amongst the two groups

One important point is that although the number of errors with missing verbs was comparatively low for students in Saudi Arabia, this is not the case for Saudi students in the UK. Its position in the fifth category shows it to be one of the most frequent errors among this particular group, indicating a common difficulty that Saudi students in the UK face. As it has been mentioned in the analysis of students in Saudi Arabia, verb deletion from many sentences refers to the English use of auxiliaries or linking verbs in-between sentences, which do not carry independent meaning in English. In order to study the differences in errors that distinguish one group from another, the same types of sentences with missing verbs will be analysed between both groups of Saudi students in this study: statement sentences and questions.

5.2.6.2.1 Production of Sentences without Verbs

As with the case of students in Saudi Arabia, the first area to be introduced in this category for students in the UK is errors with the verb 'to be', described as errors with the English copula. According to the data, students in the UK group tend to commit errors by omitting the copula or auxiliaries in their sentences, either when it appears as the main verb or as an auxiliary verb. As a result, the following errors will be divided into two major types: deletion of main verbs and auxiliary verbs.

5.2.6.2.1.1 Deletion of the Verb 'to be' as a Main Verb

In order to examine errors with in particular classification, the following examples have been highlighted in Table 30 derived from Saudi participants in the UK represented in this study. Sentences are underlined for further explanation of this particular point:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of verb 'to be' as a main verb
A	There big parking	There is a big parking
B	I think cartoon for children, big screen	I think that there is a cartoon for children, and a big screen
C	I teacher in my country	I am a teacher in my country

Table 5.30 (UK) examples for "verb "to be" as a main verb"

In point of fact, the omission of the verb 'to be' in the previous examples such as example (A) in Table 30: one of students said "there big" instead of "there is a big", and example (C): "I teacher in my country" instead of "I am a teacher in my country". Errors in these instances indicate an area of a problematic grammatical rule for Saudi students in this group, as almost every student in this group committed this type of error. Though the average number of verb errors decreased in the UK group compared to students in Saudi Arabia, both groups committed similar kinds of errors; the difference lies in the quantity, not the quality. Although students in this group have been studying in different learning environment and have been exposed to a different language curriculum and different teaching strategies, the problem of using the same utterances, the same type of error continues to arise among Saudi students. Indeed, as we can see from the examples given, students tend to produce incomplete English sentences by omitting verbs and keeping only the nouns. These verbs are missing even though they are considered main verbs and it is necessary to use them in sentences in order to produce accurate grammatical English. As with other errors, students still rely on their first language structure, Arabic, in order to produce new sentences in English. In neglecting the use of rules that are not completely new to those students, as they have studied it at school as well and even before being exposed to a native environment, this pattern of errors is considered to be strong evidence of the influence of mother tongue on the acquisition of a second language as an vital stage in the learning process. Errors in this case are attributed to students' interlanguage issues; Arabic sentences are unlike English sentences in that they can be produced without verbs. Specific to this case, however, is that there is no equivalent verb in Arabic for the verb 'to be' when it is used as the main verb in the present tense in English. Yet, one can argue in this case that the omission of these verbs among Saudi students can be traced back to their interlanguage rather than the intra-language, which does not agree to the justification of Noor (1997), Scott & Tucker (1974), or Mukattash (1986), who assigned this type of errors with auxiliaries to students' false analogy of the new system of English language. However, the second type of error using the verb 'to be' involves deleting the verb when it is considered an auxiliary verb, will be discussed below for further analysis.

5.2.6.2.1.2 Deletion of the Verb 'to be' as an Auxiliary Verb

Although the specific type of errors caused by using sentences without the helping verb does not affect the students' ability to communicate and to be understood, it still

indicates inaccuracy when producing English sentences. In comparison to the group of Saudi students in Saudi Arabia, students in the UK were less likely to commit errors in this category. According to the data, students in the UK committed an average number of 2 out of the 11 total verb errors, compared to 5 out of the 17 total errors made by Saudi students in Saudi Arabia.
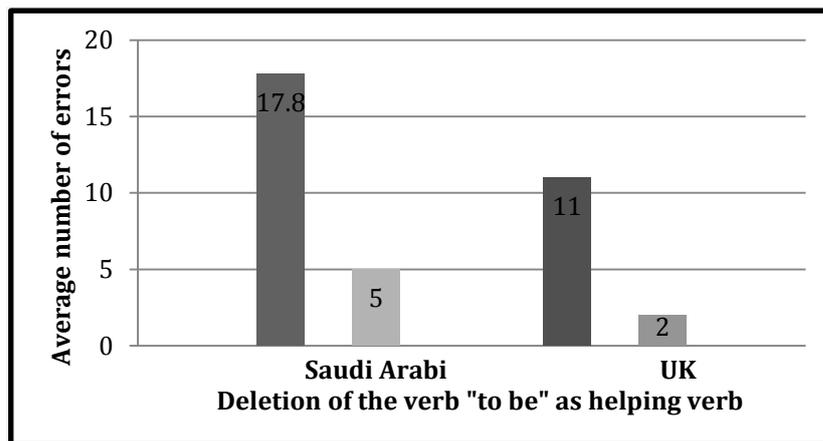
Diagram 5.7 the difference of deletion of the verb "to be" amongst the two groups

As mentioned earlier, auxiliary verbs were mostly detected among Saudi students in Saudi Arabia when they tried to use more complex sentence structure; the focus on more advanced grammar led to the students to neglect certain simple forms of grammar, such as auxiliary verbs. The case appears to be similar for the group of Saudi students in the UK in this study, as the same type of errors were committed despite a lower average number of errors. Some examples are selected among this group in order to highlight errors with deleting the verb "to be" as an auxiliary verb. Table 31 illustrates students' errors:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English deleting the verb "to be" as an auxiliary verb
A	I studying here in the UK	I am studying in the UK
B	We riding jet, I had many activities	We were riding a jet, I had many activities
C	I visiting Saudi Arabia, twice a year	I am visiting Saudi Arabia, twice a year or I visit
D	we going out in this country, without my family	we are going out in this country, without my family

Table 5.31 (UK) examples of the verb "to be" as an auxiliary verb"

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The omission of the verb 'to be', in the above mentioned sentences, such as in example (A), Table 31, 'am', (B) 'were', (C) 'am', and (D) 'are' respectively, indicates that students found this grammatical rule a problematic area to be applied accurately and used in their production of English language sentences where the auxiliaries are used. In fact, and according to the data, the UK case did not involve a certain pattern of error production as the first group did; specifically when they used complex structures such as the present continuous tense. In this particular group, students in the UK were less likely to produce errors that followed the same form. Students tended to omit the helping verb when they used the present simple tense, the present continuous tense, or the past tense; as errors with the use of auxiliaries were traced in many utterances that included these tenses. Moreover, Arabic has no auxiliaries so as a result students in the above mentioned sentences rely on the structure of their first language rather than the new rules of English required. However, a particular recurring form of these errors could not be generated from the data. Each student produced their own type of errors with helping verbs in varying contexts across different tenses, as illustrated by the examples. A general interpretation of the source of these errors could be linked to the students' inter-lingual ability, which influences their oral production and indicates that students still rely on their first language grammatical structures, in spite of living in a native environment and being exposed to a better language input and different teaching and learning strategies compared with their counterparts in Saudi Arabia. This different input would result in reducing the number but not the type of errors between the two groups. BaSaeed (2013) supported these findings in his study of English language grammar, saying: "Arab EFL learners commit inter-lingual errors more than intra-lingual ones. Moreover, the principal barrier to the second language system is the interference of the first language system with the second language system" (p.1).

However, similar to the first group, errors with the production of sentences without using a verb occurred not only in statement sentences but also in oral production of questions; therefore, a brief discussion of questions involving errors with verb omission will be presented.

5.2.6.2.2 Deletion of Verb 'to be' in Questions

The second part of the category relating to errors using sentences without verbs appeared when students attempted to form questions during the interview. Table 32 illustrates examples collected from the group of students in the UK.

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English of Deletion of verb 'to be' in questions
A	I don't know, it a kind of a fiction movie or scientific?	I don't know, is it a kind of a fiction movie or scientific
B	They tell us, where you going, where you staying?	They tell us, where are you going, where are you staying?
C	Don't know, you still facing the same problem or not?	Don't know, are you still facing the same problem or not?

Table 5.32 (UK) examples of the verb "to be" in questions"

In order to provide a balanced comparison between the two groups in terms of grammatical errors, ideally the study should find and analyse errors found in both groups in each chosen category. However, only four students formed questions in this particular group, and all occurred during the open discussion in the third part of the interview. This is due to the nature of the interview and the form of data collection, as students were not given many chances to form questions as opposed to answering questions

The errors in these examples involve creating sentences and forming questions while omitting the verb 'to be': example (A): "it a kind" instead of "is it a kind"; (B): "where you going" instead of "where are you going"; and "where you staying" instead of "where are you staying"; and (C): "you still" instead of "are you still"; in Table 32. The omission of the verb 'to be' or auxiliaries in these individual examples again represents the case of students committing errors despite being aware of how to use this particular grammatical form correctly. The Arabic language does not use copula and auxiliary verbs, therefore, the omission of the verb 'to be' in these particular examples represents the same case of errors with using sentences or forming a question without using the verb 'to be', despite students being aware of using this particular grammatical form of English. Consequently, and according to the data collected, most of errors in this

particular category were with using 'no verb' in sentences, either in their oral production of sentences or in forming questions. The omission by Saudi students in their oral production of English is strongly attributed to their mother tongue interference as Arabic has no auxiliary or copula. However, the omission of 'to be' by Saudi students in their oral production of English is strongly attributed to mother tongue interference, which falls under the classification of inter-lingual errors. These have a great impact on Saudi students' production of English despite the second group being in a native environment; living in the UK had an effect on the number but not the type of errors in this particular category, as a close look at the examples given reflects a literal transformation of Arabic rules into English. This evidence supports the view of Scott and Tucker (1979) whereby errors involving the omission of the verb 'to be' can be considered strong evidence of errors attributed to first language interference on second language learning.

Although the average number of students committing this error was lower than many other error classifications, putting missing verbs in the middle of the scale by frequency, the consistency of this error makes it one that needed to be focused on. It is evident from the discussion that students developed this type of error as a source of interlanguage rather than intra-language issues. According to existing literature, errors with the creation of sentences without a verb are primarily linked to the learners' low proficiency in speaking when learning the new language. Noor (1996) wrote that the production of sentences without verbs is believed to stem from lack of knowledge in the system of the new language, which may lead speakers to develop their own assumptions of said language, thus resulting in the above errors. The findings for the two groups of Saudi students in this study indicate the opposite of Noor's(1996) assumption, as students in these groups have gained enough knowledge of English by studying English for a minimum of six years. However, as results remained consistent even when the environment was changed and students were exposed to different, more efficient forms of language input, students from both groups corroborated the strong influence that their first language (Arabic) has on the production of English language utterances. Students in both groups committed the same type of error; the only difference was a decrease in number of errors produced, which should be expected when taking into consideration the different factors in learning environments that affect the language acquisition process.

5.2.7 Use of Sentences with Pronoun Copy

The seventh category of grammatical errors among the Saudi group, which can be classified in the middle of the scale of the most frequent errors, will be highlighted in this section and identified as the use of sentences with pronoun copy. The errors of both groups will be reviewed individually and compared for further analysis. The first group that will be discussed in this category is the group of Saudi students in Saudi Arabia who participated in this study.

5.2.7.1 Errors with the Use of Pronoun Copy for Students in Saudi Arabia

In fact, the average number of this category is quite close to the number of errors with the "use of sentences without verb", as both categories had concluded with an average number of errors of 17.80 and 17.33, respectively. According to the data, each student committed this type of errors at least ten times during their speech, whereas only one student committed this type of error four times in this particular group. However, there is no direct mention in the literature of this type of grammatical error in the field of error analysis, though some classification of other types of grammatical errors can be closely linked to the errors with pronoun copy. Noor (1996), Mukattash (1986), Scott & Tucker (1974) and Basrah (2013) have referred to some learners' errors and labelled them as "deviant" or errors using the subject of English language sentences inaccurately. Noor described errors with pronouns in his study of common grammatical errors in writing as students tend to use the subject of the pronoun in English sentences' written form incorrectly, due to developmental errors, which refer to students' intra-language. On the other hand, Scott and Tucker classified them as using the wrong pronoun in the production of the written form of English sentences, which can be neglected as learners will understand the rules of the target language and be able to apply it correctly when they gain more language proficiency. However, this particular type of Saudi learner error reflects a great depiction of the impact of Arabic interference on the acquisition of English grammar for Saudi learners. First of all, before illustrating this error with examples, a simple explanation of "pronoun copy" can be described as the repetition of a pronoun in an English sentence when it is followed by a subject in the same sentence. The following examples are selected from some students' errors with pronouns during the interviews conducted for this study. Errors with pronoun copy are highlighted in Table 33:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English with "pronoun copy"
A	My <u>teacher she tell</u> us to speak	My <u>teacher tells</u> us to speak
B	<u>Our leader she tell</u> always the plan	<u>Our leader tells</u> us always the plan
C	The writer <u>Ahlam Moustagnami she well</u> known	The writer Ahlam Moustagnami is well known
D	My <u>laptop it give</u> me all the shape I needed	My <u>laptop gives</u> me all the shapes I need

Table 5.33 (SA) examples for "pronoun copy"

Indeed, a surface interpretation of these errors may give the impression that students face difficulty when accurately applying the rules of English language grammar in terms of subject-verb agreement, where the verbs should agree with subjects in person, number and gender. Such as "the teacher tells" and "the leader tells", or "my laptop gives", which could be directly linked to the errors that resulted from rule formation or performance errors, which students may eventually overcome with time and with more practice of the target language. Richard (1971) labelled the miss-formation of rules as the learners' failure to use a complete developed structure of the new language. Also, Noor (1996) assumed that in the Arabic language there is no sign of such a structure, resulting in errors with pronouns copy, which may cause difficulty for learners or be an obstacle to be considered as a result of the first language interference.

At the outset, and by in-depth analysis of the previous examples, we first discover, students' major problem in this particular case is with using personal pronouns appropriately, which is the main focus in this grammatical category and not the subject-verb agreement. Secondly, the pronoun repetition in these sentences, which is followed by the subject, is considered to be a sign of incorrect rules that learners apply, such as in example (A): "My teacher she tell us to speak" instead of "my teacher tells us", directly without referring to the noun "teacher" with pronouns such us "she". Also, the same case recurs in example (B): "Our leader she tell always the plan" instead of saying directly without using any pronoun "Our leader tells always the plan". Students' errors in these examples symbolise a case of using pronouns when they are unnecessary in these particular occasions, as the verbs in the sentences are already linked to the subject and specify the action which will take place without further referring to the nouns with pronouns. However, if the previous examples are merely a matter of misuse of rules, or

errors related to the intra-English itself, which is considered to be the source of errors represented in students' intra-language as argued in the literature, literal translations of the previous sentences prove the opposite. Consider the following translations from Arabic; example (A): "My teacher she tell us to speak" is an equivalence of Arabic translation in meaning and form that means "my teacher she is the one who tells us to speak". Moreover, example (B): "Our leader she tell always the plan" means in Arabic "our leader she is the one who always tells us the plan", and example (C): "The writer Ahlma Moustagnmi she well known" is an equivalent in meaning with "the writer Ahalam Moustganmi is a well-known writer". And as a final point, in example (C): "My laptop it give me" means "My laptop is the one which gives me the information". In fact, the transfer of meaning using the equivalent pronouns that describe the subject from Arabic into English led students to produce such errors in these instances. As a result of transferring the elements, which is related to the form and meaning from Arabic into English, errors were identified as copying pronouns from Arabic into English. The examples above with their literal transfer elaborate the strong influence of Arabic into the acquisition of English characterised with errors in pronouns. In addition, pronoun copy errors represent a case of language borrowing from both the "deep structure", which relates to meaning, and the "surface structure", which relates to rule construction and forms, from Arabic into English. In other words, students in this case borrowed the pronouns from Arabic that describe their meaning literally from Arabic into English neglecting the precise use of the pronoun rules in English.

The borrowing phenomenon of learners' errors has been defined by Gass and Selinker as the following: borrowing is a communicative behaviour when learners borrow elements from their first language into the target language in order to attribute the rules of the new language. Furthermore, they referred to this phenomenon as "highly variable and clearly situation dependent" (Gass & Selinker, 1994, p.27). Accordingly, it could be said that Saudi learners in this study where in a situation in which they were stressed and under the pressure of being recorded, which required them to communicate in the English language for up to 15 minutes. This made borrowing elements from the Arabic language easier to be detected while the students were speaking. Al-Oliemat (2005), in a review of linguistic transfer and the role of the mother tongue by Pit Corder (1971), stated that syntactic errors which are represented in the borrowing phenomena increase seriously in oral communication, as whenever we find that communicative pressure on

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learner's knowledge, error are highly present. This may give a better understanding of why some types of errors are more noticeable in speech rather than in writing. In fact, writing is a structured and observed skill, in which students have time to revise their written production and identify their errors, as opposed to speaking, which requires students to produce spontaneous utterances to be expressed without taking into consideration the grammatical rules necessary to be used. Moreover, as this study focuses on the oral production of Saudi English learners, this type of error is highly present in the data as a result of the learners' attempts at successful communication. However, these types of errors are a clear sign of the linguistic interference of their mother tongue, which is Arabic in this case, and which is attributed to their English language acquisition. The second group of Saudi students will be discussed next and compared for further analysis.

5.2.7.2 Errors with the Use of Pronoun Copy for Students in the UK

The seventh category to be discussed as well among the group of Saudi students at the University of Leeds is the use of sentences with pronoun copying. According to the data, the average number of grammatical errors in this particular category showed a difference of over 50% between the two groups. Saudi students in the UK recorded an average of 7.73 pronoun copy errors, compared with the 17.33 errors produced by their colleagues in Saudi Arabia which comes to a difference of 9.6 in the average number of errors among both groups as illustrated in Diagram 8. Although the number of pronoun copy errors was significantly lower in the UK group, the data revealed that each student in this group committed these mistakes an average of four times during their speech. One student in the group produced pronoun copy errors 12 times. However, as mentioned earlier in previous sections of this category discussed among the first group, existing literature shows no direct link between this and other grammatical errors in terms of learner mistakes with specific syntactic features.
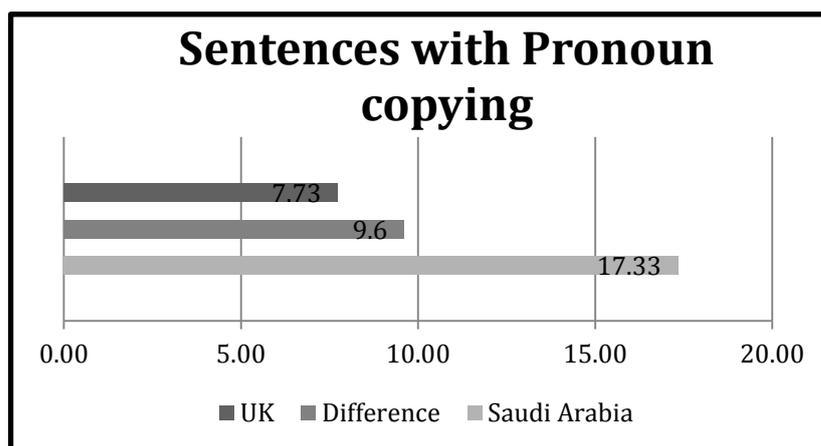
Diagram 5.8 the difference of "sentences with prounoun copy" amongst the two groups

As mentioned earlier in this section, pronoun copy errors are identified as those that occur when using the subject of English sentences in both written and oral production (Scott and Tucker, 1974; Basrah, 2013). More specifically, this type of error occurs when using the wrong English pronoun in terms of agreement between the pronoun and the intended subject. This is illustrated in most cases by the use of both pronoun and subject together in the same sentence in cases when only one is necessary. The following examples in Table 34 illustrate some of students' errors related to the use of pronoun copy:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English with "pronoun copy"
A	My mother she tell me to study this course	My mother tells me to study this course
B	My sister, she complete her Ph.D. here	My sister completes her Ph.D. here
C	Me, I am the older girl in the family	I am the older girl in the family
D	I hoped to complete like he, my husband	I hoped to complete like my husband

Table 5.34 (UK) examples for "pronoun copy"

Accordingly, with regard to structuring English, grammatical errors of this type are thought to be due to the misuse of rules such as the subject-verb agreement, by second language learners, which may be overcome by extensive language practice and structured learning strategies (Noor, 1996; Richard, 1971). When evaluating this claim, it is true that the number of pronoun copy errors decreased remarkably among Saudi

students who had been living in the UK and studied in a different environment and being exposed to a different language input as discussed previously in Chapter 3; on the other hand, it is still a significant grammatical error frequently committed by Saudi students overall. The data shows that Saudi students in this group tend not to differentiate between Arabic and English pronouns regardless of the target language, as it is acceptable in Arabic to repeat or copy the pronoun in the same sentence as a sign of confirmation. Conversely, this is not the case in English, where repeating the pronoun to indicate the subject is generally considered as an error in language production (Scott & Tucker, 1974; Mukattash, 1986; Kharma, 1987; Tushyeh, 1988). The repetition of the pronouns in conjunction with the subject indicates a direct transfer of language patterns from their L1 (Arabic) into their L2 (English) in both form and meaning of their native language. The use of the repeated pronouns in the following sentences indicates that students produced this type of errors as a further description of the nouns which they wanted to express by literally transferring their intended meaning from Arabic into English.

Example (A): "my mother, she tell me" instead of saying directly "my mother tells me" without further repeating pronouns to describe the noun phrase in this particular context. Example (B) demonstrates the same error in the sentence "my sister, she complete" instead of "my sister completes". Respectively, example (C): "Me, I am the older girl" instead of "I am the older girl", and example (D): "he, my husband", instead of referring to the husband without using unnecessary pronoun to describe him such as "I hoped to complete like my husband". All the above indicate that students still rely heavily on Arabic language rules to form their sentences and transpose them directly into English.

As indicated above, Arabic learners have difficulty choosing the appropriate relative pronoun for their subject without transposing the rules from their first language onto English, which is a sign of negative transfer. The number of errors decreased significantly among the UK group as opposed to students in Saudi Arabia, which could be a mark of improvement in their language proficiency, but despite studying in a native environment and the exposure to different teaching and learning strategies, these errors still persist. Noor (1996) argued that these mistakes could be considered a product of overgeneralization of English language rules and thus a form of intra-language error. Generally speaking, students knew the rules, as indicated by the decrease in pronoun copy errors from the Saudi Arabia to the UK group, but failed to apply them consistently in oral production. Scott and Tucker (1979) explained it as a product of the

developing stage, when students have learned the rules of the new language but are yet unable to apply them at all times. They defined this as "a developing stage in production competence parallel to the stage in L1 acquisition when learners alternate well-formed with ill-formed utterances" (p.11). Even in the developing stage of learning, however, students may rely on rules from their first language, which cannot be entirely predicted in oral production as a result of interlanguage errors.

Thus, a conclusion can be drawn out from the above mentioned analysis, which is that the findings of this particular classification of error in the current study showed a remarkable difference between the two groups. There was a significant decrease in the number of errors from Saudi Arabia to the UK; over 50% overall improvement was recorded for the group of students in the UK compared with their colleagues in Saudi Arabia. Although a surface analysis of this particular type might interpret this as a type of performance error, considered to be evidence of learner intra-language, deep analysis of the errors indicates the opposite. The source of these errors was found to be the result of interference of the mother tongue, including the UK group. Students tend to rely on a literal transfer of elements from Arabic, applying them to their use of English pronouns as discussed earlier. The investigation of examples from the data collected in this study shows that students consistently borrow pronouns from Arabic and apply them to their use of English pronouns, resulting in the production of this type of error.

5.2.8 Third Person Pronouns

Third person pronouns comprise one of the most common grammatical errors, and the eighth in order made by the Saudi students in this study in both Saudi Arabia and UK. Accordingly, each group will be discussed in this section, as errors will be identified according to their consistency and source. Students' errors in Saudi Arabia will be analysed first, followed by the second group.

5.2.8.1 Errors with Third Person Pronouns for Students in Saudi Arabia

According to the research findings, each student in this particular group misused third person pronouns a minimum of seven times during their speech. The average number of this type of error was slightly lower, which is indicated throughout the data with an average of 8.60 errors when compared to other type of student errors highlighted in this group; however, third person pronoun errors were reproduced by every student in this

group, thus indicating a systematic problem that must be addressed if pronouns are to be applied correctly by Saudi students. Errors with third person pronouns have been classified into two categories, subjective and objective. For example, in the English language third personal pronouns are represented with the use of "he, she, it" in its singular form when it is refers to nouns, such as "she is a teacher", and in plurals illustrated with the use of "they", such as in "they are teachers". These pronouns fit under the classification of "subjective third person pronouns". On the other hand, the objective pronouns refer to the use of "him, her, it" in singular, and "them" in plural, such as " give it to" book. However, more examples will be given and discussed in details below for each individual case of pronouns among this group.

5.2.8.1.1 Third Person Pronouns: "Subjective Case"

English language pronouns in the subjective case are been explained by Oxford Grammar as follows: "The use of person pronouns fit under the rule of using "he, she, it" in the case of singular pronouns and the use of "they" in the case of plural pronouns" (2014).

Several studies have pointed to the application of third person pronouns as one of the most significant grammatical hurdles that English learners face. Scott and Tucker (1974) referred to this particular type of error when studying the written production of English by describing it as when some students in their study failed to apply the rule correctly in conjunction with verbs, referring to the English pronouns in general without certain classifications. In this study, errors have been classified into subjective and objective, to which there is no direct link to this kind of error classification in the literature, yet I believe that classifying them into two types will contribute to a more accurate analysis of their sources. Al-Muarik (1982), El-Badarin (1982), Tushyeh (1988) and Abu Ghararah (1989) contextualized the proliferation of deleted personal pronoun errors committed by Arab learners in English writing as the result of possible misinformation of grammatical rules of the second language system. Dusková (1969, cited in Noor, 1996), states that "all grammatical persons take zero verbal ending except the third person singular in the present tense. The deletion of the -s, or the misuse of pronouns in this structure may be accounted for by the heavy pressure of all the other ending-less forms" (p. 20). In this particular study, the research on Saudi students focused on spoken production of English rather than the written form, thus differentiating it from these studies. Errors in speech occur more than in writing, as

speech tends to be produced naturally and unconsciously by students without close attention to the correct application of learnt rules. The aim of this study is to examine and explain these errors. Table 35 illustrates some of students' errors with third person pronouns in this particular case. Consider the following examples:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English with person pronouns: "subjective case"
A	I have <u>one brother, she</u> is at high school	I have <u>one brother, he</u> is at high school
B	My sister and my mother, <u>it</u> love swimming	My sister and my mother, <u>they</u> love swimming
C	<u>My brother</u> in a medical college, <u>it</u> study in	<u>My brother</u> in a medical college, <u>he</u> studies in
D	<u>Our father</u> tell me to travel. <u>She</u> like the idea.	<u>Our father</u> tells me to travel. <u>He</u> likes the idea.

Table 5.35 (SA) examples for third person pronouns "subjective case"

The examples above were taken from the first part of the interview, the "informal one", where students were encouraged to speak about themselves and provide personal information regarding their family or studies. Although it was more structured from my side as I was asking questions to encourage them to speak, errors with pronouns appeared to be notable in this part. Notwithstanding, a close look at these examples reveals that, overall, students were able to express themselves and communicate using the target language. However, in the above examples, such as sentence (A): "I have one brother, she is at high school", the error with using the third person pronoun "she" when referring to a brother is very awkward when heard and it does not indicate any relevant use of accurate structure of English or Arabic. In addition, example (B): "My sister and my mother, it love swimming", referring to a mother or sister with the pronoun "it" instead of "they", indicates an alarming problem when applying both the rules of personal pronouns, and the singular and the plural form of nouns correspondingly, as the student in this particular case neglected the use of more than one rule in their use of English language grammar. Respectively, examples (C) and (D), in the same table, provide a similar case of errors with third person pronouns. In fact, the substitution and the misuse of these pronouns reflects a conspicuous gap in the knowledge of their

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correct usage of English grammar, despite the fact that students at this particular stage of learning English should have become aware of these rules after studying them for a minimum of six years in the Saudi English curriculum. These errors cannot simply be referred to as negative transfer from the speakers' mother tongue, in this case Arabic, as the Arabic language involves similar variations in the number and gender of pronouns, which should allow for correct application in foreign contexts. Arabic language has an equivalent of each of those pronouns, so neither the surface nor the deep use of Arabic structure can be attributed to this type of errors. Both English and Arabic have nearly the same use of different pronouns when describing or referring to certain nouns. In spite of the similarities in the structure and form between the two languages, there are no utterances of positive transfer according to these errors, as students rely on their intra-language ability and knowledge of English language rather than their interlanguage. As a consequence, this pattern of errors, particularly with subjective person pronouns, could be interpreted as a developmental or 'intra-language' error; Saudi students might know the rules but fail to apply them, especially in oral production, they might use them correctly in written form but not in spoken production. According to Cook (1999), this pattern of errors assigned to second language learners might be a product of the developmental stage in learning: "second language users differ from monolingual native speakers in their knowledge of their L2 and L1 and in some of their cognitive processes" (p.185). Nevertheless, errors with third person pronoun continue to arise among this group, in which the second classification will be discussed for additional analysis. The other type of errors with third person pronoun, "the objective case", will be investigated below.

5.2.8.1.2 Third Person Pronouns: "Objective Case"

The second type of errors in this category refers to the use of the objective case with third person pronouns. The objective case uses the pronouns "him, her, it" in the singular form, and "they" in the plural form. Third person possessive pronouns are "his, her, its, hers" in the singular, and "their, theirs" in the plural (Oxford Grammar, 2014). Saudi students in this study committed errors most frequently when using objective and possessive third person pronouns, as each student in this group repeated this type of error a minimum of nine and eleven times respectively. In fact errors with this type were found commonly in both parts of the interviews, there was no specific part where the misuse of subjective pronouns could be said to be highly notable. The following

sentences from the transcribed data have been highlighted in examples in Table 36 for discussion:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English with person pronouns "objective case"
A	She married with his husband	She married her husband
B	Everybody depend on himself	Everybody depend on her
C	My two sister completed her masters	My two sisters completed their masters
D	The teachers her classes are boring	The teachers, their classes are boring

Table 5.36 (SA) examples for third person pronouns "objective case"

As seen in the examples shown, errors made in this grammatical category differ compared to those with the subjective pronoun, and more errors of this type were committed. The above examples are still considered to be the result of developmental errors, as students were uncertain as to the correct use of third person pronouns, in particular when mixing the singular and plural forms. Some of these examples contain more than one type of errors, such as errors committed with "pronoun copy", illustrated in the last sentence "the teacher their", or errors with preposition in the first sentence "she married with his husband", where the preposition "with" represents errors of preposition redundancy. However, the analysis of errors will be investigated within the use of "subjective case" in third person pronouns, as this will be the main focus in this particle category. For instance, in the first example (A): the substitution of "his" with "her" by saying "She married with his husband" instead of using the pronoun "her" to refer to the pronoun "she" as the following "she married with her husband", indicates that learners are aware of the different uses of the third person pronouns, but still apply the rule incorrectly. Nevertheless, the second example represents the same case, sentence (B): "everybody depend on himself" where the use of "himself" may not be deemed an area of error needed to be analysed, but it is worth taking into consideration that the data collection took place at Tibah University in the girls section, and the interviewee was one of those girls who took part in this study and her intended meaning in this context was to refer to a feminine noun, by saying "everybody depend on himself" instead of "depend on herself" when the student described her colleagues' attitudes toward learning independently in the English language classes. In this example, the student refers to her female fellows. However, this specific type of errors

reflects a literal translation from Arabic that neglects the rules of objective pronouns in English; it is permissible in Arabic to produce a similar pattern in this type of sentence that ignores gender agreement, for example, it is acceptable in Arabic to say "everybody depends of himself" even if the speaker pointing to both the masculine and feminine without referring to a feminine noun in particular, which is not the case in English as the gender agreement is required depending on whom the speaker is referring to and should be specific to the context mentioned, which consequently led student to produce similar utterance to the use of Arabic structure with pronouns rather than taking into consideration the difference in gender required for English pronoun. Additionally, the third example (C): "My two sister completed her masters" indicates a different type of error. The student said "my two sister" where she first neglected the use of plural nouns by adding 's'. Consequently, the second error with pronouns was built on the misuse of the plural nouns which took place in the first place. In other words, the student in this case used the subjective pronoun "her masters" according the singular noun "sister" and not to the plural one "sisters", which correspondingly led to errors with "subjective pronoun" in this precise sentence. Indeed, this type of errors refers to the "false analogy" of language errors which Richards (1971) identified as "false concepts hypothesized errors, which are deriving from faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language" (cited in Khansir, 2012, p.3), which can be strongly attributed to the error produced in example (C). Additionally, example (D): "The teachers, her classes are boring" instead of "the teacher, her classes" in the case of using the singular third personal pronoun, or "The teachers, their classes are boring" in plural form of the same type of pronoun. In fact, errors with pronouns in this case also demonstrate a possible literal transfer of patterns from the Arabic language into the English equivalent, where a completed sentence in the English plural form can be translated in the singular form in Arabic, which could be related to the surface analysis of Arabic structure in this particle sentence, and related to the negative transfer from Arabic. On the other hand, the deep analysis of this type of error correlates to students' intra-language, as Saudi students in this group are still uncertain of using the accurate form of pronouns and apply them in their English production.

However, existing literature has reported that learner errors such as mixing between objective and subjective third person pronouns, as it has occurred in this study, can be interpreted as a result of the context of learning. According to Brown (1980, cited in Hasyim, 2002), this involves the overlap of interlanguage: "errors resulting from the use

of elements from one language while speaking/writing another"; and intra-language: "errors reflecting general characteristics of the rule learning such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply" (Richards, 1971, p.3). Heydari and Bagheri described the source of this type of error as "the classroom with the teacher and its materials in the case of school learning or the social situation in the case of untutored second language learning. In a classroom context, the teacher or the textbook can lead the learner to make wrong generalization about the language" (2012, p.10), which to some extent can justify some of the students' errors in this particular context. It is attached to their false consumption of the new language rules and leads to some form of errors as part of their "intra-language", which relates to their developmental stage of learning, although some utterances discussed in this classification indicated the opposite, as errors with third person pronouns reflect a strong evidence of negative transfer from Arabic into English such as the type of error in example (B). However, more errors with pronouns will be investigated among the second group for further analysis.

5.2.8.2 Errors with Third Person Pronouns for Students in the UK

As mentioned earlier in this category, it is the eighth most frequent grammatical speaking error to be analysed among Saudi students in the UK, involving the incorrect use of third person pronouns: the average number of errors in this category among the 15 students interviewed in the UK group was 5.33. As for the group of students in Saudi Arabia, the number of errors was not significantly higher; the latter recorded an average of 8.60 errors, the difference between the two groups' average is of 3.27 in the total number of errors in this specific category. The difference between the two groups is illustrated in Diagram 9. Overall, the number of errors in both groups was lower compared to the categories discussed previously, but still frequent enough to represent an important classification of grammatical errors to be included in this case study.

Third person(s) pronouns

3.27	
5.33	
8.60	

0.00   2.00   4.00   6.00   8.00   10.00

■ Difference ■ UK ■ Saudi Arabia
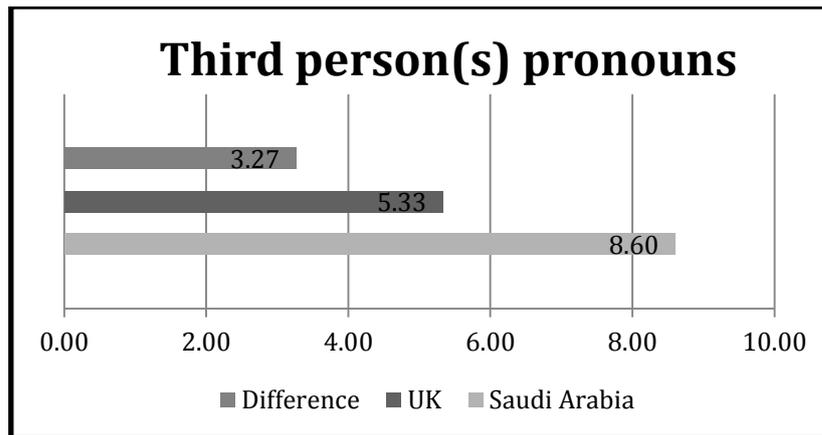
Diagram 5.9 the difference of "third person pronouns" amongst the two groups

A brief description of third person pronoun errors can be explained as the following: the misuse of English pronouns, either singular or plural, which leads to errors in oral production of English and an overall decrease in language proficiency. In reference to existing literature, second language learners tend to produce errors with third person pronouns as a result of a failure to apply the rule correctly (Al-Muarik, 1982; El-Badarin, 1982; Tushyeh, 1988; Abu Ghararah, 1989). However, further discussion is required in order to identify the source of this particular type of errors. Errors with third person pronouns will be divided into two main sections: the subjective case and the objective case to be analysed in this group.

5.2.8.2.1 Third Person Pronouns: "Subjective Case"

As seen above, the students located in Saudi Arabia in this study, tended to produce more errors with subjective pronouns in the first part of the interview, the informal one, when students were asked to introduce themselves and their family. The case differs slightly with the UK group, as according to the data, no specific sections of the interview showed a higher prevalence of this type of error. Before discussing the details of third person pronoun errors produced by Saudi students in the UK represented in this case study, it is important to note that the students in this group committed fewer mistakes when using the subjective case when compared to their colleagues in Saudi Arabia. Errors with pronouns cannot be linked directly to the transfer of grammar systems from Arabic into English, as both languages require agreement between the subject and pronoun in both person and number. However, more examples will be highlighted in Table 37:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English person pronouns: "subjective case"
A	A woman here, they can do anything	A woman here, she can do anything, or women here they can do
B	I have some offers in the university, she gave me two offers	I have some offers in the university, it gave me two offers
C	The teacher give us homework, they didn't ask for it	The teacher gives us homework, she/he didn't ask for it
D	The books we study, it very useful	The books we study, they are very useful

Table 5.37 (UK) examples for third person pronouns "subjective case"

The examples selected illustrate typical errors with the subjective case of third person pronouns, made when students try to refer to nouns using third person English pronouns, either singular or plural. The existence of this particular error in the UK group is surprising, given that the students had been exposed to various efficient learning environments, either in English classes or by being in native surroundings and having learned from various learning and teaching strategies. While the actual number was low compared to other categories, third party pronoun errors still represent a source of difficulty for Saudi students regardless of their environment. As mentioned earlier in the literature review, errors with pronouns in terms of agreement can be considered as the result of intra-language errors, which refers to the students' failure to apply the rules correctly despite prior knowledge. However, when studying the given examples, this seems not to be the case for all students, as will be explained below.

In the first example, sentence (A): "A woman here, they can do anything" where the noun 'woman' is singular and must be referred to by a singular pronoun for accurate language use, yet the student in this example failed to apply the rule correctly and used a plural pronoun instead. The error in this sentence can be examined from two different dimensions: students may have difficulty identifying singular and plural nouns in the first place, such as using 'a woman' instead of 'women', maybe when it is not a regular pattern in the case of women, as it does not require an '-s'; or due to the complex nature of the words they may have trouble identifying the correct pronoun to agree with the noun. In the above case with plural third person pronouns, the second analysis is more suitable for this category. In fact, the same error was committed by different students,

such as in examples (B): "I have some offers in the university, she gave me two offers" instead of "it gave me"; and example (C): "The teacher give us homework, they didn't ask for it" instead of "she/he didn't ask for it", where both examples indicate the use of incorrect pronouns in terms of agreement between the noun and the pronoun. Moreover, example (D), also represents the same case in this sentence: "The books we study, it very useful" instead of "The books we study, they are very useful" as the plural noun "books" requires a plural pronoun "they". Indeed, the highlighted examples indicate a common reason of committing this type of error. Evidently, students face a difficulty identifying singular and plural nouns to which they must apply a suitable pronoun according to the nouns used. This points to the explanation of these errors as more developmental 'intra-language' than interference 'interlanguage'; as students built wrong hypotheses of nouns in the first place, which as a result led them to use the wrong pronouns.

However, the students' intra-language is not the only source of errors in the case of subjective pronouns, as in example (B) above, the student used the pronoun 'she' to refer to the university, which is to some extent acceptable in Arabic, and so a deep analysis of the meaning and not the form of the error in this particular sentence indicates a negative transfer of meaning from Arabic into English. The noun 'university' is considered a feminine noun that takes the pronoun 'she' in the applied grammar of Arabic. Although Arabic, like English, requires agreement in both number and gender between nouns and pronouns, this is still considered a good example of negative transfer of an element of Arabic (in this case, gendered feminine nouns) into English. This can be interpreted as an error resulting from first language interference, but should not be generalized to other errors across this particular category; most students' errors with third person pronouns were classified as developmental errors due to the process of intra-language learning. This supports the findings of García (2014) in her study revealing that pronouns represent 13.51% of second language learner errors in English writing, even when students were in a controlled and structured learning environment. She concluded: "The great variety of criteria used to classify errors makes it very difficult to compare studies and arrive at common conclusions of the source of these errors… Despite these flaws, taxonomies are valued because they show errors and errors are considered to be an essential part in the process of learning any language" (p.3). However, more analysis of errors with third person pronoun with its two types will be discussed in the next section in this particular group.

5.2.8.2.2 Third Person Pronouns: "Objective Case"

The second classification of errors with third person pronouns made by Saudi students studying in the UK occurs when using the objective case, although errors with the third person subjective were found to be more frequent than those using objective pronouns. Regardless, the fact that students still commit this type of errors is not surprising, as applying the rules of the objective case appears to be a problematic area of grammar for all international students, not only Saudi students. Acquiring the rules regarding the objective case with third person pronouns and applying them correctly requires a high level of language proficiency (Harmer, 2007). Table 38 highlights some of students' errors in the case of objective third person pronouns.

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English person pronouns: "objective case"
A	When I came here, I met some Arab teachers, and I talked to him	When I came here, I met some Arab teachers, and I talked to them
B	I met some people, from Saudi Arabia, and knew just one of him	I met some people, from Saudi Arabia, and knew just one of them
C	Everyone got, their own car	Everyone got, her/his own car
D	I like all teacher here, I prefer him, than Saudi Arabia	I like all teachers here, I prefer them, than Saudi Arabia

Table 5.38 (UK) examples for third person pronouns "objective case"

The misuse of third person pronouns in the previous examples are represented as follows. Example (A): "I met some Arab teachers, and I talked to him" instead of using the plural pronoun "I met some Arab teachers, and I talked to them". As well as example (B): "I met some people, from Saudi Arabia, and knew just one of him" instead of referring to the plural noun "people" with the pronoun "them". Example (C) and (D) illustrate the same type of error: "Everyone got their own car" instead of treating the noun "everyone" as singular not plural, and the last sentence; "I like all teacher here, I prefer him" instead of "I prefer them". As demonstrated by the selected examples, this error appears to be the result of students' failure to apply the rules of third person pronouns correctly; the examples show no agreement between the nouns and the pronouns to which students are referring and indicate an obstacle for those students to decide first if the nouns referred to are singular or plural, and as a consequence of this, errors students made led to another type of grammatical deviant when choosing the

accurate pronouns. Nevertheless, students in this group were able to form more complex sentences involving pronouns than their colleagues in Saudi Arabia. In sentence (A) above, student was able to correctly maintain the past tense across both clauses which indicate that students were able to develop a high level of English sentence structure, which could lead to more complex errors. The same can be applied to the second sentence in this context, in example (B): "I met some people, from Saudi Arabia, and knew just one of him", where the student was able to produce a sentence with two clauses using the same tense. As this student's focus was drawn towards maintaining the same tense, he or she failed to contemplate the pronouns used according to the nouns. In light of this, errors with the objective case of the third person pronouns could be seen to have two different explanations for their source. First, errors are due to the developmental process, such examples (A), (B), and (D), which is related to the students' intra-language learning, very similar in source to the errors produced by their counterparts in Saudi Arabia. Basically those errors resulted from the ambiguity of defining whether the nouns referred to were singular or plural. This can be attributed to the Saudi students using communicative strategies without paying attention to the rules required, as both groups committed similar types of errors with only a slight difference in numbers. Brown (1980) described this communicative strategy as "the conscious employment of verbal mechanisms for communicating an idea when linguistic forms are not available to the learner for some reasons" (p.12). The second explanation is that students may recognise the rules, but for some reason fail to apply them and rely instead on their first language system, illustrated in example (C): "Everyone got their own car" where the focus is on meaning and not on form or the structure of sentence, as in Arabic it is correct to treat the noun "everybody" as a plural noun, which means "many people". Therefore students transfer the meaning of their first language (Arabic) into the form of the target language (English), which led them to the use inaccurate pronouns in terms of agreement with the nouns used. James (1998) identifies this type of error as those "influenced by the native languages which interfere with target language learning" (p.3). Nevertheless, Schumann and Stenson (1974), describe a similar process of this type of errors by stating "there are three major reasons of errors; (1) incomplete acquisition of the target language, (2) exigencies of the learning/teaching situation, and (3) errors due to normal problems of language performance, such as the difficulties, both inter- and intra-lingual ones, which are normally expected" (cited in Huang, 2002,

p. 24). Accordingly, the third source best describes Saudi learners' errors in terms of the "subjective case" of third person pronouns.

In summary, Saudi students in Saudi Arabia demonstrated difficulty with the subjective case due to developmental errors that resulted from their intra-language. However, in terms of the objective case, their errors were interpreted as an overlap between intra-language and interlanguage. According to the existing literature, errors with pronouns for all foreign language learners are often believed to be the result of the learner's intra-language (see Noor, 1996; Scott and Tucker, 1974; and AbiSamra, 2003). Previous studies indicated that the misuse of pronouns or the substitution of different pronouns for English language learners usually reflect a gap of knowledge of the system of the English language, as learners need to acquire a sufficient level and knowledge of English language in order to apply them correctly. Moreover, Arabic in particular involves similar variations in the number and gender of pronouns to English, which should allow for their correct application in foreign contexts. However, results from the current study involving Saudi students' production of English sentences when using different pronouns do not support the view that the only source of error is developmental. Some cases, represented in the examples and illustrated above, were due to the interference of Arabic elements when applied directly to the use of English language pronouns.

In order to distinguish whether the Saudi students' errors with pronouns occurred due to 'interlanguage' interference or developmental 'intra-language' factors in the current study's analysis of foreign language data, it is necessary to compare the Saudi Arabia group with the findings for students in the UK.

This should provide the ability to accurately judge the source behind this type of error. In the case of Saudi students in the UK, they have been exposed to different forms of language input, and have lived in a native environment for a significant period of time; this affects their cognitive approach to language learning and makes them passably aware of the systems of the new language. Despite this, results showed that Saudi students in the UK group tended not to differentiate between Arabic and English pronouns regardless of the spoken language. In cases with subjective pronouns, they committed errors as a result of their knowledge of Arabic; they transferred their use of Arabic pronouns to their attempts to use English ones.

On the other hand, regarding the use of objective pronouns, the examples illustrated in the above section indicate that errors were due to a developmental source; students had not fully acquired a sufficient knowledge of how English pronouns worked away from the interference of the Arabic language system.

The second explanation is that Saudi students in both groups may recognise the rules but apply them incorrectly, particularly with the subjective case for students in Saudi Arabia and the objective case for students in the UK, as the transfer from Arabic appeared to be stronger in these two situations. Students failed to apply the English rules consistently and relied instead on their first language system; James (1998) identifies this type of error as "influenced by the native languages which interfere with target language learning" (p.3).

In addition, Richards (1972) explained it as the following: 'In examining instances of interference or language transfer we thus need to consider more than just the linguistic variables and their distribution across languages; we need also to consider social reactions to different aspects of language use, since these too may be carried from one language to another influencing the sort of sentences that may be formulated in the second language' (p.19).

However, English language learning is indeed a process of trial and error, which this case study attempts to focus on. This leaves one final category left to be analysed and discussed in the next section for both groups.

5.2.9 Misuse of Regular and Irregular Verbs

The last category to be discussed regarding the two groups of this study, the group of students studying in Saudi Arabia and the group of students in the UK, is grammatical errors in the use of regular and irregular verbs. The first group will be discussed below for further analysis of common speaking errors.

5.2.9.1 Errors with Regular / Irregular Verbs for Students in Saudi Arabia

In fact, the average number of errors in this category is low compared with other errors discussed in this case study, but the frequency is significant enough to warrant highlighting. Each student in this particular group faced problems with the correct use of regular or irregular verbs, particularly with the past tense.

English language uses regular and irregular verbs to describe nouns or noun phrases. Regular verbs are those whose conjugation follows a typical pattern, such as adding '-ed' at the end of the verb to describe the past tense, e.g.: talk/talked or like/liked. On the other hand, irregular verbs are those whose conjugations do not follow a certain pattern, such as buy/bought or think/thought for the past tense. The list of English regular verbs is open ended, but the list of irregular verbs is closed; according to Mourssi "the number of irregular verbs in English is only about 150-180, and there have been no recent additions" (2013, p.3). Moreover, English verbs are used to describe either tenses such as the past and the present tense, or participles, such as past or present participle tense. The main scope of this study focuses on errors with regular and irregular verbs in the past tense, as they tend to be the most frequent error among Saudi students in both Saudi Arabia and the UK.

According to the literature, many studies have been conducted on the acquisition of regular and irregular verbs by English language learners. Learners tend to master a language by following and applying certain grammar rules, such as adding '-ed' to the end of the verb to form the past tense. In addition to second language learners, children whose first language is English occasionally follow the same type of patterns and make similar errors. Research has demonstrated that children not only create words but continue to put verbs in the past tense by adding '-ed' to the end of the word regardless of the type of verb used. This kind of language error is a significant feature of language development, described by Mourssi (2013), Pinker (1995), Chomsky (1980), Richards (1997), and others, as an overgeneralisation of rules.

Mourssi (2013), who conducted a study on the acquisition of regular and irregular verbs in English language learning, mentioned that irregular past forms are acquired before regular simple past forms. "It was confirmed that children learning English as a first language mastered the morphemes at different ages, but the order of their acquisition was very similar" (Mourssi, 2013, p.7). Conversely, in the case study of Saudi students studying in Saudi Arabia, the majority of errors occurred with irregular verbs. During

their speech, each student committed at least two errors with the irregular verbs listed as follows:

(1) To make

(2) To learn

(3) To teach

(4) To think

(5) To take

(6) To read

(7) To see

(8) To buy

(9) To know

(10) To speak

According to the transcribed data, the verbs listed above were the only irregular verbs used by the students studying in Saudi Arabia, and each student used at least one of the above words in their interview. Moreover, unlike other types of grammatical errors in this study, there was no pattern during the interviews where errors with regular and irregular verb could be traced in one part rather than another. The students' errors listed above were found to be common during the overall process of the interviews. However, the errors were committed using the overgeneralization of the '-ed' rule in the simple past, and none of the students were able to use the verbs in their simple participles such as: made, thought, taught, taken, seen, etc. The Saudi students in this group managed correct usage of these irregular verbs in the simple past in two or three occasions only, such as the verbs saw and found. Table 39 highlights some of students' errors regarding the misuse of irregular verbs, which will be discussed in more detail; consider the following examples:

| Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English with "irregular verbs"
A	He crazy man, <u>tooked</u> a lot of people	He is a crazy man, he <u>took</u> a lot of people
B	I <u>thinked</u> she was a good teacher	I <u>thought</u> she was a good teacher
C	I <u>knowed</u> her.	I <u>knew</u> her.
D	I <u>speaked</u> to my dad about it	I <u>spoke</u> to my dad about it

Table 5.39 (SA) examples for "irregular verbs"

Indeed, the above highlighted errors in the examples indicate that the students simplified the grammatical rule of adding the suffix '-ed' in forming the past tense and applied it to irregular verbs. For example, sentence (B): "I thinked she was a good teacher" instead of saying "I thought she was a good teacher". Some students add the suffix '-ed' to the verbs which are irregular and forming the past tense requires using different forms of the verb without generalising and applying the '-ed' rule to every single verb to indicate the past or participle tense. The same case is replicated in example (C): "I knowed her" instead of "I knew her'; and example (D): "I speaked to my dad" instead of using the correct form of the irregular past tense: "I spoke to my dad". Errors in these sentences indicate that students add the suffix '-ed' to the infinitive forms of the verbs in order to create the past tense of these particular examples. However, some unique language errors in regard to the irregular verbs can be expected to appear in certain cases, as some students produced unique errors such as in example (A): "He crazy man, tooked a lot of people" instead of "He is a crazy man, he took a lot of people". In this sentence, the use of the irregular verb "tooked' is an additionally complicated case, as the '-ed' was added to the already formed simple past tense 'took', not 'take', which would be in accordance with the overgeneralization rule. In this particular case, the student did not add '-ed' to the simple form of the verb "take", but to the irregular simple past tense, which was already formed as "took", and then added the suffix '-ed' to say "tooked" instead. However, it can be noted that among this group overall, each of the 15 students committed the same type of overgeneralization errors when using irregular verbs. It was very common to form un accurate assumption of the past tense from the infinitive verbs , such as in examples (B), (C), and (D) as errors were distinguished by the addition of '-ed' to the verb, and could be predicted by identifying their source, as it is due to the students' intra-language. However, some

errors could not be predicted as students were already using the past tense correct, such as example (A), but still overgeneralising the rules of forming the past tense of verbs. However, the source of the above given examples cannot be related to students' first language in any features of Arabic language, as even Arabic language requires different form of verbs when it is indicated in the past tense; this type of error with irregular verbs does not match any equivalent form in Arabic, in both meaning and form. Deviants of this type are common in second language learning and interpreted as a lack of knowledge of the rules, resulting when the learner creates a "deviant structure on the basis of other structures in the target language" (Richards, 1970, p. 2). This phenomenon of oversimplifying the rules, particularly with the use of simple irregular verbs as demonstrated in the case study, was explained thus by Chater (1996), who stated that "the simplicity principle in choosing among potential models of finite data, there is a general tendency to seek simpler models over complex ones and optimize the trade-off between model complexity and accuracy of model's description" (P.3). In other words, students tend to simplify the grammatical rules first in order to acquire them gradually, before moving one to the more complex ones which they need to learn.

It can be concluded from this case study that the lack of practice of English language during the learning process in Saudi students from insufficient exposure to language input led to the production of this type of error. The number of irregular verbs used during their speeches was quite limited, those listed above representing 30% of the number of both regular and irregular verbs in total. The students in this group also tended to acquire and use regular verbs more accurately than irregular verbs as most errors were on forming the irregular verb due to the overgeneralisation of rules in this case. This contradicted the finding of Mourssi's study, which stated that irregular verbs are acquired first with regular verbs following. However, most Saudi students (11 out of 15) used some regular verbs correctly in different context throughout their interviews. However, more analysis will be represented in next section, in order to compare their source across both groups.

5.2.9.2 Errors with Regular and Irregular Verbs for Students in the UK

According to the data, the average number of errors in this particular category was calculated at 3.33 among the 15 students interviewed. Errors with regular and irregular verbs come at the bottom end of the scale of the most frequent errors for both groups. In comparison to the Saudi students studying in Saudi Arabia the average number of errors of this category was 4.40. Accordingly, the two groups showed a difference in the average number of errors of 1.7 between them as illustrated in Diagram 10. The maximum number of errors with regular and irregular verbs was calculated as 6 times for a single student, with a minimum of 1, among students in the UK group. The numbers in this particular category indicate a positive step in the language learning process; students are on their way to understanding the rules of English in terms of grammatical competence. However, the frequent number of errors with regular and irregular verbs, as well as repeating the same verbs, reveals an area that should be examined in order to find out the major source of these errors.

Regular And Irregular Verbs

1.07	
3.33	
4.40	

0.00 1.00 2.00 3.00 4.00 5.00

■ Difference ■ UK ■ Saudi Arabia
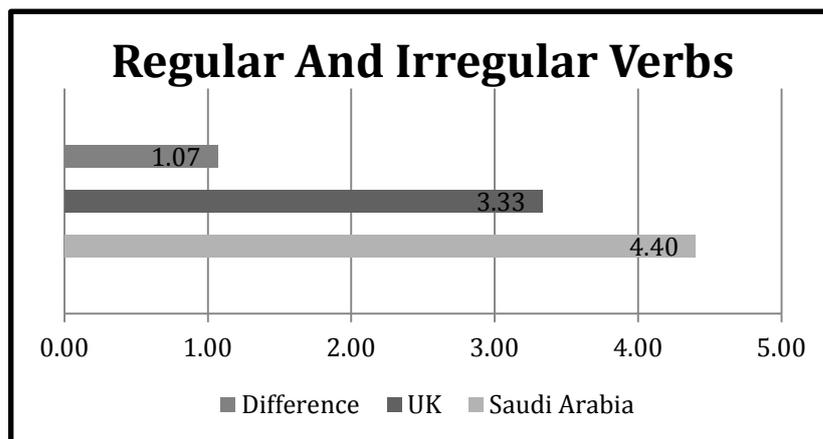
Diagram 5.10 the difference of "regular and irregular verbs" amongst the two groups

Before discussing the list of errors with irregular verbs committed by Saudi students in the UK, a brief description of the types of English language verbs should be given. Verbs in English are divided into two main types: regular and irregular. Regular verbs involve adding the suffix '-ed' to the infinitive/present form of the verb in order to change it to the past tense, such as 'like' to 'liked' and so on. The other verbs, which require modifying the whole word to indicate the past tense or the past participle, are known as irregular verbs, and require the learners to know and recognize them before changing the form of the verb. Moreover, the list of irregular verbs is idiosyncratic and chaotic and cannot be classified into a standard category. Throughout the data, 10 forms

of examples of irregular verbs were used incorrectly by Saudi students in the UK in comparison to students in Saudi Arabia. Table 40 highlights a list of some examples with errors of irregular verbs;

Example	irregular verbs by students in S.A	Verbs in common	irregular verbs by students in U.K
1	To think	To think	To think
2	To see	To see	To see
3	To teach	To teach	To teach
4	To know	To know	To know
5	To take	To take	To take
6	To learn	-	To come
7	To read	-	To choose
8	To make	-	To wear
9	To buy	-	To find
10	To speak	-	To give

Table 5.40 examples of errors in with irregular verbs
found to be common among both groups

The list above was compiled from the group of Saudi students in the UK, and when compared with the verb list from the Saudi Arabia group, students in both groups have these verbs in common: 'teach', 'think', 'see', 'know' and 'take'. Students in both groups committed the same type of errors with the listed verbs; they generalised the rule of adding '-ed' to the simple form of the verb in order to change it to the past tense. The following examples illustrated in Table 41 were found among this group:

Example	Incorrect in English	Suggested Correction in English with "irregular verbs"
A	When I <u>camed</u> in Leeds, before few months	When I <u>came</u> in Leeds, before few months
B	We <u>taked</u> a lot of exercises in this course	We <u>took</u> a lot of exercises in this course
C	The teacher <u>teached</u> us how to write academic	The teacher <u>taught</u> us how to write academic
D	My husband <u>choosed</u> to study translation	My husband <u>chose</u> to study translation

Table 5.41 (UK) examples for "irregular verbs"

In the first example, sentence (A), the student made an error with the irregular verb 'come': the 'ed' was added to the past tense of the verb, already changed from 'come' to 'came', similar to the type of unique errors made by students in Saudi Arabia, when adding 'ed', to the past tense and not to the infinitive form of the verb, such as in "tooked" instead of "took". Producing this type of error indicates that students know the correct rule but fail to apply it correctly. The words-and-rules theory developed by Pinker and reviewed by Knobler (2000, p.4) explains it as follows:

> Everything linguistic is fundamentally grounded in two complementary phenomena, 'words' and 'rules'. 'Words' are defined as the memorized chunks of linguistic data stored in the human mind - the entries in our mental dictionary - while 'rules' are the active procedures performed in real-time to generate novel linguistic forms. English past-tense verb inflection requires phenomena, words *and* rules, in concert. Without either one, fluent speech is impossible.

In other words, students in this case used two strategies of learning the past tense of irregular verbs; they memorised the list, as represented by using the verb 'came', but as a result of overgeneralisation of the regular rules, they also added '-ed' to the already formed past tense. Similar to the errors of the first group, errors with irregular verbs reoccurred in the following three examples, such as sentence (B): "We taked a lot of exercises in this course" instead of "took"; example (C): "The teacher teached us how to write academic" instead of "taught"; and (D): "My husband choosed to study

translation" instead of "chose". By studying the type of unique errors illustrated by "tooked" and "camed", and the errors in the above mentioned examples, the question remains: if students know the rules and have been exposed to a native environment when practicing the language, what makes it so difficult to apply the rules correctly? Besides the student strategy of overgeneralisation of rules, using their memory to apply the rule has a crucial importance in this case. Herschensohn (2003, cited in Mourssi, 2013, p.268) argued that "the more frequent verbs are processed faster than rarer forms and … in such evidence as this; the rule-governed and rote-learned forms are thus stored differently in the mental grammar."

Additionally, Klein (1986, cited in Herschensohn, 2003, p.3) categorised second language acquisition as either spontaneous or guided:

"The term 'spontaneous learning' is used to denote the acquisition of a second language in everyday communication that occurs in a natural fashion and free from systematic guidance. On the contrary, guided acquisition refers to the domestication of a natural process that differs from spontaneous by its structured presentation of materials, and contrived opportunities for practice and systematic intervention."

In other words, students in both groups produced the same type of errors, although both have been studying English for six years and students in the UK have been exposed to a native environment and different learning and teaching strategies, and had the opportunity to practice the language in a native English language environment. This raises the question: what makes this type of error so frequent and common in the two groups? Further, in terms of grammar and the mental ability of putting rules into practice correctly in oral production, what is the source of this type of error?

Students using irregular verbs committed similar errors when using the simple past, past perfect, and past participle; students in this case generalised the rule of adding '-ed' to all forms of past tense verbs, either to the original verb (simple form) or the simple past form. Producing these errors by indiscriminately adding the suffix '-ed' to form the past tense of all verbs first indicates that students in both groups are attempting to learn the rules. They are in the developmental stage of language learning, but the lack of practice and proper memorisation of the rules, even in a native environment, leads to these errors. This is due to the learners' intra-language ability, where errors are produced by

overgeneralisation, and appear to occur for the most part in oral production rather than written from.

Thus, the results of this category indicate that Saudi students from Tibah University and Leeds Language Centre both produced the same type of errors using the same verbs in some instances. The findings in this category illustrates that students tend to acquire regular verbs before fully acquiring irregular verbs. This result supports the theory of a general order of difficulty as put forth by various researchers (Richards and Sampson, 1974; Norrish, 1983), who noted when studying the causes of errors that language rules are acquired in a similar fashion not only by foreign language learners but also by children in their early stages of learning. The simplicity of a given rule appears to be significant; when learners have difficulty distinguishing between different elements of a new language, they first simplify the rule and acquire this simple form before a more difficult one. This could explain why the Saudi students made the most errors with irregular verbs rather than regular ones. Norrish (1983) stated:

"Indeed, experiments have shown some quite surprising similarities in achievement between different groups of language learners, both first and foreign. Bailey, Madden and Krashen (1974), examining results from several experiments, show that both adult and children who are learning English as a second language perform very similarly to each other, although the adult level of performance was not as high as that of the children in rules' acquirements" (p.31).

This means that committing this type of particular error is part of a Saudi student's cognitive process regarding their English language learning. Additionally, Saudi students in both groups showed an indiscriminate tendency to add '-ed' to all verbs to make the past tense, regardless of whether they were regular or irregular, and the average number of this type of error differed only slightly between the groups. This overgeneralisation of grammatical principles draws attention to the fact that the only source of this error found in this study was due to the students' intra-language, not interlanguage. According to Richards (1974) and George (1972), a possible explanation for this type of error may be a blend of two different language structures in the early learning sequence. Students in this case already know the rules and may have studied the list of irregular verbs, but still commit the same type of error and change the rules of the regular into the irregular. Norrish (1983) studied learner errors in terms of the

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overgeneralisation of rules, stating that "the information of the message is, under optimum conditions, not interfered with -but less favourable conditions, the learners would have only one indicator of 'time past' and could miss it, thus leading to failure to apply the rule" (p.32). These errors appear to be consistent between the two groups as a result of overgeneralisation of rules which relates to the students' intra-language rather than interlanguage. It is evident that the more students overgeneralise the rules, the further their language development moves from the simple transfer of knowledge and rules from their first language, in this case Arabic. This indicates a positive sign in their language learning progress.

5.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the most common grammatical errors have been categorised into nine different categories according to their consistency. Two different groups of students have been discussed in two dissimilar learning environments. The case study of both groups, students in Saudi Arabia (Tibah University), and students in the UK (Leeds University), was represented individually first and then compared when relevant for further analysis. Also, arguments concerning some sources of errors, specifically those concerning whether learners grammatical errors are due to the first language interference, "interlanguage", or target language learning processes, "intra-language", were re-tackled as discussion among them was presented. In fact, after identifying the definite source of all errors categorised in this chapter it was found that they vary from one group into another, although the main focus was on errors resulting from students' first language. Indeed, Arabic language is significantly different in its forms, meanings, and both surface and deep structure from English. Most Saudi students' language errors resulted from the conflict between the similarities and differences between the two languages. Most students, regardless of their language input and learning environment, committed errors due to the transfer of linguistic structures from Arabic to English. The English structures with similarities to Arabic appeared to ease certain forms of English oral production for Saudi students. Conversely, target language errors that were found to be major sources of difficulty in this particular case study were those that differed from the first language, either at the surface level or in deeper structures. Both occurrences are directly linked to the students' interlanguage. However, not all errors were due to the similarities or differences between Arabic and English, errors were also found to be due to other sources.

According to Ellis (1997), some errors were due to universal grammar, which is "reflecting learners' attempts to make the task of learning and using the L2 simpler" (1997, p.19). Others were due to the omission of certain English language structures, particularly leaving out or neglecting certain grammatical elements such as errors with irregular verbs. Still others were an example of the overgeneralization of rules, where students tended to apply the same rule across different English language structures. Additional errors were found to be the result of the developmental stage of the language learning process, reflecting the learners' attempts to communicate by using the language without paying attention to the appropriate use of grammatical elements discussed. All the previously mentioned sources of errors were more involved with the learners' interlanguage than their intra-language. However, evaluation of all Saudi students' grammatical errors in this particular context should be considered to be important, as many of these errors are likely to affect the intelligibility of their oral production.

Chapter six

Concluding Remarks and Implications

6.1 Introduction

It is clear from this research that language learner errors are a valuable area of study for researchers, language teachers and practitioners interested in the field of language learning and second language acquisition. Many existing studies have a wide interest and pedagogical value in the field, but more research must be conducted, especially on the role the first language plays in the process of second language learning. More importantly, the environmental factors that shape a learner's knowledge of a second/foreign language should be examined in order to investigate their impact on the level of language proficiency. Indeed, it is not enough to study the structural differences between the two languages or refer to them as the main sources of learner errors while neglecting other external and internal factors that affect language proficiency. While there is significant evidence of the role of the first language on the acquisition of a second language regarding various phonological and pragmatic features, more empirical research in terms of syntax and grammar is required to fully investigate potential sources of learner errors related to these specific language features. More observed data is necessary to investigate when transfer may be taking place, and to identify which particular aspect of the first language is being transferred. Moreover, other sources of errors need to be examined in all aspects of language rather than focusing only on the negative role of the first language.

Before closing this study, it is important to comment on some of its findings. We shall also discuss the concluding remarks for this research, as well as re-examine our research questions. Finally, the pedagogical implications that can be derived from this study will be pointed out, in addition to putting forward suggestions and recommendations for further research in the field.

6.2 Acquisition of Second Language Errors

The field of error analysis no longer considers language errors to be a sign of failure in the learning process; indeed, examining these errors and understanding their source could be considered the first stage of development in language learning and teaching. To this end, Brown (2007, cited in Shekhzadeh & Gheichi, 2011, p.159) states:

> By the late 1960s, second language acquisition began to be examined in much the same way that first language acquisition had been studied for some time: learners were looked on not as producers of malformed, imperfect language replete with mistakes but as intelligent and creative beings proceeding through logical, systematic stages of acquisition, creatively acting upon their linguistic environment as they encountered its forms and functions in meaningful contexts. By a gradual process of trial and error and hypothesis testing, learners slowly and tediously succeeded in establishing closer and closer approximations to the systems used by native speakers of the language.

Nevertheless, the overall findings of this study indicate that a speaker's first language (in this case Arabic) plays an important role in the acquisition of specific grammatical features in the target language (in this case English), confirmed by the types of errors recorded among the two groups of learners. Errors found in the learners' speech helped identify problematic areas of grammar for Saudi students in two different learning environments, as discussed in earlier chapters. However, the language acquisition process and resulting errors are complex and often differ between learners, making it difficult to identify specific roles in certain contexts. In this study, verbal errors were often unique to the speaker and varied from one student to another according to factors such as learning environment, motivation, the cognitive process of language learning, and first language interference. Accordingly, Ellis (1994, cited in Qaid and Ramamoorthy, 2011) identifies four essential areas for investigation of acquisition of second language, which were the focus of this study; these factors have been taken into account in order to investigate Saudi learners' errors:

1) The characteristics of learners' language, which involves errors, acquisition orders, variability, and pragmatic features;

2) The learner-external factors where social contexts are concerned;

3) The learner-internal mechanism, which deals with first language transfer, learning processes, communication strategies and knowledge of linguistic universals; and

4) The language learner, motivation and learner strategies (p.535).

Out of these factors, the most essential focus of this study's findings is the characteristics of the Saudi learners' errors and their performance in oral production of English according to the sources of the above errors. The acquisition process and the analysis of errors cannot be examined without explaining the errors in detail. In other words, identification of grammatical errors and analysis of their source cannot be investigated without highlighting how both internal and external factors, as discussed in Chapter 3, affect the Saudi learners' oral production of English .

Traditionally, a strong focus was placed on the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, which posited that learner errors occur solely as a result of transferring elements from the learner's first language. As mentioned in the literature review, this is called mother tongue or first language interference, otherwise known as 'interlingual errors'. However, the analysis of errors made by the learners in this case study revealed that while first language interference was acknowledged and proven to be a major source of grammatical errors for Saudi students, it is by no means the only source. Several additional error sources such as developmental factors, as well as errors of omission and overgeneralisation have been identified in both groups, extending beyond the scope of the language transfer theory. Further, the role of the first language on the target language in this case study was not always negative; knowledge of Arabic did help the learners in some cases. The similarity of certain specific grammatical forms between English and Arabic such as the similarity of meanings led to a positive transfer into English, particularly regarding the accuracy of spoken utterances produced by Saudi students.

The concept of language transfer and the different sources of errors have been explained previously in Chapter 2 as an important step in understanding the notion of interference, as well as sampling the behaviours and attitudes of learners toward language learning. The next section will provide an account of the most important findings of this study, organised according to grammatical category and taking into account the different environmental factors that affect learning.

6.3 Findings of Main Sources of Grammatical Errors Committed by Saudi Students in Both Groups

It is interesting to notice however, the similarities and differences of sources for the same categories of grammatical errors examined in this research, resulting from the dissimilarities in the learning environment. In fact, errors with the unmarked form of verbs comprise one of the most notable types of errors among Saudi students in both groups. Compared to other grammatical errors when analysed in terms of accuracy of English speech production, students in both groups recorded nearly the same average number of errors with unmarked verbs despite the students having studied in two different learning environments. These were the differences in environmental factors taken into consideration between the group in Saudi Arabia (case study at Tibah University) and the UK (case study at Leeds Language Centre): specifics of the English language programme and curriculum; language teaching strategies; student/teacher attitudes toward learning/teaching English; and language learning and communication strategies. Each factor had a strong influence on the language learning process in this particular case study. Despite this, Saudi learners of English in both groups consistently used the unmarked form of verbs incorrectly. The students' excessive use of unmarked form of verbs provides a good example of first language transfer among both groups regardless of the learning environment. Errors with the markedness of verbs indicate that Saudi students represented in this study still use elements of their first language, in this case the grammatical structure of Arabic, and transfer them to their production of spoken English. In fact, this important finding challenges the criticism of validity of the weak version of the contrastive analysis hypotheses, which states that in case of the occurrences of errors, they do not appear to be the result of the negative transfer from first language (Oldin, 1997). In the case of Saudi students, and despite taking into consideration the differences and the efficiency of the environment that the second group was exposed to, the source of errors with the unmarked form of verbs was still consistent and arose due the first language transfer. However, most Contrastive Analysis studies devote most attention to the analysis of the overall structure of whole sentences, rather than analysing specific elements of grammar such as unmarked verbs, which led to the difficulty in predicting second language learners' errors. Indeed, according to the findings, errors with unmarked form of verbs can be generalised as a

problematic area among Saudi learners, and researchers and teachers may want to take into account this type of errors as a significant one.

In addition, the various types of verb tense misuse were divided among the two groups of students according to the past, present and future tense; this revealed a significant disparity in the consistency of errors between the different groups. The results of this study indicate a remarkable improvement in the production of English verb tenses from the UK group in comparison with the Saudi Arabia group.

The average number of errors decreased by almost half for students in the UK, despite the high number of errors found with this particular element of spoken grammar overall. Given the current learning environment that students in Saudi Arabia are exposed to, the number and variation of errors were much higher rather than for their counterparts in the UK. The sources for the errors made by Saudi-based students were analysed and found to be the result of interlanguage issues, when students tended to rely on their first language when switching between tenses as previously discussed. Errors in this case were interpreted as a negative transfer from the structure of the Arabic language to English; these findings, to some extent, support the views of Noor (1997), Abu Gararah (1990), and Scott and Tucker (1972), who found interlanguage issues to be the root of most learner errors with verb formation in written language production.

However, these findings should not be confused with behaviourism theory and the formation of habit stimulating a response connection in the learners. It describes learner errors as the result of old habits persisting rather than the learner's investigation of a new language system. In other words, with regard to specific grammatical errors such as with verb tenses, the version of first language transfer theory is more likely to suggest that students in Saudi Arabia who have encountered obstacles in their learning environments are likely to receive correct knowledge of how the English language system works but fail to apply the rules correctly. According to Ellis, "the dominant psychological theory of the 1950s and 1960s was the behaviourist learning theory, which states, language learning is like any other kind of learning in that it involves habit formation. Habit formation are formed when learners respond to stimulate in the environment and subsequently have their response reinforced so that they are remembered" (1997, p. 31). In this regard, Saudi students in Saudi Arabia are likely to build their own hypotheses of English resulting in such errors producing English

utterances due to the insufficient input of their current learning environment. Schacter (1983) states that learners build their own hypotheses about the new language, in this case English, when new rules are absent in their learning process; they then take a further step to formulate their own rules by relying on the system of their first language. This model of interference may be related to how Saudis in this group create their own rules, resulting in negative language transfer in terms of verb formation.

Thus, in the analysis of errors produced by all students in both environments, both groups produced errors most extensively due to first language interference, which is the major focus of this study. The system of the Arabic language was a crucial factor as a source of errors, providing a compelling argument for the importance of interlanguage in the learning process. This study demonstrates that errors in verb formation are primarily due to the language learner's negative transfer of Arabic, which to some extent goes against the recent trend of denying the role of the first language in lexical or syntactic features on second language learning. According to Verhoeven (1994), transfer from first into second language does not seem to occur for all language skills; he indicated that transfer might happen for pragmatic or phonological features, but not on lexical or syntactic elements (cited in Jiang, 2011). Additionally, more serious criticism has been raised on the role of first language interference on the acquisition of second language learners, where second language errors are mainly due to intralanguage, not the interference of their mother tongue. Kim (2001) claimed that "despite such a prevalent belief of the role of the interference of L1, the sources of learners' errors and L1 interference were not clearly identified" (p. 160, cited in Heydari & Bagheri, 2011, p. 7). However, errors in this specific category have been recognised as the result of both inter- and intralingual factors, which contribute to Saudi learners' linguistic behaviour toward English language learning.

In regards to errors with articles, one notices that articles comprise one of the most remarkable areas analysed in this study, relevant to all Saudi students at Tibah University and the Leeds Language Centre. Before discussing the findings of this particular grammatical error, it worth mentioning that articles have long been the focus of study by many researchers in the field of language learning and second language acquisition. Article use in written English has been examined by researchers such as Noor (1996), Scott and Tucker (1974), and Diab (1996), whose findings were somewhat controversial regarding the acceptance or rejection of the role of the first language on

the acquisition of articles. Their findings indicated that in general, articles were linked with first language interference as a result of the lack of knowledge that students received. This contrasts with Asfoor (1978), who rejected the role of the first language in the acquisition of English articles.

This study differs from the previous research in that it examines errors made with articles across two different environments in order to discover to what extent Arabic influences the acquisition of particular grammatical elements. Results have been divided into two main sections within each group to enable accurate analysis of error sources. The division is as follows: definite articles, involving errors with article deletion and redundancy, and indefinite articles. The findings varied from one group to another, but overall the average number of errors with articles decreased radically for the group of Saudi students in the UK. The investigation of the source of article errors for all students in this case study of this particular area serve two purposes. According to Corder's classification system, errors fall under the diagnostic and the prognostic categories (Corder, 1967 and 1992). Diagnostic errors tell us about a learner's grasp of language at a given point, in this case acquisition of definite and indefinite articles during the learning process in two different environments. Conversely, the variety of Saudi students' error sources can be considered prognostic because it tells us to what extent the learning environment affects their language proficiency. This is useful in order to take further steps in modifying the learning factors to identify the most problematic area of errors with articles for Saudi students. The differences between the sources of errors in terms of the use of articles among the two groups indicate concrete proof of the learning taking place in this case study as a result of the natural developmental sequence of learning. To conclude, based on the results, the study shows that students in Saudi Arabia rely on the transfer of Arabic to judge the appropriate usage of articles due to the lack of knowledge of the system of the new language (English). Whereas, in the case of students in the UK, they were able to make more accurate judgement in using articles, although errors occurred for both groups even when exposed to native input but were lower in the group of students in the UK, either due to the form of instructions they received or the frequent exposure of English in the surrounding environment.

Furthermore, errors with singular and plural nouns were another area of grammatical errors in which their sources remain the same. More precisely, in terms of singular nouns, the major source of errors for students in Saudi Arabia was due to differences in the structure of Arabic and English. This resulted in negative transfer when there was no one-to-one equivalency of nouns in the sentences produced by these students. This supports the view of Gass and Selinker (1983) with regard to the closeness between the two languages and role of the native language in promoting first language interference. The type and amount of particular elements transferred usually depends on the perceived distance between the first and learned languages, and this distance usually narrows as learners acquire more knowledge of the target language. This theory helps to interpret the decreased number of errors from the Saudi Arabia to the UK group, although the major sources were defined as interlanguage errors. Gass and Selinker (1983) stated that "the learners' perceptions play a role in language transfer, and that perception of language universality increases the likelihood of transfer" (cited in Lakkis and Malak, 2000, p.4). The source of errors with singular nouns was identified to be the same for all students in both groups; other factors of the learning atmosphere, for example the amount of practice and the exposure to a native environment in addition to the perceived distance between the two languages, play an important role in reducing the number of errors for students in the UK but not their source. On the other hand, in the case of errors with plural nouns, this was interpreted as developmental errors, indicating they have acquired sufficient knowledge of how the grammatical elements of English language work. This supports the view of the natural order hypotheses made by Krashen (1982), who wrote that second language learning goes through predictable stages similar to that of first language, gradually developing a system of language via errors made throughout the acquisition of grammatical rules in the target language. As well, Norrish (1984, p.34) described this type of errors; as made by "learners who are limited in their opportunity of listening to the target language tend to form hypothetical rules about the new language on insufficient evidence. Learners need to create new utterances, but with limited experiences of the target language, they may make errors".

However, errors with plural nouns has been explained as an error of performance due to the students' fossilization of the new rules of English they acquired naturally in the native environment especially in the case of Saudi students who study in the UK represented in this study.

Accordingly, grammatical speaking errors with the use of prepositions fall in the middle of overall errors by frequency for Saudi students in both Saudi Arabia and the UK. Analysis of these errors proved to be quite interesting when comparing source and consistency between the two groups. According to the literature, the use of the prepositions is one of the most problematic areas for English language learners regardless of their first language. Although Noor (1996), Scott and Tucker (1974), Al-Kasimi et al. (1979) and Meziani (1984) examined prepositions in learners' writing and assumed that most errors with prepositions resulted from literal translation of their first language, the findings of this study do not coincide on all types of prepositions examined. But before concluding the findings of prepositional errors, it is important to differentiate between the concepts of 'interference' and 'translation' from the first language, as this will enhance the findings of the different sources of speaking errors regarding prepositions. According to Norrish (1983), the term 'interference' in language learning is about the unconscious production of the new language in the minds of learners, which may affect the formation of the new language rules; thus is not necessarily a source of error, as sometimes it may enhance production. The distinction between the two concepts, interference and translation, means it is more likely for the latter concept 'translation' to be a conscious strategy made by the learners when the new rules appear to be absent from the second language. This supports to some extent the findings on the source of errors with prepositions studied by linguists mentioned above, as they examined expressions in writing which were familiar to the learners in their first language and translated into their target language, in this case English. However, according to this particular case study, the sources of errors with prepositions varied in their consistency, both within and between the two groups. For Saudi students who studied at Tibah University, and as a result of the different factors affecting the learning environment and the sufficiency of their language input, different sources were found according to the various types of errors.

The most common source of errors was negative transfer from Arabic language for Saudi students in Saudi Arabia, particularly with regard to preposition omission, although the majority of students in this group also represent a strong case of negative transfer across the other classifications of preposition. Substitution errors occurred due to the absence of the new language rules; this led students to unconsciously rely on the

system of their first language due to their lack of knowledge of these new prepositions, replacing them with the ones which already existed in Arabic. In the case of errors in preposition redundancy, they were found to be occurring as a result of using communicative strategies and described as neither developmental nor interference. This type of error was the least common among this group but still significant, indicating that students were in a stage of focusing on communication. Saudi learners at this stage accessed their intralanguage ability, which is considered a sign of significant learning development since their focus is on using the target language rather than relying on their first language. On the other hand, although the findings fell into the same classification of preposition errors as the Saudi Arabia group, students at Leeds University made errors less frequently in this particular category than their counterparts, with different sources of errors as well. Analysis indicates that students in this group committed errors with preposition omission, due to a negative transfer from Arabic, similar to their colleagues in Saudi Arabia, but with the lowest frequency among the different types of preposition errors. Conversely, errors with substitution of prepositions represent the majority among all other types, which made it a significant category for analysis among this group as they occurred due to both negative and positive transfer from their first language. In this case, students show evidence of positive transfer, but in instances when the element in their first language differed from that of the target, they used it inappropriately; this led to a negative transfer of certain prepositions. Nevertheless, the source of errors with preposition redundancy was found to be the result of their intralanguage; as students developed their knowledge about the new rules they experienced in the native environment, they concentrated on their ability to express themselves more fluently and were less concerned about accuracy. This type of error is similar to the first group: a positive sign of learning development as students use the target language without the elements of their first language interfering.

Errors resulting due to the production of sentences without verbs proved to be a perplexing area for students in both Saudi Arabia and the UK. Despite the fact that the average number of students committing this error was lower than many other error classifications, the consistency of this error made it a significant one. Findings for the source of errors in this specific category indicate that the only difference between the two groups lies in the quantity, not the quality. It is evident in this study that Saudi students in Saudi Arabia took literal transfer elements from their first language in the

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production of their new language when making sentences without verbs. This occurred through the deletion of the verb as a main verb or as an auxiliary verb, even when forming questions. Similarly, Saudi students in the UK were shown to produce the same type of error, especially with the deletion of auxiliary verbs, thus indicating that both groups rely on elements of their first language rather than incorrectly applying the rules of the new language. The difference in number could be interpreted as a distinction between the production of spontaneous and guided speech. In case of the Saudi students in Saudi Arabia, their errors were more the result of spontaneous speech, which was less guided due to the role of learning environments previously discussed and resulted in a higher number of errors. On the other hand, Saudi students in the UK were more guided in their speech as they were provided with various communication strategies due to being in a native environment and having sufficient comprehensible input, thus their production of errors was lower in number but not different in source. In fact, although the findings of this research is emphasising the role of the environment in raising learners' awareness of the second language, it could not be applied to all features of foreign language, as some grammatical aspects remain a problem for Saudi students despite being in a native environment. This finding does not completely support the view of Klien (1989) in his review of foreign learners' source of errors when he states that "an essential aspect of learning a second language through contact with everyday situations is the marginal attention paid to the language itself" (p.17). In other words, Saudi learners in the UK focused on communication instead of language forms. They were concerned with effective communication rather than applying the rules appropriately. This process allows for little opportunity for metalinguistic reflection (in this case applying the rules correctly), which results in this particular type of error.

In accordance with the findings discussed, comparison of this particular classification of errors regarding sentences without verbs agrees with Carl James (1980) in his contrastive analysis of errors. The discrepancy in number between the two groups suggests that although deep structure is common to all languages, errors result from the differences in surface structure between Arabic and English. Specified earlier in the previous section on errors with deletion of verbs, the number of errors produced in the surface structure are crucially linked to the degree that the language is acquired, determined by differences at the intermediate level. The contributing factors are how and where the language is learned and to what extent language proficiency is acquired.

In this case this involves a correspondence between the transformation of rules between the two languages and the effectiveness of the learning environment in some particular types of errors such as verb formation. In fact, this finding disagrees with Norrish (1983) who further describes all learner errors in general as follows:

"Language can be unpredictable, and while the causes of errors made by learners of a foreign language may be limited to their exposure to the target language in the class-room, learners of a second language are also influenced by the varieties of that language that they come into contact with outside the class room and the surrounding" (p.42).

Another key point in the findings of this study is errors made by Saudi students in both groups in terms of using sentences with pronoun copying. Although a surface analysis of this particular type might interpret this as a type of performance error, considered to be evidence of learner intralanguage, deep analysis of the errors indicates the opposite. The source of these errors was found to be the result of interference of the mother tongue, including the UK group. Ellis (1985) explains interlanguage as a theoretical construct which underlies the attempts of a learner's production of the new language; the stages they go through when developing their knowledge of the new language system allow them to borrow elements and continue to build up false hypotheses about the target language, which leads them to rely on the structure of their first language and results in this type of error. This also supports the views of Selinker (1972), who writes, "learners do not progress from zero knowledge of a target rule to perfect knowledge of the rule. They progress through a series of interim or developmental stages on their way to target language competence" (cited in Duran, 1994, p.3). This is relevant to the group of Saudi students who studied at Leeds University, as the source of errors for this particular group was highlighted to be the same as the Saudi Arabia group; most students committed this error consistently, transferring pronouns from Arabic and applying them to their use of English. The source of this error was similar to that of Saudi students in Saudi Arabia, despite the UK group having a new form of language input and using different communication strategies after learning in a native English environment. The source of the errors remains the same in comparison to the group in Saudi Arabia; the difference was in the reduction of the number of errors, but not the type of error itself. The significant difference between the two groups in terms of the average number of errors in this particular category indicates a positive sign of the UK group's learning, and suggests that the problem of interference could be overcome using

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different teaching strategies, such as focusing on the use of the communicative approach to enable students to practice the new language and be aware of the system of this language rather than relying on their mother tongue. However, and while the students in the UK lived in a native environment and were exposed to the target language daily, it would not be possible to constantly expect perfect performance in their language production, especially when speaking. When these errors arise and have the same source as with their colleagues, despite the groups being exposed to remarkably different learning environments, their importance should be noted as a problematic grammatical structure for acquisition by Saudi students. In this regard, Doughty (1972) puts forth his view of the effect of environment on language learners: "a problem occurs when a listener new to the environment appears, or when a speaker accustomed to one perhaps rather than limited variety of local English moves into a different setting, needing the language for different purpose, it is of interest that these problem occurs" (cited in Norrish, 1983, p.39). In other words, errors in the specific case of Saudi learners who study in the UK may be attributed to their lack of familiarity with the new rules, despite being in a native environment, thus resulting in their failure to fully acquire the rules of the new language. Accordingly, Doughty's claim should not be generalised to all sources of errors, as the findings of this study, such as pronoun errors indicates that grammatical errors differ in their sources; as Klein (1986) states: "However imperfect from as normative point of view, these means represent the learner's current repertoire and, as such, a learner variety of the target language. The process of language acquisition can be construed as a series of transitions from one variety to the next" (cited in Duran, 1994, p.5). This appears to be an argument for interlanguage errors which proved to have a significant influence in Saudi learners' errors, however, Duran also cited Corder (1981) in his definition of the structural properties of interlanguage as the following: "(a) a simple morphological system, (b) a more or less fixed word order, (c) a simple personal pronoun system, (d) a small number of grammatical function words, (e) little or no use of the copula, and (f) the absence of an article system. Corder describes the interlanguage notion as "transitional language" and presents a model which is inaccurate in various respects but is always more or less complete" (Duran, 1994, p.6). This supports the theory that these errors with pronouns in this case study can be considered an example of student interlanguage errors, which in some cases may be improved by the use of new communicative strategies regardless of the environment they are exposed to.

Likewise, other types of errors in this study, the misused third person pronouns. Although the number is lower overall among both groups, results indicate that it is still frequent enough to be considered a significant source of difficulty for Saudi students, representing a questionable area of English grammar acquisition. Errors with third person pronouns have been classified into two main categories: errors with the subjective case and the objective case. Results showed that the sources of these grammatical errors were common for Saudi students in Saudi Arabia and in the UK. The major findings in regard to third person pronouns indicate that the errors in this case have two different possible explanations for their source. First, errors could be due to the developmental process, which is related to the students' intralanguage learning. This can be attributed to the Saudi students using communicative strategies without paying attention to the rules required, as both groups committed similar types of errors with only a slight difference in numbers. Brown (1980) described this communicative strategy as "the conscious employment of verbal mechanisms for communicating an idea when linguistic forms are not available to the learner for some reasons" (p.12). Moreover, the type of sentences produced by the learners in their developmental stage of language production are influenced by the fact that they are under the pressures of using English language to communicate; for both groups, this view is not fully in agreement with the assumption of Richards (1972). He explained most errors as being a result from using communicative strategies:

"The shape of the utterances produced in the second language may be influenced by additional factors, not related to interference, or to aspects of generalization and analogy. Under communication strategies we may include errors which derive from the fact that heavy communication demands may be made on the second language, forcing the learner to mold whatever he has assimilated of the second language into a means of saying what he wants to say, or of getting done what he wants to get done. The learner may simplify the syntax of the language in an effort to make the language into an instrument of his own intentions. Errors deriving from such efforts may be attributed to strategies of communication" (Richards, 1972, p.18).

In other words, errors with third person pronouns only, in the case of Saudi students, may be attributed to learners attempting to convey what they have learned about pronouns in this case, with errors resulting from using these strategies. Richards continues:

"Errors attributable to the learner's attempts to reduce the Learning burden of what he has to assimilate. May be closely related, and these may be referred to as strategies of assimilation. Perhaps the clearest examples of alterations in language structure as a result of strategies of assimilation and communication are to be found in pidgin languages used by people whose mother tongues are different, in order to facilitate communication between them. In the process of becoming a pidgin a language often loses some of its vocabulary, or is simplified in its phonology or grammar" (Richards, 1972, p.16).

The second explanation is that Saudi students in both groups recognise the English language rules but apply them incorrectly, particularly with the subjective case for students in Saudi Arabia and the objective case for students in the UK, as the transfer from Arabic appeared to be stronger in these two situations.

Finally, the last category of grammatical errors discussed in this study among the two groups deals with the use of regular and irregular verbs. The frequency of errors committed using the same list of verbs was found to be common between all students, whether they studied in Saudi Arabia or in the UK. Regardless of their exposure to different learning environments and language acquisition factors as discussed earlier in this study, the results show a nearly unanimous finding in terms of this particular error's source and the reasons behind it. While the number of errors by both students in Saudi Arabia and in the UK were significantly low on the error scale in this study, the similarity of the type of errors committed by most students makes it an important factor to be discussed, as a crucial part of understanding the process of acquiring a language is to understand learner errors. The first finding in this category illustrates that the students tended to acquire regular verbs before fully acquiring irregular verbs among both groups. This overgeneralisation of grammatical principles draws attention to the fact that the only source of this error found in this study was due to the students' intralanguage, not interlanguage.

The second point is important to the field of second language acquisition in relation to the learner errors. Taylor (2006), in his study of the use of overgeneralisation and transfer of learning strategies of ESL students, first defined the strategy of syntactic overgeneralization as "a process in which a language learner uses a syntactic rule of the target language inappropriately when he attempts to generate a novel target language

utterance" (Taylor, 2006, p.74). Additionally, he mentioned three important facts about a learner's knowledge of the syntax of the target language:

"1. The learner has mastered the mechanics of a particular syntactic rule of the target language.

2. The learner does not know how to use the rule appropriately; i.e., he has not learned the distribution of the rule or the exceptional cases where the rule does not apply.

3. The learner is an active participant in the language acquisition process and is exercising his already acquired knowledge of the target language in a creative way; he is neither operating under a repetition or imitation strategy, nor transferring native luggage structures in his target language attempts" (Taylor, 2006, p.75).

His study on the overgeneralisation of rules goes on to claim the following:

"Second language learners of English make errors which are not attributable to the structure of their native language and which, therefore, cannot be predicted by the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, and many errors which second language learners make can be attributed to inherent difficulties and/or irregularities in English itself and can be explained by a strategy of target language syntactic overgeneralization" (Taylor, 2006, p.76).

The findings of errors with use of regular and irregular verbs represented in this current study, however, do not fully support Taylor's claim, as in some cases errors resulting from the overgeneralisation of rules can be predicted. A list of common errors was generated with specific verbs used incorrectly by all Saudi students in both different environments, indicating a predilection for a certain type of errors with particular verbs. This could result in the creation of fundamental assumptions about these errors, leading to representation in classes and curriculum so that these errors could be focused on by both teachers and students in order to be overcome.

6.4 Conclusions on First Language Transfer

The major focus of this research has been investigating Saudi learners' spoken errors in terms of observable features of interference from the first language (L1) on the target language (L2) and its effects on the grammatical structure of oral English production. Indeed, there are many theoretical difficulties within the existing arguments on the importance of transfer (Oldin, 1997). One problem is that for many years the primary focus of the transfer hypothesis has treated errors as a sign of failure (Whitman and Jackson, 1972); as stated earlier, while second language errors no doubt provide important evidence of weakness and the high level of one's native language influence, they are far from being the only factor. In practice, these errors should not be considered a sign of failure. Rather, they are a means to increase both student and teacher awareness of the Saudi students' weak areas in English language competence; this serves to strengthen the students' communicative abilities, in particular speaking proficiency. The other problem with many studies on language transfer errors lies in the assumption that the universal sequence of development of second language learning provides the major source of errors, in which case transfer then cannot play much part. In fact, the results of this study show that most 'grammatical' syntactic errors were due to the transfer of particular grammatical structures from the student's first language, Arabic, into English. The learners in this study used much of their L1 structure to produce appropriate meanings when they communicated using their L2. These structures are used by Saudi students to make themselves understood, and reflect the level at which they arrived at a certain usage of English.

In order to provide a strong and valuable base for testing language transfer hypotheses, and to see to what extent they affect the production of second language syntactic features, the second language learning environment was examined. Analysis was done in two different locations, Tibah University and Leeds Language Centre, as these represent external factors where the institution is the "giver" of English knowledge and Saudi learners the "receivers". This study shows that Saudi learners accumulated many structural components of English grammar but demonstrated some difficulties applying them, particularly when using this knowledge for appropriate spoken language production. It is evident that there is a remarkable gap between the acquisition and organisation of language knowledge reception. When speaking in the target language (English), Saudi learners in this study relied on their native language structure to

produce accurate spoken utterances. This study demonstrated that Arabic and English have significant differences in their structures; the analysis of learner errors indicated that interference of Arabic as a native language on the target language of English (interlanguage errors) should be expected to a large extent. This also includes a number of other error sources highlighted in this research, such as developmental (intra-language) errors.

In conclusion, this research has pinpointed the most common grammatical errors produced by Saudi learners in two different environments, one native and one non-native to English. Errors were found to fit into nine different categories, some related to the use of nouns and others to the use of verbs and prepositions. Errors were collected via transcribed interviews, which provided the main source of data for this research. Errors were highlighted in the transcripts in order to be counted and analysed for the purpose of this study. Moreover, one of the research aims was to discover and identify the major sources of these grammatical errors from a specific number of students, in the light of language transfer theory as an important source of second language learner errors. This was done in order to provide an accurate test of these first two hypotheses, and to study to what extent the learning environment affects students' level of language proficiency, particularly their speaking skills. External factors, such as the strategies of English language learning and teaching, the English language curriculum used, and the attitudes teachers and students have towards learning have been examined in both Leeds Language Centre (as this case represents the effect of learning in a native English environment), and Tibah University (which provides the non-native learning environment).

This led us to identify whether the level of English is improved by sufficient input, which would point to the influence of external environmental factors, or whether students improve by some natural process of language learners, which would lean toward the internal factors that affect language learning. This would be concluded by identifying the different sources of errors. In fact, the major sources of errors in both groups were found to be due to the strong role played by the L1, although the number of grammatical errors were reduced in the native environment as students developed more awareness about the structure of English instead of relying on the their L1 to communicate. The outcome of testing external factors revealed that they helped in minimizing the number of errors but not reducing their sources. However, some

language learning errors could not be predicted consistently as they varied from one situation to another; as these errors often resulted from the cognitive ability for language learning, few instances of these errors were represented in this study.

6.5 Research Implications for Language Practitioners, Teachers and Students

The research has revealed various dimensions to the issue of spoken errors in the Saudi language context. The main focus of this study was on the theory of language transfer; in light of this hypothesis, when testing English language errors practitioners might take into consideration the role played by learners' first language in terms of other features such as phonology and semantics, as well as the other theory of developmental errors as a major language learning barrier.

In regard to teachers of foreign languages, errors should be considered a significant sign of learning. Learner errors should be taken into consideration and further examination of the learning environment factors should be considered. Great emphasis should be placed on language errors in general and grammatical ones in particular, as the errors represented are the main steps to raising language proficiency. However, according to McLaughlin (1987), teachers should give students more time to practice, "as second language learning like any other complex cognitive skill, involves the gradual integration of sub-skills as controlled process initially predominate and then become automatic" (p.139). According to the class visit reports I completed after attending English classes at Tibah University, which aimed to observe teachers' attitudes and performance with regard to their students' errors, English language teachers should perform the necessary corrections and provide the students with the correct forms of grammar in oral feedback as well, not only in written form. In addition, the English curriculum, issued by the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education, provides teachers' guides, which often give advice on how to correct students' oral errors regarding grammar and pronunciation. This will help students in their oral performance if used appropriately by the instructors while teaching or communicating in English inside the classes. To this end, Hamdan (1994) investigated corrections in English language classes in Jordan and found that language errors go largely uncorrected. The results of our study provide convincing evidence that feedback from language teachers could be a source of help for students in enhancing their L2.

Positive feedback, using textbooks designed according to the student's level of English and different teaching approaches that focus on practicing oral skills inside the classroom during classes attended at Leeds Language Centre helped to reduce the numbers of errors examined in this case study. Related to the issue of teacher involvement, Johnson (1996) posited that it is the teacher's role to stimulate the learners to active reception and production of language by developing activities which will help them to acquire the language wherever this acquisition is taking place. Additionally, "this characterisation of language learning entails the successful mastery of steadily accumulating structural entities and organising this knowledge into coherent structures which lead to effective communication in the target language" (Bhela, 1999, p.22). Thus, in the case of a learner's mastery of language learning, we would expect that well-formed, accurate and complete target language structures such as the ones discussed at Leeds Language Centre would provide a sufficient learning environment, as these factors emerge on the learner's path towards gradual mastery of the new language. Furthermore, "if the learner went on to master the language, we could, in principle, tabulate the expansion of his/her repertoire up to the point where all of the well-formed structures of the target language had been accounted for" (Bhela, 1999, p.22). Teachers in this case should be aware that language learning goes through different stages to develop the student's language competency with the aim of achieving a gradual elimination of errors.

The knowledge gained from this study regarding how language is acquired and the influence of the mother tongue on errors during language production has revealed significant findings regarding error sources. According to the data collected in this study, it appeared that all students were aware of the second language system and had adequate language comprehension skills. Littlewood (1984) notes, "the fact that a structure or sound has no equivalent in the learner's mother tongue does not necessarily mean that it will be more difficult to learn because of that" (p.19). This implies that more practice is required in order to overcome and reduce the production of errors regardless of L1. Harmer (2007) states that successful second language acquisition is dependent on the nature of the input received. This input influences the self-correction that students display while speaking.

Finally, the research led to the finding that both learners (Saudi students in this case) and teachers should recognize that, while practice is the best method for learning and

facilitates language acquisition toward better communication, some errors should be ignored as this results in the unconscious acquisition of both second and first language knowledge (Rutherford, 1987; Thornbury, 1999).

6.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Considering the findings and the implications given above, and due to the limitations inherent to our research, such as the sample size of this study, it would be appropriate before we conclude to mention some of the areas in which research might be done as a follow-up to this study:

1- This study could be replicated for other learners of different linguistic backgrounds than in the current research.

2- More grammatical categories and language features could be found and expanded.

3- The study could be conducted on larger groups and at different educational institutions to test the external factors which influence learner language performance.

4- Each grammatical category could be examined individually in more detail, using different levels of proficiency of foreign language learning.

5- The role of first language and other psychological and affective factors could be examined, not only on grammar but also on phonological and semantic features.

6- Further studies could examine in more detail and in one focused group the effects of using the communicative approach to determine whether it improves the acquisition of English grammar in both oral and written forms.

In conclusion, what this research has perhaps shown most clearly is that foreign language (in this case English) oral production is not a 'blank slate' where different inputs can easily produce a sufficient and professional output. Rather, the process of speaking, including the errors produced, is due to both internal and external complex factors, various sources, "inter-" and "intra-language", and is a component of reflective characteristics that have the potential to impact how the learning process happens.

Thus, I believe the completion of this study does not mean the end of our work, but rather the discovery of a new source of knowledge in the field of language learning and teaching. We are aware that this research has its limitations but our hope is that in

addition to being a useful source of information on second language acquisition, it might also serve a basis for further study in the role played by the first language on second language learning. Our aim is to provide the first step to shedding light on the various sources of errors for different languages and levels of learning under multiple learning conditions and for learners of diverse backgrounds.

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Sample of students` interviews in Saudi Arabia

Line	Interview 1
1	SA (1)
2	**I:** Hi, Lujean
3	**S:** hi...
4	**I:** how are you today?
5	**S:** i am fine thank ..
6	**I:** can you tell about yourself please?.
7	**S:** i am 18 girls .. studys in university in tibah university ..my name is lujean .. i
8	am studying in the foundation year .. i hope that .. i can go to emmm .. i can ..
9	catch my dream .. to be a business women .. i hope that and get .. master in it ..
10	the what i hoped.. hope it .. and emmm can i talk about myself ?
11	**I:**ofcourse you can also talk about your interest or hobbies if you please?
12	**S:** and iam very lazy girl .. ok ? even when we said that .. you are in the third ..
13	third .. i dont know what they call it ...
14	**I:** you mean in the third year?
15	**S:** in the third floor .. so emmm ... i felt it emmm .. i have like some .. but i dont
16	like what they call it .. (not clear word)
17	**I:** sorry what do you mean?
18	**S:**emmm (breath heavily)
19	**I:** you mean you get short in breath when you use the stairs?
20	**S:** yeah yeah .. and emmm i love to watch movies .. every in the weekend and ..
21	and i download some movies and stay with it .. even if i have exam emmm .. i cant
22	study without like a movie i want to watch it or something like this .. i can watch
23	movie .. it is not translate to Arabic .. in Arabic .. i can not speak very well English
24	but i can't understand .. that's why i can not speak .. and i am not speak English
25	well that's why .. but i can understand and catch everyone say it quickly and i can understand ..
26	**I:** so your listening is excellent you mean ?
27	**S:** very excellent but speaking noo.. and i am really bad in spelling .. even if have
28	a writing or in exam or something like this i fell it big challenge for me .. because
29	my spelling is really really bad ...
30	**I:** ok .. maybe just its the listening is the first step to be excellent in the rest of
31	the skills .. you well get there iam sure ..you should be fine there is nothing to
32	worry about ..
33	**S:** yes .. yes .. emmm hope that ..
34	**I:** so lujean for how long you have been studying English ?
35	**S:** i have been studying English from the meddle school .. (intermediate| until now
36	.. in the preparation year (foundation) every subject every thing is in English ..
37	that was challenge .. because me study math and physics science in English but ..
38	thank God i have really english language very well .. so i can understand what they
39	are saying in the another subject ..
40	**I:** so if i amy ask you about your English ? is it a personal effort or you got it from
41	learning in school?
42	**S:** emm .. personal .. because .. there here in Saudi Arabia they didn't teach
43	English very well they just wanted to know .. just they prepare for the exam ..
44	just .. just this ...
45	**I:** you mean theu concern only about the written form ?
46	**S:** yeah yeah ,,
47	**I:** so you don't practice the language as real situation in life ..

Line	Interview
48	S: yeah yeah .. i hope they can improve .. our teacher English .. our English
49	teacher in the Saudi Arabia .. they just say the grammar .. say the .. they not like
50	.. it not like the prep year ... emm .. many girls i know it .. when they come to ..
51	prep year .. they said the English very very very different with they studies ..
	because emm stopped ..
52	I: you mean compared with what they studied in the secondary stage?
53	S: yes yes .. because they .. there many teachers .. are native .. so you cant speak
54	Arabic with him .. you have .. you must learn English .. yes .. in the first our you
55	have learn to learn about listening .. writing speaking everything .. its not like the
56	.. emm the school or high school ..
57	I: what about the speaking skill? 'do you think you have enough time to speak and
58	practise speaking?''
59	S:emm i didn't get what you say .. ?
60	I:i mean .. do you have enough chance to practice speaking ?
61	S: we have a lot of chance .. we have to improve .. i think we have emmm
	stopped ..
62	I: do you have enough chance because you got a native speaker of English?
63	S: no .. because we have a native speaker ... i hope that every teacher in that ..
64	in the university specially in the prep year they must come a native speaker ..
65	S:yeah it is improve you .. that you have to learned .. to you can .. Communicate
66	with your teacher..
67	I: so but i think it is still possible to speak English with your teacher even if they
68	are not native speaker ?
69	S: emmm i don't know .. i don't know her .. they can speak English .. but they say
70	if they are not native .. even if they Arabic .. they say don't talk to me in Arabic ..
71	but if .. it is not like a native speakers .. at all .. emmm .. in the first semester i
72	had a a .. a non native teachers .. she was miss ameera .. do you know her ? she
73	didn't allowed the girls speak inarabic .. but even we speak this ... they speaks of
	us .. its Arabic ..
	Section two; formal part
74	I: ok i see .. ok can you tell about a book or a movie ?
75	S: i read a novel .. actually emm .. in Arabic novels .. like Ahlam moustganame if
76	you know her and emmm and .. i search for her book that emm .. the "black is suit
77	you" .. i read just the first part i couldn't ..
78	I: so way don't you try to get it from jaraear?
79	S: i go to it .. there .. they said it is not allowed in Saudi Arabia ..
80	I: really ?
81	S: yeah yeah ..
82	S: it is before month .. and even if emmm
83	I: you know sometimes they bring the books and after they sell them out .. they
84	are not allowed to bring more ..
85	S: aha .. that way maybe .. that's why ..
86	S: there is first book i read it it was emm .. the .. emm around the world in 80
87	days .. i cannot remember the title .. it about a man that emm .. that got
88	challenge ,, the he come .. around the world in 80 day .. day .. just in 18 days ..
89	he do it .. when he come to her country .. they think .. he is (unclear) but
90	because .. the sun said .. there more day .. they come .. before the specific time

Line	Interview
	..
91	**I:** you mean he didn't in the last minute ..
92	**S:** yes .. and he move .. he .. have it .. emmm
93	**S:** emmm and he .. win the challenge ..
94	**I:** can you tell me more about this book ? the experience in this book? what can of
95	detail he mentioned about the world?
Line	**Interview**
96	**S:** emm he was .. a very details .. he .. interesting .. he in very small details ..
97	like .. the water should have to be .. in the example .. 18 degree .. if it more or
98	less .. he fire .. her server .. he fired him .. them .. because it is not the degree
99	he want .. but when .. because he a very emm .. details man .. can we say that ?
100	.. he count the days to come around the world in it .. and then he got .. the India
101	china .. and he go the the middle east .. and Egyptian .. emmm
102	**I:** so what was the point to travel around the world in 18 days ?
103	**S:** to improve .. ti prove and her counted .. her mathematics or something like this
104	is good ..
105	**I:** aha .. what is his nationality?
106	**S:** his British .. i think ..
107	**I:** so you have enjoyed the book ?
108	**S:** yeah yes ..
109	**I:** is kind of documentary book?
110	**S:** yeah .. there is a movie about it .. it in funny way actually .. Jake Shan ..
111	and he was the server (servant she means) .. that he .. emmmm and i don't
112	know if there are movie of the book but in the funny way there Jake Shan ..
113	**I:** so its kind of comedian ..
114	**S:** yes yes comic .. movie
115	**I:** ok .. thank you very much Lujiean for your time ..
116	**S:** you welcome …

Line	Interview 2
1	SA (2)
2	**I:** hello Fatima,
3	**S:** hi .. hello ..
4	**I:** thank you for your time today..
5	**S:** hi .. welcome..
6	**S:** first of all, my name is fatma, i am ninety years old.. i studied .. i studying in
7	tibah university .. i have three brothers .. their name are .. niyeaf aseam and
8	bander..and i have one sister .. is name .. is .. her name is noof .. and my mother
9	.. mother name .. sahar ..emmm .. i love swimmings .. and drawing and writing .. i hate reading ..
10	**I:** can you tell me more about for how long you have been studying English ?
11	**S:**ok .. first of all .. English here not better enough .. because the doctor .. not
12	translate emm .. the doctor translate everythings.. like question and also , we
13	don't .. we don't speak lot but English ..
14	**I:** so you saying that you don't really have enough speaking during classes ..
15	**S:**yes .. we don't have enough of speak ...
16	**S:** just and they .. just doctor come in classes and emmm ... give us grammar and
17	writing .. just and she don't talk a lot with me .. and don't make some practice ..
18	practice ..
19	**I:** so how many hours do you usually take of English ..
20	**S:** four .. four hour ..
21	**I:** so do you think it is enough?
22	**S:** yes for English enough .. but we don't .. but I don't .. we wonts .. we want
23	some .. special .. like English .. how do you speak English professional.. and how
24	do you write professional ..
25	**I:** so you don't thing the quality of teaching is good enough to acquire the language?
26	**S:** yes .. yes ..
27	**I:** what about the teachers are they native or non native speakers of English?
28	**S:** in one in the term .. first term native speakers .. and this term non native .. Saudi ..
29	**I:** so you do you find there is a different between the two?
30	**S:**yes .. no the native speaker more better .. because the native speaker speak
31	English correctly .. and they you know speaks English .. write English .. but the
32	non native speaker are .. just take the role .. and like when i ask her were do that
33	.. why do that .. or why write :G: or ing .. why added ing in the verb ... she don't know .. just the role ..
34	**I:** so you are pointing to the teaching proficiency in here ? so tell more about your
35	future plan what are you going to do after you finish the foundation year?
36	**S:** ok .. i want to be doctor in .. in usa .. in university .. and be manger ..
37	**I:**in which major?
38	**S:** emmm ... physics or mathematics ..
39	**I:** so what do you usually do to get the chance to go either to physics or math.. do
40	you have alike a certain average to get to those majors?
41	**S:**yes .. we have .. we have .. and emmm
42	**I:** so is it quite restricted to meet the entry requirement ?

Line	Interview
43	S: emm i don't know .. emmm stopped
44	I: so you don't know how much you should get in average i mean ?
45	S: no .. we .. we have the same different average in each term .. emm .. i hearing
46	if you want to be in the physics section .. you must be 4.9 or like that .. and they
47	change..
48	I: so they have regularly changing them .. so you don't have restricted rule about it ?

Line	Interview
49	S:no no ..
	Section two; formal part
50	I: ok can you tell fatma about your interest hobbies or what you do in your leisure time?
51	S: i watched tv .. i watch tv all the time .. and i talked to my friend .. i make cake
52	.. i making cake.. just sweet ..
53	I so you are interested in cooking ?
54	I: laughing just sweet .. but the chicken and the meat ,, no i hate it ..
55	S: and we have swimming pool at my house .. and every day i swimming .. if the
56	water colded .. just emmm stopped ..
57	I: emm so can you describe one of your interests .. for example you said you like
58	cooking can you give the recipe of your best or favourite one?
59	S: emmm .. all the sweet .. stopped ..
60	I ; ok tell me one?
61	S: emmm .. like cupcake .. emmm stopped
62	I: ok great .. how do you do cupcake ?
63	S: laughing emmm .. ok first of all .. i .. emm put the eggs and drop it in emmm ….
64	I: blender?
65	S: yes blender and i put it the sugar .. and emmmm stopped .. emm fl .. fo ..
66	I: flour ?
67	S: yes flour and flour and they put the chocolate and they mix the .. emmm that
68	just .. after that you put in the microwave .. emmm
69	I: the oven?
70	S: in the oven … ofen .. just .. emmm
71	I: so is it easy to cook? i have never tried to do cupcake before .. i though its
72	difficult to do ?
73	S: really .. no no .. so easy ..
74	I:ok you said you watch Tv all the time.. true ?
75	S: yes ..
76	I: ok can you tell me about what kind of program you watch or your favourite tv show ?
77	S: noo .. movies .. scary movies .. funny movies .. romantic .. and just ..
78	I: ok can you tell me more about one of your favourite?
79	S: "SAW" .. all the part .. emm .. i remembered ten part ten series ..(mean series)
80	I: oh! really ? ten ?
81	S: so i watch all the part .. yes ..
82	I: oh god .. i didn't even watched the first one !!
83	S: oh .. and i love harry botter ..

Line	Interview
84	**I:** so can you describe it in details please?
85	**S:** it talk "took" about one man .. crazy man .. catch people and but it in the base
86	.. and play a game with it .. kill .. kill .. kill game .. like emmm .. like .. cut your
87	self if you to get out .. cut your self and like that .. emm stopped ..
88	**I:** so what about the end ?
89	**S:** no no end .. it complete his games ..
90	**I:** so is it games or crimes you mean?
91	**S:** no games .. he crazy man .. he talk about all thing is game ..
92	**I:** so do you mean , he thought it is like a game that he killing people ..
93	**S:** .. oh no .. yes all the movies .. he kill the ... emm the game .. and they can not
94	.. the police catch ..
95	**I:** what else you want to tell me ?

Line	**Interview**
96	**S:** emm nothing .. stopped ..
97	**I:** ok thank you very much fatma of your time ..
98	**S:** thank you ..

Line	Interview 3
1	SA(3)
2	I:hello hanaa ..
3	S: hi
4	I: how are you today?
5	S: i am fine thank you ..
6	I: thank for your time today ..
7	S: welcome
8	I:hana can you tell me about your self.
9	S: my name is hana .. Iam Sudanese .. but i born and live in Saudi Arabia.. my
10	family .. iam the youngest in my family .. i have one brother and one sister .. they
11	are older than me .. they are twin .. emm .. my brother is medical student ..is ..
12	he .. his .. heart .. emmm anyone .. i absolutely i love him .. my sister .. emm she
13	is .. my sister is medical student and she closed me .. very closed me .. i study in
14	community college .. for 2 year for diploma .. i study computer science .. now i
15	want to complete my education for computer science .. its (unclear word) manager .. that it ..
16	I: so for how long you have been studying English ?
17	S: emm .. for four hours ..
18	I: i mean how many years?
19	S:i studies in school .. yes .. for six year .. in school .. in community college .. i
20	study for one semester .. now study for emmm ... one year ..
21	I: so you are nearly toward the end of the foundation year ?ok how many hours do
22	usually study English ?
23	S: for study of my self or emmm here ?
24	I: i mean her in the foundation year?
25	S:emmm ... stopped .. 20 hour ..
26	I: ok may ask you about the speaking focus? do you think that you have enough
27	time to practice speaking ? or the focus is on the written skills?
28	S: it depends ... in last semester i have emmm .. teacher .. she is .. she want to ..
29	she want .. all .. the class to speak .. just speak .. she don't want to reading .. or
30	emmm .. she want just speak .. but now .. my teacher .. she was .. she want to ..
31	every skills .. to emmm
32	I: so is she a native or non native speakers of English?
33	S:emm sorry ?
34	I: is she a native or non native speaker of English i mean ?
35	S:emmmm i ..
36	I: what is her nationality i mean ?
37	S: she is Canada .. she is Canady ..
	Section two; formal part
38	I: what about your interest you hobbies something that you do for leisure?
39	S: my favourite place in my home is library .. i .. i spend a lot of time to read a
40	book .. emmm .. i .. i emm .. care so much for the .. the religious .. book .. books
41	.. my best emm .. author is .. "ibn algayeam" i .. i read alot of her .. books ..
42	emmm sometimes in my free time .. i cook .. i help my mother to do the laundry
43	or something like that .. that the main hobby is reading ..
44	I: emm i see .. as you said that you love to read? so can you tell me about your
45	favourite book or favourite writer ? in more details please ?

Line	Interview
46	S: he always .. talk the mine idea and he explain it .. for he .. say for three for
47	seven example for explain her .. his name .. idea .. he talk and talk and talk .. the
48	main idea and the example .. and the example and he come back to his mine idea
49	for three chapter ..
50	I: so you mean he is expanded his idea ?
51	S: yes yes .. expand .. she tooked ideas… emmm stopped
52	I: ok that's great can you tell more about ibn alqyeam ?
53	S:emmmmm … he is .. it is national .. like that .. he is .. that he write alot of
54	book .. like aldaa we aldoaa .. and emm .. and stopped .. don't know .. 3edat
55	alsabrean .. i read it for three time ..
56	I: so you must find it very interesting ?
57	S: his teacher ibn tuemayah .. and some times .. he spend alot of time .. and he
58	died .. his (stopped) his .. he spend alot of time to .. he love .. he loves his
59	teacher .. he say .. my teacher .. said like this .. his talk for what .. for this and
60	this .. he say the reason … yes .. i think interesting ..
61	I: can you tell me more about cooking ? what dishes you like to cook?
62	S: the sweet .. my .. unfortunately .. my father .. is .. has debates .. but i do the
63	sweet is .. at least this sugar for my father .. and some times .. iam veg . veg .. i
64	like to eat vegtablaes ..
65	I: you are vegetarian you mean ?
66	S: i read any dishes about vegetables and tried to cook it .. always .. emm .. i
67	cook delicious dishes ..
68	I: can you tell me then about your best dishes?
69	S: ok .. emm stopped
70	I: i mean something that you are perfect in ?
71	S:anyking of cake .. all people .. emm any kind .. any kind .. emmm .
72	I: do you like to do carrot cake ?
73	S: caroot for what ? (miscommunication)
74	I: i mean it is a kind of cake with carrots and a double cream on the top ..However
75	sorry to interrupt ..
76	S:really?? i should try to cook this ..
77	I: yes it is very tasty you should do ..
78	S:good idea .. emmm
79	I: so hana .. what is your future plan ? after you finish your foundation year ? what
80	major are you going to specialize in ?
81	S: emmm .. when i complete these .. i want to study master … emmm ..
82	I: in which area?
83	S: in computer science ..
84	I: do you a specific one in mind ..
85	S: about programme .. exactly .. i want to Photoshop .. Photoshop .. i like .. i
86	tried to develop my education .. and when ..i finish it .. emm i don't know .. i
87	want develop anything .. because every year .. a new program come ..
88	I: ok what about you future plan ? finding a job ? doing the master here or abroad
89	? what are you planning to do i mean ?

Line	Interview
90	**S:** emm .. these year .. when i finish four year .. but i studied before some
91	subjects .. so i think i study for two years and complete my education to master ..
92	**I:** so you are going to upgrade from diploma to bachelor ?
93	**S:** yes .. exactly .. emmm stopped
94	**I:** oh thank you very much hana i do appreciate your participation
Line	**Interview**
95	**S:** thank you ..

Sample of students' interviews in United Kingdom

Line	Interview 1
1	**I:**Hello hassan..
2	**S:** hello
3	**I:**can you talk about your self please..?
4	**S:**yes.. emm .. my name is hassan .. I'm from Saudi Arabia..emm i'm a civil engineer.
5	i..and i'm government employ now.. and i could scholarship from my job and i came
6	to .. uk .. to the uk .. to continue study and degree .. and before that .. I will study
7	English language.. after that i will start study degree in project.. in engineer project
8	manager..
9	**I:** so for how long you have been here? i mean studying English?
10	**S:**i have been uk .. since august .. since last August ..
11	**I:** so it have been 7 months?
12	**S:**yes .. no .. actually 6 month
13	**I:** can you tell about any culture differences?
14	**S:**differnt! .. yes alot of emm cultural different..but i think the food it different
15	between my country and emmm.. the uk.. there .. there are a lot of kind food in my
16	country .. it is traditional and .. emm i think it is very nice .. but i think in the uk just
17	i think .. emm fish and ships.. as .. as emm .. traditional food and famous in British ..
18	in the British...(stopped).. and ..
19	**I:** i see.. have you find any interesting things in here?
20	**S:**emm .. i think .. emm .. i think there is or there are traveling or emm or transport
21	.. i think in this country absolutely emmm .. different in my country.. because in my
22	country.. usually use my car just .. if i want go any place or if i want travel or .. emm
23	but in uk ..you have to just to .. take a bust or emm just public translate..not specific
	.. not emm
24	**I:** so you like the transportation in uk ?
25	**S:** yes .. yes i think it is better ..but maybe in my country .. emm i think it is specially
26	or but .. emm
27	**I:** private you mean?
28	**S:**yee private car ..
29	**I:** ok can you tell me about your interests or hobbies?
30	**S:** emm .. i think .. there are a lot of interests .. emm usually when i go to another
31	city .. like Manchester or York London Liverpool .. i have visited .. i think emm . i .. i..
32	emm i can see a lot of new thing .. new thing .. maybe .. emm museum .. maybe
33	shops .. maybe free .. think.. things new..
34	**I:** you are interesting in visiting new places?
35	**S:**yes ..
36	**I:** so are there any other hobbies?
37	**S:**yes i think very good .. it easer when i .. emm when i went go .. went go another
38	city .. just make appointment or .. make booking or .. i go to train station and ..
	emmm

Line	Interview
39	**I:** take a train ..
40	**S:** yes take a train directly .. in direct to any city i want to go ..
41	**I:** aha i see .. which is areal advantage of using puplic translation ..
42	**S:** which better .. i think emm .. i think train .. train is better kind of transportation ..
43	in transfer .. emm in uk ..
	Section two; formal part
44	**I:** what about any recent news you have heard or book you liked or a movie you watch..

Line	**Interview**
45	**S:** oh .. i .. really .. want to talk about last read i did .. emm it was book about
46	specific my subject in civil engineering about ..(un clear word) complete .. emm the
47	writer .. it is very famous in civil engineer .. it was professor mark .. i think mark
48	mark .. like this .. this book talk about emm .. how i can make enforcement concert
49	and from all contracture .. from foundation until the roof .. and the emm it talk
50	about for property.. properties concrete .. and emm ... how i can make a .. emm
51	strong or weak reinforce concrete.. or how i can make .. enforce steal .. like .. emmm ...
52	**I:** so something related to your subject area you mean?
53	**S:** yes .. it was about my subject not emm (stopped)..
54	**I:** which means you like reading about books that you find it useful in you work field..
55	**S:** i think very easy because .. i study same the subject when i was in university ..
56	**I:** so are you going to use this book when you do your master?
57	**S:** i think this book .. i think emm free engendering .. any civil engineer..you have to
58	read it and some time ues it .. use .. there is more explain for design .. and
59	sometimes analysis (analaayses).. the program in reinforcement concrete and
60	sometimes solv or give some solution .. solution for the problems in concrete like
61	this .. emm .. i think it is better good in .. in the ss.. civil engineer books...
62	**I:** so you find it a good one.. and you advice it to engineers..
63	**S:** yeah.. i think it is good..
64	**I:** anymore book you read about?
65	**S:** i emm .. i usually read about my subject .. i read book about the soil under
66	foundation .. of . for any construction .. this book talk about properties .. the soil ..
67	how i can make .. make foundation .. for a construction ..i want big foundation or
68	small foundation .. sometimes ues .. another or different type foundation .. not
69	same .. normal foundation like square or cube .. maybe is like .. like a big Ben in the
70	ground .. a lot of type of .. emm foundation .. is good for the basic or foundation of construction ..
71	**I:** ok thank you hassan for your time .. i really enjoyed your talk ..
72	**S:** thank you thank you welcome..

Line	Interview 2
1	**I:** hello Amal ..
2	**S:**ok .. my name is Amal .. emm .. im working in king king abdual azziz university
3	..am lecturer.. my department is accounting .. i have ,, master degree .. and
4	came here to leeds .. because .. i want to continue emmm .. my education and
5	take the phd .. emmm .. for my self i have two daughter .. emmm .. they came
6	here with me .. emm the older one his name is Gidah ..and the youngest one ..
7	here name is doaa .. and my husband is died .. and emmm
8	**I:** ok for how long you have been in the uk?
9	**S:** four month ago ..
10	**I:** so have you studied it all in leeds ?
11	**S:** yes i study here in language centre ,, in university of leeds .. i start in October ..
12	**I:** ok in which course you are enrolled in at the moment ?
13	**S:** yes .. i study in intermediate course .. soo emmm.. \
14	**I:** ok can you tell me about your experience here .. for example about the
15	differences in culture .. if you wanna talk about it?
16	**S:** emm .. i went a lot of thing different between here and Saudi Arabia.. the first
17	one is the weather .. is very different from my city in Jeddah .. always .. in my
18	city always warm .. and sunny .. but here always .. runny .. i didn't see the rain ..
19	in my city maybe .. one days or two days in the years .. here everyday .. i see the
20	rains .. the weather is rain .. and .. the .. and there is another different like ..
21	emm .. the house or the home ..here .. the .. the model of house different in my
22	country .. when i set .. everywhere .. i can here everybody .. because .. there i
23	don't know why .. the .. they make her wall .. viper .. or what .. i don't know .. not in my country .. not in my country emmm ..
24	**I:** so it is like made of concrete you mean ..
25	**S:** yes.. and emmm .. now i forget ..laughing ..
26	**I:** ok what about the cultures ?
27	**S:** the culture .. emm yes .. the food is different between here and my country .. i
28	think food here i didn't .. is don't delicious when eat anything .. i don't .. know ..
29	maybe .. there is alot of spicy .. a lot of favourite with food .. not like here .. and
30	emm .. what another .. thing .. emm i didn't remember ,,
31	**I:** ok no worries .. so if you can tell me what you like most about uk?
32	**S:**sorry i didnt understand .. most?
33	**I:** i mean something that you really like here?
34	**S:** maybe the weather .. i like it here .. i see the .. i see the every season .. i see
35	the the spring .. and the winter and the .. emm the fall ..
36	**I:** you can really see the four seasons?
37	**S:** yeah ... i didn't see this in my country .. the all is the same .. summer ..
38	**I:** what about your interests or hobbies something you like to do for leisure?
39	**S:**emmm .. sometime .. in my country or here?
40	?**I:** here .. please or even in back home?
41	**S:** sometime.. emm .. i think only i make shopping when .. i have every time .. or
42	visit another city .. because i came four .. four month .. when i have sometime .. i
43	want to go .. the .. another city .. near my city or go .. to London .. like that ..
44	**I:** so you like visiting cities.. can you talk one of these cities please?

Line	Interview
45	**S:** i vistied .. i have been visit .. the London .. three times ago .. when .. i.. emm
46	after i came here in leeds .. the two times .. very short .. one days .. after that
47	two days.. but .. in .. in the .. in the .. holiday .. Christmas .. i went i stay there ..
48	in London .. one weeks .. i interesting there .. is .. the .. London is emm is very ..
49	nice .. i like it .. i visit in ..i went to the London eye .. i went to see the .. emm
50	the big ben watch .. i went to Madam tusse .. i thing .. i went there to the outlet
51	.. shopping .. for London .. and i take .. take .. emm . a ride .. i went around
52	London .. in the sea .. i take one lunch and visit .. the .. emm what .. i don't know what ..when .. emmm ..
53	**I:** you mean the tourist attractions?
54	**S:** yes .. the tourist attraction.. around the London .. emmm
55	**I:** aha .. i see .. ok lets go back to the general course.. if you wann talk about it ..
56	how do you find it ?
57	**S:**emmm .. i don't understand well .. but emmm ..
	Section two: formal part
58	**I:** ok no worries .. tell me about the general course .. do you like it so far?
59	**S:** yeah.. yes .. i initersting here when i study .. the last .. the last course ..
60	maybe . i didnt get a lot of ... emm .. alot of idea .. i didn't keep .. alot of ..
61	emmm i didnt improve my self .. alot .. maybe because i have start after the ..
62	emm in start the course .. i make something .. i want to buy the house rent the house .. emmm ..
63	**I:** you mean .. you have been in the middle of the course when its already started?
64	**S:** now .. but i think .. i can .. i will .. emm i can .. be a good .. because i start it
65	.. when the beginning .. when .. the .. begen after the begrn this course .. and i
66	think .. maybe .. start to get a lot of vocabulary abd .. understand ..understand
67	something .. .. emm .. better than before ..
68	**I::** so can you tell me about your futuer plan? after getting the ielts? you said you
69	are going to start ou Phd in which major? what subjet ?which school?
70	**S:** yes .. i unfortunately didnt take the .. offer .. but my department is accounting
71	.. i want to continue in the same department .. i want to continue the reapared . (
72	means) prepare) small proposal? maybe .. four hundred word .. or five hundred
73	word maybe .. when i .. when apply for the .. for the take offer in phd .. emmm ..
74	**I:** so you are planning to get the Ielts first and then applying for the phd? you mean ..
75	**S:**yes .. emmm
76	**I:** so do you have a university in mind i mean ? is it going to be in Leeds or another
77	university?
78	**S:** i don't know now .. i registered in some university .. you need .. the first .. the
79	all .. you need first .. contact with the prof ..
80	**I:** or supervisors?
81	**S:** yes .. supervisor .. and .. but because my language is not fluently and not
82	understand well .. i want to improve my language firts after that .. i want .. emm
83	**I:** so is going to be through out this year?
84	**S:** maybe .. but .. i hope start before that .. after .. emm .. maybe after three
85	month .. after that i can ..
86	**I:** you can decided then ..

87	S: yes yes ..
88	I: thank you very Amal for your time .. i wish you the best of luck ..
89	S: thank you .. welcome..

Line	Interview 3
1	**I:** hello iman.. can you tell me about your self please?
2 3 4 5 6 7 8	**S:**my name is Iman .. I'm from Saudi Arabia.. I.. I .. emm .. the first .. the older ..me the older girl in my family.. i have three sisters and four brothers .. emm .. I also, i have son .. his name is Lead.. I came to uk.. the UK with my husband and my son .. before maybe 6 months ago .. because my husband .. emm .. studies ..Ph.D translation .. and now .. I study in the.. in language centre in the university of leeds .. I .. for two months .. emm .. and i hoped to complete my study .. emm...i hope to complete master degree .. i have .. i have bachelor degree in English literature .. ..
9	**I:** so you both you and Arwa are from the same university?
10	**S:** no no .. i'm in .. I'm at .. i'm in king Fasial university .. but Arwa in king said university ..
11	**I:** so you both from Riyadh?
12	**S:**no, i'm from Tharan..
13	**I:** and what major you are going to study here?
14	**S:**i hoped to complete like my husband .. translation .. i hope that ..
15	**I:** can you tell me about your interests? or the differences between Saudi arabia?
16 17 18 19 20	**S:** i think there are many differences between Saudi arabia and the Uk.. I .. emm .. I think first .. the uk . there is more freedom than saudi arabia .. and the .. emm .. in my viwe .. a .. specially woman here.. we can do everything .. we want to do it .. but sometimes there .. i think there is .. a saudi men also here .. like in.. who look .. for me .. like why you are wear here .. and why you be like this .. i think like saudi arabia..
21	**I:** so you mean the Saudi's behaviour toward women is still the same..?
22	**S:**yes .. its not different ... yes .. but ..
23	**I:** but what about outside the language centre?
24 25 26 27 28	**S:** i hope that .. emm but .. i don't care for him .. ok .. i will do everything i want to do it .. and i know // what i will .. what the right things.. and i will do it .. ok and i think .. there are here in the uk more activities more fun than Saudi arabia .. i think the weather better in saudu arabia .. the facilities .. more facilities (difficult pronunciation?).like there are a lot of bus .. we can move everywhere easily .. and i

Line	Interview
	.. emm
29	**I:** you mean transportation is better here?
30	**S:**yes .. better than saudi arabia .. of course ..
31 **32** **33** **34** **35** **36** **37**	**I:** and also women here .. we can drive a car .. in my country no .. but i think .. also .. disadvantage here .. for example . emm I for example .. the shop .. the shop every shop close at 6 o'clock .. i think .. because in my country 12 am .. but in here just 6.oclock .. when the night came .. oh very sad ..i don't like this .. but actually the weather here its better than saudi arabia... and i think here the people respect the others .. and don't care about others .. everything(think).. everyone do what.. which he .. you .. want to do it .. no its care about others .. and emm (stooped)..
38	**I:** which you mean a really advantage of being here?
39	**S:** i think .. emm
40	**I:** what about your hobbies and interests?
41 **42**	**S:** i want .. i hoped to learn how to drive a car ..and also, i want to .. learn play in the piano ..just .. i want to .. watching a lot of theatre.. i go to theatre alot of time ..
43	I; ok can you tell me about the theatres you went to, your experience i mean?
44	**S:**experince..
45	**I:** i maean what play have you gone so far?

Line	Interview
46 **47** **48**	**S:**ok .. emm .. two moths ago .. me and my husband ..go to the leeds .. leeds.. i don.t know theatre .. and we say .. we saw the emmm.. the music between a .. Italian and south African.. and the musician dance .. dancing ..
49	**I:** so it was like a musical play?
50 **51** **52** **53**	**S:** yes yes .. music playing .. mix between flamingo and south africa.. really i .. i enjoy and ok i think we .. we want to " the phantom of opera" .. it very(fery) fantastic.. i like it .. and i feel not .. in the real life.. emm .. in the film .. yes .. i like it .. i think there is many activities here..
	Section two: Formal part
54 **55**	**I:** yes great .. ok can you tell me about anything in watched recently or heard about in news.. or a book you like?
56	**S:**ok .. i read a book about the .. the love in the cholera..
57	**I:** the love in the time of cholera?
58	**S:**yes .. you read it ?

59	**I:** yes i did ..
60	**S:** you like it ..
61	**I:** emm not really ..
62 63	**S:** i like it because .. it was gift from my husband .. i like it .. i think it is crazy story ..ok .. i think it so for Gabriela marquis .. yes .. do you want it to talk about it .. ?
63	**I:**yes please if you can do ?
64 65 66	**S:**ok .. it is a story took about .. men .. man and women .. they love .. and the women .. woman.. get married from other person .. of other man .. and the man who loves him .. complete to love her .. me .. maybe before .. i don't remember .. ..
67	**I:** was it like 20 years?
68 69 70	**S:** no no .. i think more .. more like hundred .. one years.. ok .. three hundreds .. after .. he .. i think he .. he slept with a lot of women but don't married .. after her husband die .. he .. came and .. emm stooped..
71	**I:** you mean they got back to each other?
72 73	**S:**yes yes .. right .. and emm maybe one hundred .. emm but i like it .. because i like Gabriel marquees ..
74	**I:** have you watched the film too?
75	**S:**yes .. i watched it ?
76	**I:**can you tell me about the adaption of this book? do you like it?
77	**S:**yes i like it the music of the film is for saahkerah .. .. i like it .. ok .. emmm (stopped)
78	**I:** ok thank you very much iman for your time ..