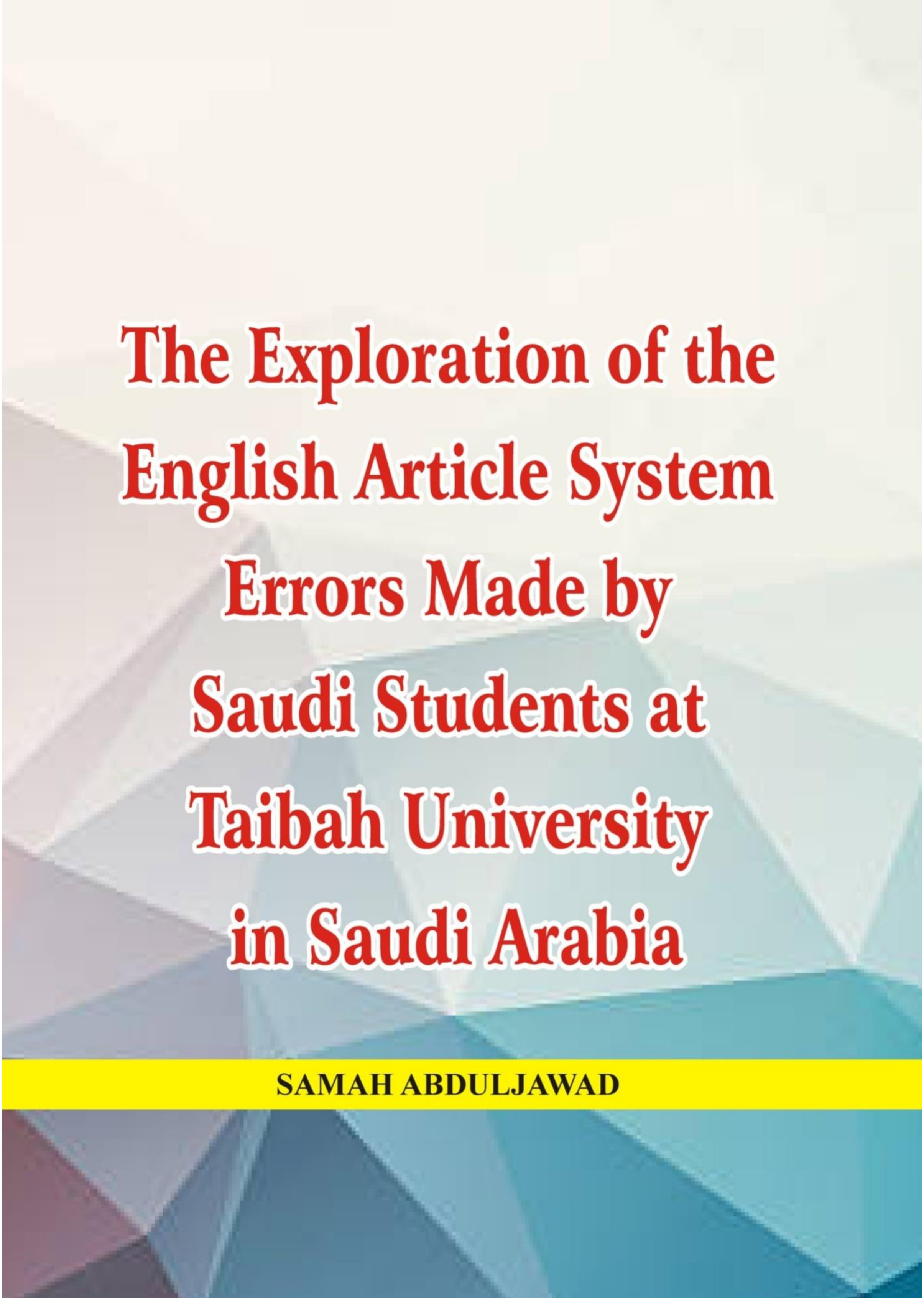

The Exploration of the English Article System Errors Made by Saudi Students at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia

SAMAH ABDULJAWAD

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Samah Abduljawad

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 The Importance of Language LearnerErrors

The introduction of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) and later Error Analysis (EA) as two interrelated theories of second language acquisition (SLA) directed to a series of discussions on the nature of concepts such as "difference" and "difficulty" and a consideration of their pedagogical implications in teaching English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) (Ellis, 2003; Odlin, 1989). CAH argued that the main obstacle to second language acquisition is the interface of the first language system with that of the second language (Lado, 1957). However, a lot of problems are associated with the CAH. Although the hypothesis accounts for transfer to some extent but sometimes over-predicts in the sense that some contrasts do not lead to negative transfer and also under-predicts in that not only different areas but also some areas of similarity may still constitute problems for learners. Hence, EA was proposed and distinguished itself from CAH by its analysis of errors attributable to all sources, not just those subsequent from the negative transfer of the native language (Corder, 1967). The sources of errors include the L1 influence errors, developmental errors (overgeneralization, simplification) and the induced errors from the classroom or other practices. Research conducted within the framework of EA is still popular today because of its practical applications to the immediate context of language classrooms.

More specifically, the examination of error sources has been considered as an interesting topic in the study of learner errors. It is hypothesized that if we improve our comprehension of the sources of learners’ errors, teachers will be in a superior position to help their students develop their language proficiency levels. As an English language teacher, the researcher knows for sure that generally Saudi students and particularly students at the University of Taibah make errors in their writings. Therefore, this study is set to explore errors commonly found in Saudi ESL students in their use of articles at Taibah University. It is hoped that this research will give means and an insight to the ESL teachers to understand the English article errors made by Saudi students and provide guidelines for improvement and correction of writing skills.

1.1 The Article SystemAcquisition

Syntax and particularly the article system is one area in which studies of this nature seem to have potential for drawing important pedagogical implications. The importance of the English article system is manifested in the fact that articles are among the five most incessant words in the English language (Sinclair, 1991). Odlin (1989) has studied the article system in different languages to conclude that it follows different syntactic categories in different languages. He goes on to suggest that these differences in syntax can indeed lead to language transfer. Not only does the article system involve a large number of inconsistencies and exceptions, but also the rules governing the systems of different languages are usually distinct. Hence, the acquisition of the article system is considered to be one of the most troublesome aspects of English for students (Master, 1990; Park, 2006; Mizuno,1999).

In an attempt to locate the areas of difficulty and propose solutions, many researchers have compared and contrasted the article system of English (classified by Moore (2004) as definite, indefinite, and zero article) with that of other languages. For example, Ionin et al. (2008) found that second language learners whose mother tongue has an article system, transfer article semantics from their first to their second language.Similarly,GarcíaMayo(2008)focusedonthearticlesysteminSpanish(L1) and English (L2) and noticed that learners overused the definite article because of substantial transfer from their first to the second language. Moreover, Barrett (1999) examined the use of English articles by Taiwanese English learners in their academic writings. The findings showed that participants overused both the definite and indefinitearticleshoweverunderusedthezeroarticle.Transferhasalsobeendiscerned by Diez-Bedmar and Papp (2008) and by Trademan (2002) and in their corpus-based learner corpus study in which they compared Chinese, Spanish and EnglishL1 speakers’ use of the English articlesystem.

TheissueisevenmorecomplexwithArablearnersofEnglishsincethereisonly definite article (al) and zero article but no indefinite articles in Arabic. According to the CAH, then, Arab learners of English will have more problems with indefinite articles. This was confirmed by Kharma (1981) who examined the errors made by learners of English whose first language was Arabic. He came to the conclusion that thearticlesystemisamongthemosttroublesomeelementsoftheEnglishlanguageto dealwith.Asitwasexpected,indefinitearticleswerethemostproblematic,whilethe definite article (the) was the easiest to master. Schulz (2004) holds that Arab learners of English are expected to ignore the indefinite articles because all words in Arabic are considered indefinite. In addition, Smiths (2001) explains this by referring to the dualroleoftransferasbothpositive(thecaseofdefinitearticle)andnegative(aswith the indefinite articles). Other similar examples are when Arab learners of English use the definite articles with proper nouns. This is because English does not allow theuse of definite articles with proper nouns, but Arabic does. These examples make itclear that L1 (Arabic) indeed influences performance and negative transfer does exist. Other examples of negative transfer are reported which can happen as a result of the notions of countability and definiteness (Butler, 2002) since it is difficult for language learners to identify the countability or definiteness of the words with precision. For example, the word “money” as a non-count noun in English can be accounted count in Arabic.

However, aside from the issue of transfer, other accounts have been provided for the errors committed by Arab learners of English. Bataineh (2005) considers transfer responsible only for indefinite and zero errors, citing overgeneralization, teaching transfer, learning and communication strategies as other possible causes. Hence, the present study attempts to examine the use of articles among Saudi learners of English in K.S.A and provide explanations for the errors that may occur within this undertaking.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This research aims at examining the misuse of definite and indefinite articles among Arab learners in the K.S.A and more particularly the ESL students at Taibah University and it is intended to be a source of further research and investigation. As a teacher of English, the researcher has seen that both students and teachers in K.S.A express concern over using definite and indefinite articles in English. This can be attributed to the interference of their mother tongue that is Arabic. As it was mentioned, some errors result from the fact that the system of articles in Arabic varies from the article system in English. However, there seems to be other errors for which alternative accounts should be provided. The present study is an attempt to shed light on this important issue and propose useful solutions to cope with it.

1.3 Significance of theStudy

To the best of researcher’s knowledge, unfortunately only one study has been carried out by Alhaysony (2012) to investigate the errors made by Saudi Female ESL Students. So, the lack of study about the errors in utilizing the English articles by the Saudi students in the K.S.A learning and teaching sittings has encouraged the researcher to investigate this issue going for discovering successful solutions to deal with it. In addition, an essential issue to be considered with this appreciation is the learners' first language. Teachers are better off if they can analyze student utterances and break them up into their constituent parts. Teaching can also be more effective if teachers are familiar with the structural similitudes and contrasts between the first language of the learners and the second language. Teachers require this sort of information to have the capacity to make plans for their teaching and enable the learners to avoid the most obvious errors associated with the article system.

1.4 The ResearchQuestions

The present study is an endeavor to answer the following research questions:

- What are the most frequent errors (Interlingual and intralingual) committed by Saudi learners of English in the context of K.S.Auniversities?
- What are the possible sources of theseerrors?
- Whatlearningandteachingstrategiesshouldbeappliedtoaddressthesedifficulties andchallenges?

1.5 Thesis Structure

The present thesis is arranged in five chapters. In the first chapter (introduction) the research problem is stated, the research questions are presented, and the significance of the study is elaborated upon. Second chapter (literature review) starts with an examination of the theories of second language acquisition and goes on to review the studies conducted within the framework of error analysis especially the ones with Arabic as the learners' first language and with a focus on the learning of English article system. Following, in the third chapter (methods) the materials (test of Arabic to English sentence translation and interview) are explained and the participants are introduced. The next chapter (results) illustrates the findings of the analysis of the collected data. Finally, in chapter five (conclusion), these findings are discussed both within the context of the study and the broader context of ESL in KSA. In addition conclusions are drawn and suggestions for further research aregiven.

Chapter Two: LiteratureReview

2.0 Theories of Second LanguageAcquisition

Second-language acquisition (SLA) is the procedure by which individuals learn a second language. Second language means any language learned in addition to a person's first language (mother tongue). In spite of the fact that the concept is named second language acquisition, it can likewise include the learning of third, fourth or someotherlanguages.Furthermore,Second-languageacquisitionmeanswhatlearners do and it does not mean practices in language teaching although pedagogical implications can be drawn from the theoriessuggested.

A plethora of hypotheses and theories about how individuals learn a second language have been proposed in the field of second-language acquisition. Theories of second-language acquisition have drawn the consideration of scientists since they attempt to shed light on the processes involved during the learning of a second language.Thesetheorieshavedrawnthingsfromdifferentsciencessuchaslinguistics, neuroscience, psychology and sociolinguistics. Hence, most theories of second-languageacquisitioncouldbedescribedashavingrootsinoneofthesesciences.Each of the theories can be considered as an explanation for one part of the language learning process and not any theory of second-language acquisition has yet been generally acknowledged by scientists and researchers as a comprehensive and overarchingone.

In addition, it is not easy to identify the precise origins of these theories since second-language acquisition has begun as an interdisciplinary field. However, the history of SLA can be divided into the period before to 1980s and the oneafterwards.

Prior to 1980s, the language education was dominated by the behaviorist views of learning and teaching. Behaviourists (or behaviorists) believed that animal and human behaviour should only be studied in terms of physical responses.This directed to theories of learning which attempted to explain how an external event (stimulus) resulted a change in the behaviour of an individual (response) with no reference to concepts such as mind, ideas or any kind of mental behaviour. Stimulus and response theory is particularly combined with the works of the American psychologist Skinner (1972) who describes learning as a formation of association between responses. Behaviorist psychologists equated human brain with a “black box” and they refused toconsideranyroleforthebraininthelearningotherthanassometypeofmechanical connectionbetweenastimulusandaresponse.Hencesecondlanguageacquisitionwas considered as a mechanical process which needed a lot of memorization, repetition, and practice, (Mischel,1993).

However, two publications in this period are particularly considered as instrumental to the improvement of the present research of SLA. The first one is Pit Corder's(1967)essay“TheSignificanceofLearners'Errors”.Corder'sessaycriticized a behaviorist account of SLA where errors were considered as deviations from the accurateuseoflanguageandrecommendedthatlearnersmadeuseofintrinsicinternal linguistic processes. Selinker's (1972) article, on the other hand, argued that second-language learners develop an individual intermediate linguistic system which he namedas“interlanguage”andproposedthatinterlanguageisfreefrombooththefirst and second languages. In the 1970s then, the movement in SLA was for research discovering the opinions and ideas of Selinker and Corder, and challenging the behaviorist accounts of language acquisition. Examples incorporate research into transitional phases of second-language ability, researches in error analysis, and the morpheme researches which examined the order in which learners learn linguistic aspectssuchasmorphemes,negation,andquestioning,(Brown,1973;DulayandBurt 1974, 1975). However these researches too attracted criticism mainly because of the methods used to elicit the data which were thought to be biased in favor of some linguistic elements (Gass and Selinker1994).

During the next decade (1980s), attempts were made to present new theories which would challenge the tenets of the behaviorist paradigm and bring its relevant practices under attack. The most noticeable theory in this post-behaviorist era was Krashen’s (1981) monitor hypothesis. Hence, in this period the theories of Stephen Krashen (1981, 1982, and 1985) became the primary paradigm in SLA. Through his five basic hypotheses (generally known as the input hypothesis), Krashen held that learningdoesnotleadtoacquisitionandadultstooacquirelanguagejustlikechildren do. He further mentioned that language is merely acquired by comprehensible input, language input that is just One level above the present level of language learners’ proficiency and therefore quite appropriate for their learning. Krashen's design was powerful in the area of SLA and furthermore had a vast impact on language teaching andlearning,butitleftsomeimperativeprocessesinSLAundefined(forexamplethe importantissueofindividualdifferencesinultimatelanguageachievementintheface ofsimilarlinguisticinput).Researchinthe1980swasdescribedbythetrytofillin these gaps. Many researchers and educationalists heavily criticized Krashen’s theory as not being able to account for many aspects of the language learning process.

Therefore, many concomitant approaches were put forward by the researchers inthefield.Theseincludethemodelsinwhichinputandinteractionwereemphasized suchasMichaelLong's(1980)interactionhypothesis.Initsearlyversionofinteraction hypothesis,Long(1981,1983)studiedtheimpactofinteractionalmodifications(Ellis, 1991, p. 7) on input comprehensibility which is thus viewed as a vital part of L2 acquisition. Some research discoveries (Pica, Doughty and Young, 1986) proof that interactional modifications can promote L2 comprehension. On the other hand, itwas critiqued by different researches directly after its formation, and Ellis claims that although interactional modifications might encourage comprehension, it is not yet certain which modification works the best and in which context (1991, p.17).

Later, Long (1996) updated his theory to argue that negotiation, which stimulates interactional modifications, connects input, especially output and selective attention in productive ways' (pp.452-453). The more extensive extent of this view represented consideration drawing capacity of interaction to the current gaps in learners' interlanguage increased through negative proof and addressed the topic of how acquisition could be facilitated and encouraged through interaction.

InadditionsomeotherapproachessuchasSchmidt's(1990)noticinghypothesis wasputforwardduringthisperiod.Eachofthesetheorieshadtheirownimpactonour comprehension of both the theory and practice of language learning and teaching. Schmidt (1990) mentions that although metalinguistic knowledge of a languageis not generally imperative for acquisition, the learner must be mindful of L2 input inorder to pick up from it. In his “noticing hypothesis,” Schmidt explains the idea that learners must notice the routes in which their interlanguage structures vary from those of the target language. This noticing of the gap prompts the learner’s internal language processing to rebuild the learner’s internal representation of the rules of the L2 to convey the learner’s production closer to the target.

The following decade (1990s) too introduced a series of innovative and new theories to the field. In any case, the two fundamental areas of research attraction amid the 1990s were linguistic theories of SLA based upon Chomsky's Universal Grammar (UG). UG concentrates on system internal factors and particularly the part of linguistic universals in second language acquisition. According to this view, input alone or input interacting with non-linguistic cognitive principles can't represent a definitive achievement of adult and child language learners. Therefore in order to account for language acquisition, an innate universal linguistic component is proposed. This innate language acquisition device (LAD) is assumed to consist of some basic principles and parameters.

Principles are essential properties which all languages share whereas parameters are properties which can differ between languages. From a UG point of view, learning the grammar of a second language is only a matter of setting the right parameters. For instance the pro-drop parameter determines if sentences must have a subject to be syntactically right or not. This parameter can either have the positive value like the case of Persian, in which sentences don't essentially require a subject or negative value like English in which case subjects must be available. An English speaker learning Persian would just need to derive that subjects are optional from the language he listens, and afterward set his pro-drop parameter for Persian in like manner. Once he hassetalltheparametersinthelanguagerightly,thenfromanUGviewpointhecould be said to have mastered Persian. In other words he will dependably produce correct Persiansentences.However,theprimaryinadequacyoftheUGapproachindescribing second-language acquisition is that it doesn't totally deal with the psychological processes involved with learning alanguage.

For most of the following cognitive theorists, however, the distinction between competence and performance was not necessary and clear cut. Instead they believed thatthelearningofasecondlanguagereliesongeneralcognitivemechanismsjustlike thelearningofanyotherskill.Learningasecondlanguageincognitivetheoryrequires the automatization of the underlying sub-skills as well as the restructuring of the information that has been acquired. Internalized rules and memorize chunks of the language constitute the what of the learners’ system or declarative knowledge while knowing how to apply strategies to process second language data for acquisition and use is referred to as the procedural knowledge which accounts for the automatization and restructuring of knowledge. (McLaughlin and Heredia,1996).

In addition some researchers and theorists have added to the development of cognitive SLA theories by expanding comprehension of the ways L2 learners restructure their interlanguage knowledge frameworks to be in more prominent adjustment to L2 structures. Pienemann’s (1998, 2003) Processability theory, for example, mentions that learners restructure their L2 knowledge frameworks in a request of which they are fit at their phase of improvement. For example, with a specificendgoaltoacquiretherightsyntacticandmorphologicalstructureforEnglish questions, learners have to change declarative English sentences. They do as such by a series of levels, constant crosswise over learners. Clahsen (1990) states thatcertain processing principles determine this order of restructuring. In particular, heexpressed thatlearnersinthefirstplace,keepupdeclarativewordorderwhilemovingotherparts of the articulations, second, change words to the beginning and end of sentences, and third, move components inside of main clauses before subordinateclauses.

Moreover, the 1990s saw the introduction of a series of empirical research in whichsociolinguisticconceptsplayacentralrolehavebeenrecentlyconductedinthe field of second language acquisition. Through ideas such as interlanguage variability, language socialization, situated language learning and power relations, (re)construction of identity, and affect and emotion researchers have attempted to reveal insight into parts of second language acquisition not previously accounted for. The idea of interlanguage variability, for example, emphasizes elements in learner interlanguage that are used interchangeably to question the very concept of language acquisition. How can we claim that a linguistic element is acquired when there is still variability in the performance of language learners? (Towell and Hawkins1994).

In addition, from language socialization perspective language acquisition is the result of forming the relationship between language development and culturally organized situations of use. The idea claims that for successful language learning studentsshouldgetfamiliarwiththeculturallyappropriatesituationsinwhichespecial linguistic items can be used. For example some terms or even styles of speaking may not be considered appropriate language use by some social groups within a specific speech community. (Pallotti2001).

Moreover, identity and power are closely related concepts which can create different opportunities for the language learning process. Unequal power relationships in terms of ethnicity and gender, for instance, can lead to unequal opportunities for the development of second language. Developing a strong identity, on the other hand, can help the language learner to regain power and develop acceptable levels of language proficiency. (Lam 2000; Norton2000).

Finally the role of affect and language attitudes in promoting or inhibiting learning success has been given attention within the sociolinguistic perspective towards SLA. The concept of investment is proposed as an alternative to the idea of motivation in social psychology. The amount of motivation or investment in the learning of a second language has been proposed as being influential to the language learning process (Rampton 2006).

The introduction of sociocultural theory (SCT) into the field of second language acquisition during the 1990s put a more extensive point of view on the language learning process. In the light of the theory, language learning is essentially seen as a social process which is not just made inside of a person. In other words, second language first creats in the social “intermental plane” and progressively continues into the “intramental plane” (Lantolf 2006, 2011). The sociocultural theory unifies prior theories of Vygotsky (1978, 1986) and later views on the social formation of mind essentially by Leontiev (1981) and Wertsch(1988).

From the beginning of the new millennium forward, research concentrated on much the same areas as in the 1990s, with an emphasis on three main camps of linguistic, cognitive, and social approaches. However concepts such as linguistic errors, interaction, form, and function still continue to be areas of hot debate within the discipline of applied linguistics. Some new theories were also proposed which can be seen as complements to the existing theories of SLA. For example Atkinson's (2002) sociocognitive theory can be viewed as similar to the earlier sociocultural theories (Lantolf, 1991) with a different emphasis on the language learning process.

VanPatten and Benati (2010) do not believe that this situation will see any changes in the near future. They point to the importance and influence of these regions of exploration in the more extensive fields of psychology and linguistics as evidence for their claim. This literature review presents an account of the contrastive and error analysis in second language learning as the theoretical framework behind the present study. It further discusses the interlanguage theory and order of acquisition studies as related disciplines. This is followed by a discussion of the English as well as Arabic article systems. Finally, studies of error analysis with the article system are elaborated upon in the last section.

2.1 Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis

In line with the dominant approach towards learning in 1970's, language acquisition was also viewed as a behaviouristic phenomenon. Adopting the behaviourist approach towards learning, Lado (1957) proposed his strong form of the contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH). This hypothesis declared that the main hindrance to second language acquisition is the interface of the first language with that of the second language. Therefore CAH proposed that an experimental of the two languages in question would result in a taxonomy of linguistic contrast between the two languages which will empower the linguist to know the challenges that a learner would face while trying to learn the second language. Lado's CAH held that those elements that are similar to the learner's native language will be easy to learn while the elements that are different will be more difficult. Of course the concept of transfer was both viewed as a positive and negative phenomenon. Positive transfer which is facilitative to the language learning happens when L1 and L2 features are close to each other while negative transfer or interference happens when L1 features are erroneously carried over into the second language.

Later on Wardhaugh (1970) presented a weak form of CAH arguing that the weak form does not suggest from the earlier expectation of specific degrees of difficulty. It perceives the significance of interference across languages but it additionally perceives that linguistic difficulties can be better clarified after the committed errors are analyzed. In other words, as the learners are learning a second language and errors show up; teachers could use their knowledge of the native and target languages to try to comprehend the sources of the error.

Yet another blow to the strong form of CAH was conveyed by Ziahosseini and Oller (1970) who proposed their form of "subtle differences". Designing a creative study on language learners' spelling errors, they stated that for ESL learners English spelling proved to be more difficult for individuals whose native language utilized Roman script than for those whose native language utilized a non-Roman script. The strong form would have anticipated that the learning of an entirely new writing system could be more troublesome than reinterpreting spelling principles of the mother tongue. Therefore the moderate form proposed that wherever patterns are insignificantly distinct in meaning or form in one or more systems, complicity may result to make the learning process more difficult. In other words, intralingual errors

(errors caused by target language itself) were suggested to be as important as the interlingual errors (errors influenced by mother tongue).

The most effective materials were supposed to be those which were based upon a scientific explanation of the language to be compared, learned with a parallel explanation of the language of the learner. For example the fundamental assumption of Frie’s (1945) book entitled the “Learning and Teaching English as a Foreign Language” was that people tend to transfer forms and meanings of their dynamic language and culture to the foreign culture and language both profitably when trying to speak the language and act in the culture, and responsively when trying to understand and grasp the culture and the language practiced by native. The principles and techniques expected to be seen in a classroom based on the contrastive analysis hypothesis include Presentation and Practice Correction to remove bad habits, Reinforcement of good habits, Drills and practice, Mimicry and memory. These principles are manifested in the audio-lingual method of teaching the language.

However, a lot of problems are associated with the CAH. Although the hypothesis accounts for transfer to some extent, it over-predicts the errors as some contrasts do not lead to negative transfer. In addition, it under-predicts errors as some areas of similarity still constitute problems for learners. Moreover behaviorism was stronglycriticizedduetothefactthatitconsiderssolelytheproductandnottheprocess of learning. Also Chomsky’s (1959) ideas about L1 learning led to the rebuttal of Skinner’sVerbalBehaviouranddrewthescholar’sattentiontothelogicalproblemof language acquisition such as the imperfect input leading to the final grammatical language with a very complex syntax mastered. Therefore copying and correction alone were criticized as not being sufficient for successful languagedevelopment.

Errors are characterized as idiosyncrasies in the language of the learner that are immediate appearances of the system within which a learner is operating at the time. Erroranalysis(EA)gottoberecognizedfromCAHbyitsexplanationoferrorsowing to all possible sources, not simply those causing from the negative transfer of the nativelanguage.Thefollowingtableillustratesthedistinctionsusuallymadebetween errors andmistakes.

Table 2.1. How errors are differentiated from mistakes

Mistakes	**Errors**
Part of performance	Part of ‘transitional competence ‘
Unsystematic	Systematic, non-random
Slips of the tongue	
Can correctimmediately	Not corrected
Do not show ungrammaticality	Show learning processes

For Corder (1967) a learner’s errors then give confirmation of the system of the language that he is utilizing at a specific point in the course (and it should be expected that he is utilizing some system despite the fact that it is not yet the right system). These errors can be attributed to many sources such as the L1 influence errors, developmental errors (overgeneralization; simplification) and the induced errors from the classroom or other practices.

2.2 Interlanguage Theory

Selinker et al (1975) gathered data of English–speaking Canadian children (7 years) in an immersion program to conclude that although English learners of French make some errors which can be attributed to their native language structure, the reverse is not correct. In other words, French speakers learning English do not produce errors predicted by the CAH. Since this cannot be seen as a one way learning problem, it was concluded that CAH over-predicts many of the errors within the process of language leaning.

Selinker then proposed the interlanguage as the uniqueness of a second language learner’s system. It is a system that has a structurally middle status between the target and native languages. This system is constantly revised to approach the target language structure. However in some learners this may never happen and learners may end up with a fossilized version of the second language. To account for the successive approximation of the interlanguage to target language, it is referred to as the approximative system. In addition the term idiosyncratic dialect is used to connote the idea that the rules of the learners’ language are unique to the language of that individual alone.

The best way to clarify interlanguage is to examine the writing and speech of the learners or what is known as the learner language. The data from learner output presents the underlying developing language competence. In addition, the study of the learner language is mostly equated with the study of errors which learners make. Therefore error analysis is also emphasized in this approach.

2.3 Taxonomy of Learner Errors

One of the often-cited error taxonomies is proposed by Richards (1971). Accordingly, the errors that students are expected to produce are classified into interference and intralingual errors. Interference errors refer to the errors that result from first language (Arabic in this study) interference such as when "*the*" is used wrongly by students instead of "*a*", "*an*", or zero article. Developmental errors or intralingual, on the other hand, are errors that result from incorrect learning methods that are improved during the time of learning the English article system. These errors are in turn characterized into substitution and omission errors. As the names suggest, a substitution error happens when an article is substituted with a wrong article such as the use of "*a*" instead of "*the*" and an omission error occurs when a necessary article is erroneously left out of the sentence.

Four reasons behind intralingual errors have also been discussed by Richards (1971) as ignorance, overgeneralization of rule restrictions, incomplete utilization of rules, and false hypothesis. An overgeneralization error happens when an error is made based on other similar linguistic structures. In addition, utilizing a rule to the inappropriate structure regardless of restrictions or not consider using a fully developed structure are two other reasons. Finally, if learners do not completely understand a difference in the target language, they may develop false hypotheses leading to errors.

In order to develop the taxonomy, Richards (1971) involved participants from different language background (French, Polish, Chinese, Japanese, Czech, as well as westAfricanandIndianlanguages)andpresentedthedifferentkindsoferrorsrelating to the use of questions, distribution and production of verb groups, articles and prepositions. By using Richards' distinction of learners' errors — intralingual and interlingual—asabasisofanalysis,differentstudies(Alhaysony,2012;Adway,2013; Sarko, 2008) have been done in the area of article acquisition which will bediscussed in the followingsections.

2.4 The English Versus Arabic ArticleSystem

In linguistics, an article is usually defined as determiner (or a word) used with a noun to show the sort of reference made by the noun. The English article system has three main kinds of articles: definite, indefinite, and the zero article. The definite article include only “*the*”. The indefinite article embraces both articles “*a*” and “*an*”. Quirk et al. (1972) hold that *“a”* or *“an”* is used with singular non-specific whereas *“the”* is used with specific nouns. In other cases such as plural non-specific nouns, mass nouns, proper nouns, and non-count nouns the zero article is used.

The concept of definiteness has been defined in various ways. Halliday and Hassan(1976)believethatdefinitenessonlyrelatestothefactthattheiteminquestion is identifiable. In other words, it is possible for the reader/listener to recover the necessary information in order to identify that item. They mention twogeneral functionsfortheuseof“the”namely,endophoric(cataphoricasforwardpointingand anaphoric as backward pointing) and exophoric functions. The former refers to the items within the text while the latter provides reference to items outside the text. To be considered as definite Hawkins (1991) believes that the referent set should be identifiable by the reader/listener via a complex interplay of different pragmatic parameters (knowledge shared by the interlocutors). The indefinite articles, on the otherhand,occurinanindefinitesingularnounphrase(NP)environmenttosignalthe countability of the NP. The use of “*a*” indicates that there exists other referents of the same set that are not included in this act ofreference.

Master (1990) holds that the English article system is one of the most difficult partsoftheEnglishgrammarfornonnativespeakers.Itisalsooneoftheareasthatare acquired very late by second language learners. He adds that it is very difficult to provide metalinguistic explanations for the article usage in English even for native speakers. A comparison of the article system between English and Arabic makes it clearthatwhereasEnglishhaszero,definiteandindefinitearticles,Arabicutilizestwo of these definite articles (i.e., the zero article *and “al”* which is a prefix) and lacks indefinite articles. Along these lines, Arab learners of English are expected to have morechallengeswithindefinitearticles.Kharma’s(1981)studyinanArabicESLcontext wasalsoevidencetosupporttheclaimsmadebyMaster(1990).Heexaminedthekindsof errorscommittedbyArablearnersofEnglishandreportedthearticlesystemtobeamongthe most difficult components of the English language to dealwith.

BecauseofabsenceofindefinitearticlesinArabic,ArablearnersofEnglishare expected to delete the use of the indefinite article “a” or “an” due to the way that all wordsinArabicareindefinitebynature(Schulz,2004).WhileEnglishdoesnotallow the use of definite articles with proper nouns, Arabic, on the other hand, makes it obligatory. Apparently, L1 (Arabic) plays a very crucial role in making such choices. This is what is referred to as negative transfer in studies of contrastive analysis.

Other examples of negative transfer can be seen because of the differences between English count/non-count nouns and their counterparts in Arabic. For instance, non-count nouns such as “money” and “information” in English are usually considered countinArabic.However,theremaybeotherexplanationsforthekindsoferrorsthat Arab ESL learners make regarding the article system. These sources of errors are explained in more detail in the following section when studies on the errors made by Arab learners of English are elaboratedupon.

2.5 Studies of Arabic ESL/EFL Learners’ ArticleErrors

Recently there have been a large number of interesting researches in the area of error analysis.Thebasicreasonbehindthesestudieshasbeentoclassifyandidentifyerrors and thereby raise teachers’ awareness of the problematic areas that language learners are struggling to learn. These studies support either or both of the two different views toward the sources of errors (interlingual and intralingual) which were discussed before. Of course, both perspectives have been supported by different research findingsandthereisasufficientempiricalproofforeachoneofthemtobeconfirmed.

Accordingly,manyresearchershavebeenstudyingtheacquisitionoftheEnglish article system by Arab second language learners. Results from these studies are also extremelymixed.Someofthemhaveindicatedthatthelanguageinterferenceisthe major reason behind the misuse use of the English article system while others have provided other intralingual accounts for the occurrence of such errors. We start with studies that contribute the errors mainly to the first language interference.

For instance, AbiSamra (2003) believes that most of the syntactic errors committed by Arab EFL learners in their writings are caused by interference of the Arabic language as their mother tongue. More specifically, Crompton (2011) studied the article system errors made by Arabic learners of English from different Arab countries. To identify the errors, he analyzed the regular essay assignmentssubmitted by students. He discovered that the most frequent error was the misuse of the definite article "for generic reference" and ended that most errors result from L1 interference asopposedtobeinginteralingualinnature.Heclaimedthatevenforforeignlanguage learners with a first language such as Arabic in which there is an article system, L1 transfer may be a problematicissue.

Similarly Abushihab et al (2011) classified the grammatical errors made by the Jordanian ESL learners. He found that the most frequent error is the addition of 'the' and the least frequent error is the omission of the. He concludes that basically the difference between English and Arabic languages as far as the articles system causes these errors. Moreover, the L1 interference was found to contribute negatively to the occurrence of these errors.

In yetanother study, Alhaysony (2012) studied the sorts of errors committed by female students of English in Saudi Arabia. By asking the participants to write life-related descriptive topics, she identified the errors that they made in terms of the Englisharticlesystem.ShefoundthatmanyfemaleArabEFLlearnerstendtoomit the articles as well as making a few substitution errors. With regard to the error of omission, “a” is the most frequent article omitted while the omission of “an” is the least frequent error. She identified the native language interference as having the greatest role in making such errors followed by strategies of instruction when teaching the English articles.

To shed more light on the role of interference in making such errors, Sarko (2008) compared Arab learners of English with French English language learners. While French has both a definite and an indefinite article, Arabic has only one definite article. Preliminary findings suggest that compared to Syrian Arabic speakers, the French speaking learners indicate more advance in learning the article system regardless of their capability levels. He concludes that the presence of indefinite article in French contributes to the process of acquisition while the absence of an obvious morphological form for the indefinite article with singular nouns in Arabic hinders the acquisition of the morphological classification in the L2 by L1 Syrian Arabic speakers.

On the other hand, another camp of researchers has demonstrated that the source of errors in the English articless system is mainly due to the learning strategies used by language learners. For example, Bataineh (2005) carried out a study on Jordanian EFL learners. The results demonstrated that the majority of the errors are developmental in nature, for example, simplification and overgeneralization. These errors are believed to be the result of wrong learning methodologies. In fact, the omission of the indefinite article is the main L1 interference error that is distinguished in this study. In addition, Alsulmi (2010) found that the errors made as a result of the wrong learning and teaching strategies are more common than those resulting from the Arabic language negative interference. Adway (2013), too, studied the Arab students in the United Arab

Emirates in terms of their use of English articles. His data collection method included multiple choice and cloze tests. Discoveries of his research revealed that the sources of errors are more intralingual rather than being the result of interference.

The apparent mixed results are of course natural and even beneficial to the research community. In fact, this controversy helps develop our comprehension of the English article system acquisition by Arab learners from different perspectives. Furthermore, it paves the way to conduct future study with new methodologies and contexts. In other words we can conclude that different participant populations, methodologies, and techniques of data collection and analysis are among the factors that may lead to such mixed results. Therefore researchers are suggested to try to come up with creative and sound methodologies to make the results of their study reliable and generalizable to other contexts of language learning. The following chapter illuminates on the methods used in the present study. More specifically it discusses the population and sample of the study as well as the methods for data collection and analysis.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter shows a comprehensive description of the research methodology used in the current study. The chapter includes four sections. The first section talks about the researchdesignusedforthestudyfollowedbyareportonthedevelopmentandcontent of the two instruments, the translation test and the interview. The next section, illustrates the characteristics of the participants and the procedures for conducting the study.Inaddition,thethirdsectiondiscussestheissueofvalidityandreliabilityofthe instruments.Thefinalsectionexplainsthemethodsadoptedforanalyzingthecollected data.

3.1 ResearchParadigm

The research design applied in the present study can be regarded as a mixed method research design. This is because the study is drawn upon the triangulation method, which is characterized as using more than one technique for collecting data. The explanation for this choice is to incorporate more viewpoints on this specific topic, to strengthen the validity of the findings and to be more confident about the discoveries. Dörnyei(2007)alsoagreesthat“usingamixedmethodsmodelgivesaccurateresultsand clearfindingsthandoeitherqualitativeandquantitativemethodsalonebyallowingthe researchertogettodatafrombothinformationsorts”(p.62).

Amixedmethodsresearchincludestheadvantagesinherentinbothquantitative and qualitative designs. In other words, it offers the in-depth, contextualized,and natural insights of qualitative research as well as the more-efficient quantitative research. The qualitative interview used in the study can help enrich the results while the quantitative data adds compelling predictive power. The disadvantage, however, is that it makes the study more time-consuming, Mackey and Gass (2005). The research methods used for the study nicely fit the research questions. The questions are most suitable for mixed methods because the quantitative approach, by itself, is inadequate to develop a complete understanding and multiple perspectives about learner errors. In other words, quantitative results are better comprehensible using qualitative data. The researcher has chosen the mixed methods design to view problems from various perspectives to enrich and enhance the meaning of the perspective.

3.2 Instruments

To achieve the aim of study and triangulation purposes, data was gathered through a translation test with 14 items as well as qualitative data which included quotes from the interviews with five teachers of English from Taibah University in K.S.A. These interviews with the 5 teachers provided the researcher with a valuable input on how amendable plans ought to be applied when dealing with errors in the English articles. The two instruments (the translation test and teacher interviews) are described below.

3.2.1 The TranslationTest

A test of Arabic to English sentence translation was devised in order to extract the possible errors that participants make with regard to the English article system (See AppendixF).Moreover,thetranslationtestwaspickedinthisstudybecauseitdoesn't conceal the nature of the research. In another words, the translation test minimizes participants' biases and can be utilized with a large sample (Mandell, Paul B,1999).

Translation is generally defined as the rendering of text from one language into another, (Newmark, 2009). It does not only require an expert level of proficiency in writing and reading in both languages, but the ability to capture the delicacies of the original message. Translators should be able to select equivalent phrases or terms not to change the meaning of the original text, (Newmark, 2009). However, since the researcherislookingtotestandquantifytheleanererrorsregardingtheEnglisharticle system and the data is to be analyzed statistically, a special form of translation test is neededtomeettheresearchobjectives.Inotherwords,thetranslationtestinthisstudy shouldobtainthemostcompleteandaccurateinformationaboutthelearners'possible errors in the English article system. Therefore, a sentence translation test is chosen as the instrument to extract the learner errors with regard to the English article system. The items are designed in a way to ensure that participants fully understand the questions and are not likely to refuse to answer or try to conceal their answers in case they are not sure about the correct response. A sentence translation test is straightforward enough to encourage respondents to provide complete and accurate information. In other words, it makes it easy for respondents to give the necessary informationandfortheresearchertorecordtheanswer,anditisdesignedsothat interpretation and sound analysis are possible, (Webb, 2005). In addition the test is brief and to the point and is arranged so that the participants stay interested all through the test.

Moreover, the sentences were chosen carefully so as to cover both areas of interference and intralingual errors (e.g. the definite article, indefinite article and zero article have been used equally in the test). According to Richards (1971), the errors that students were expected to produce in the test were classified into the following:

1. Interference errors: Errors caused from Arabic interference when “the” is written wrongly by students instead of “a” or “an”, (Adway, 2013). This is regarded as an interference error since it is hypothesized that because “a” or “an” do not exist in Arabic article system, students draw on their knowledge of Arabic to replace them with “the”, the definite article which has the counterpart “al” in Arabic.

2. Intralingual or developmental errors: Errors caused from inefficient learning strategies that are developed during the time of learning the English article system,(Adway, 2013). These errors can be either substitution or omission errors. As the names suggest, a substitution error happens when an article is substituted with an incorrect article such as the use of “a” instead of “the” and an omission error occurs when a necessary article is erroneously left out of the sentence. These errors are intralingual since they cannot be related to students’ relying on Arabic article system. In fact, the indefinite articles do not exist in Arabic for us to conclude that substituting “a” or “an” with other articles is an interlingual error.

This classification of interference errors and intralingual errors was applied because originally it included learners from different language background (Chinese, Japanese, Polish, French, as well as West African and Indian Languages) andshowed the different sorts of errors relating to prepositions, articles and production and distribution of verb groups, Richards (1971). By using Richards' distinction of learners' errors —intralingual and interlingual — as a basis of analysis, various studies (Alhaysony, 2012; Adawy, 2013; Sarko, 2008) have been done in the area of article acquisition.

3.2.2 Teacher Interviews

The interview was designed to clarify the findings of the quantitative method (translation test), and to investigate teachers' attitudes over a mixture of issues that are related to students' errors in the use of articles. Mackey and Gass (2005:172) claim that "the interviews allow the researcher to explain phenomena that can't be directly watched" such as human opinions and thoughts. Dörnyei (2007) also agrees that the aim of the interview is essentially heuristic by developing and clarifying ideas from the subjective eyes of therespondents.

Interviewing as a technique that involves oral questioning of the respondents (Neuman, 1997) was conducted individually with participating teacher. Through interviews, the researcher had the flexibility to diverge from the interview questions that needed to be covered in the study to turn data into meaningful information (e.g. asking the interviewees to clarify their answers if their answers were off -topic or ambiguous).

The interview form was comprised of two sections (see Appendix G). The first section gathered data about the teachers' background in terms of what levels they teach and their teaching experience. This sort of data may assist in deciding the credibility of their responses. In the second section, the participating teachers were asked five open-ended questions about the challenges they had when attempting to teach their students about the English article system. In addition, questions were asked about teachers' classroom techniques as well as problems students had within the English article system. They were also asked about the most effective methods and strategies they believed could be used to reduce the misuse of the English article system among Arab learners of English. Finally, they were asked to add any further comments or suggestions.

3.3 Participants

The participants in this study included 50 female students of English language and 5 English language teachers from Taibah University in Saudi Arabia. The students were chosen randomly from both levels One and Two (25 in each group) in the preparatory year at the university. Students of level One are considered as pre-intermediate learners of English based on the language proficiency test run by the university upon their arrival at the university, while level Two students are intermediate language learners. Students of level One are required to pass an English course as a prerequisite to their usual curriculum while level Two students are exempt from this course. The participants' ages ranged between 18 and 19 years with an average of 18.39. Table 1 illiterates the demographic data of participating students.

Table 1. Demographic data of participating students

Name of the university	Students level	Number of students	Age	Gender
Taibah	1	25	18-19	F
Taibah	2	25	18-19	F

In addition, to triangulate the data, 5 teachers were asked to express their own viewsaboutthechallengesthattheirstudentsfaceregardinglearningthearticlesystem and how to deal with these challenges. The teachers were chosen based on their experience in the field of English language teaching as well as their understanding of theK.S.Acontextsincetheyhadallworkedasteachersin K.S.Aforalongtime.Table 2 demonstrates the demographic information of the participatingteachers.

Table 2. Demographic information of the participating teachers

Name	Gender	Age	Experience	Qualifications
Azzah	F	38	8 years	BSC in Linguistic
Faisa	F	38	10 years	BSC in English literature
Hanan	F	42	12 years	MA in TESOL
Hayat	F	43	17 years	MA in English literature
Duria	F	46	14 years	PhD in TEFL

The researcher has limited the study to female participants only from a single university because, as a female teacher, it is difficult to visit men's universities as the education system in KSA is regarded.

3.4 Procedure

Aftersigningtheethicalapprovalfromtheresearcher'sadviser(SeeAppendixA)andgetting permission from the dean of Taibah University (See Appendix B), participants (students and the teachers) were asked for permission to participate in the study. Meanwhile, they were only provided with a general explanation of the purpose of the study (See Appendix C&D) to ensure they were not fully aware of the exact nature of the study in order to control the study from participants' biases. Furthermore, they were guaranteed that the results of the study would have no influence on their present position with the university. It was made clear for them that their participation in the research was totally voluntary and their responses would be kept anonymous and confidential.

3.4.1The translationtest

Students from both levels were administered the test by the researcher completed the translation during a regularly scheduled class. They were given about 35 minutes to translate the sentences (See appendix F). Later, the researcher herself analyzed the translation test, concentrating only on errors with articles and neglecting all other errors.

3.4.2 TeacherInterviews

Toensurethattheinterviewswouldbeaccuratelyconducted,theresearchertookcertainsteps. First, she picked the time and place that suited the teachers to interest them in the interview. Then, she took their permission to record audio during the interviews. Later, shedidinterview transcripts from these audio records for analysis since they were open-ended questions. Also, duringtheinterviewssheattemptedtoreduceherroletotheminimuminordertopreventbiases and leading the respondents, which as Creswell (2007, p. 61) mentions, “The bias of the researcher can reduce the value of the research”. Additionally, she tried to be as friendly as possible with them by explaining that all their answers were solely for research purposes. Moreover, the teachers were informed that they could decline or withdraw from the interview at whatever point they wanted. The interviews were held in the summer of 2015 in the university classroom during break time. Each interview went on for around 25minutes.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of theInstruments

AsindicatedbyAlAghaandIhsan(1996)avalidtestmustmeasurewhatitisprecisely expected to measure. In regard to reliability, it’s another imperative component that inspectsthetest’sconsistencyanditsquality.Gay(1987)characterizesreliabilityofa testasthelevelofconsistencyofthetestmeasurement.Toensurethetest’sreliability andvalidity,thetestwasreadbymyadviserandfiveArabspecialistsinEnglish.Some changeswereaddedaccordingtotheirrecommendationsandfeedback.Thiswasmade to ensure that the test was designed to cover every single expected error of the participants.

Later as a piloting phase, the test was administered to an ESL class (N=12) at TaibahUniversitybearingalmostthesamecharacteristicsasthetargetsample.Oneof the benefits of directing a pilot study is that it could give advance knowledge about where the research might fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether instruments or proposed strategies are too complicated or incorrect. The reasonforconductingthepilotstudywastotestanddeveloptheadequacyofresearch instruments and evaluate the feasibility of the main study. It was noted that all participants completed the translation test within the allotted time limit. Results from item analysis revealed that all items were appropriate to extract the necessary data. In addition, the interview was successfully conducted with the five teachers and they provided the researcher with ample data for her to draw the necessary conclusions, which can manifest the validity of theinstrument.

Furthermore, interested participants (The teachers and students) were assured to receive feedback on their performance through personal correspondence with the researcher and share the research findings. Moreover, to ensure the validity of the research the researcher compared her study with many studies such as the study undertaken by AbiSamra (2003), which is (Investigating Writing Problems among Palestinian Students). In the last stage, peer debriefing was required, so the researcher asked her supervisor to review herresearchmethodologyandfinalreport.Takingafterthis,hisfeedbackwasgiventoenhance credibility and validity of thestudy.

3.6 DataAnalysis

Thecollecteddataincludedtwotypesofdataquantitativeandqualitative.Resultsfrom thetranslationtestwereenteredintothestatisticalpackageforsocialsciences(SPSS) software program to be analyzed quantitatively. Formula of percentage and Chi - Square test were utilized to discuss and analyze the errors made by students from two levels (levels One and Two) in the preparatory year at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia. The analysis contains the percentages of the students’ wrong answers regarding the translation test. In addition, a point biserial correlation analysis was conducted to explore the possible relationship between the level of English and performance regarding the use of English articles. These analyses were enriched through an inclusion of a qualitative analysis of the interview data. Excerpts from teacher interviews were selected to shed light on our discussion of Arab ESL learner errors regarding the English article system. Finally, after conducting the interviews with the 5 teachers, the data was coded and summarized into meaningfulcategories.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Findings

4.0 Introduction

In this study, the researcher tries to answer the exploration questions:

1. What are the most frequent errors (Interlingualand intralingual) committed by Arab learners of English in the context of K.S.Auniversities?
2. What are the possible sources of theseerrors?
3. What learning and teaching strategies should be applied to address these difficulties andchallenges?

The present chapter introduces a comparison of level one and level two students in order to explore the significant errors of both levels. Furthermore, this chapter consists all of the calculations and statistical analyses done in order to test the questions raised by the researcher. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are elaborated below.

4.1 Interference Errors

There are three types of errors that can be regarded as interference errors. The first type is a substitution error caused from Arabic interference when “the” is written wrongly by students instead of “a”, “an”. This is regarded as an interference error since it is hypothesized that because “a” or “an” do not exist in Arabic article system, students draw on their knowledgeof Arabictoreplacethemwith“the”,thedefinitearticlewhichhasthecounterpart“al”inArabic. Thefollowingisanexampleofsucherrorinthedata.

Example 1. *Jeddah is the beautiful city in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The second type is an addition error in which "the" is overgeneralized to contexts where no article is needed. This is because the definite article is more widely used in Arabic than in English. Example 2 is one such error in the data.

Example 2. *What did you have for the lunch?

Finally, the third type is when students omit the English definite articles. This error is considered interlingul because there are no indefinite articles in Arabic.

Example 3. *The sun is star in the sky.

Following, the instances of the produced errors were counted for the participants. The percentage of the occurrence of these errors is reported in table 3 below.

Table 3. Frequency of interference errors

Interference errors	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Substitution of "the" for "a" or "an"	14	12.07	12.07
Addition of "the" where not necessary	73	62.93	75
Omission of "a" or "an"	29	25	100
Total	116	100	100

As the table shows, students overuse the definite article 'the' in places where it is not necessary (73 cases). This of course is explained when we see that the definite article is more widely used in Arabic than English. Therefore, the overuse of the definite article by Saudi learnersofEnglishisobviouslyaninterlingualerrorwhichistheresultofArabicinterference. This finding is in line with Crompton (2011) and Abushihab et al (2011) who also found an overgeneralization of the use of the definite article bylearners.

The next most frequent interlingual error type (n=29) occurred when students omit the indefinite articles ‘a’ or ‘an’. Again, this can be explained in that there is no indefinite article in Arabic making it an interlingual error. This concurs with the findings of Smith (2001), Alhaysony(2012),andBataineh(2005)whofoundtheomissionofindefinitearticlesafrequent error among Arab learners of English. Finally, the last frequent interference error type (n=14) occurred when the definite article ‘the’ was substituted for indefinite articles; a finding which is congruent with those of Sharko (2008), and AbiSamara(2003).

4.2 IntralingualErrors

Whereas interlingual errors can be explained by the interference form students’ native language, for intralingual errors we must look for other explanations. These errors can be either substitution or omission errors. As the names suggest, a substitution error happens when an article is substituted with a wrong article such as the use of “a” instead of “the” and anomissionerroroccurswhenanecessaryarticleiserroneouslyleftoutofthesentence.These errorsareintralingualsincetheycannotberelatedtostudents’relyingonArabicarticlesystem. In fact, the indefinite articles do not exist in Arabic for us to conclude that substituting “a” or “an” with other articles is an interlingualerror.

Table 4. Frequency of intralingual errors

Intralingual errors	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
Substitution of “a” or “an” with other articles	11	14.67	14.67
Addition of “a” or “an” where not necessary	16	21.33	36
Omission of “the”	48	64	100
Total	75	100	100

The most frequent intralingual error type (n=48) found in the data was the omission of the definite article ‘the’. This finding seems to contradict the findings of the previous section in which the overuse of the article “the” was found as the most frequent interlingual error type. However, when we consider the large number of inconsistencies and exceptions in the English article system, we can expect both error types to have a high chance of occurrence. In other words, both overuse and underuse of the article “the” occurs but for each of these errors a different explanation should be provided. Therefore, in line with AbiSamra (2003), the errors in this case are not interlingual but intralingual errors caused by reasons other than first language interference. The second most frequent intralingual error (n=16) happened when students added the indefinite articles in areas where they were not appropriate. Finally, students used indefinite articles instead of the other article types in a few cases (n=11). Of course, this should be attributed to factors other than the mother tongue influence.

4.3 Sources ofErrors

A test of chi square was run in order to see whether there are any significant differences between the error types. The test results yielded a test statistic of 0 with 2 degree of freedom. Theresultsmanifestthatthereisastatisticallymeaningfuldifferencebetweeninterferenceand intralingual error types in the performance of Arab ESLlearners.

Table 5. Chi-Square Tests for error types

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	34.335[a]	2	.000
Ratio of Likelihood	35.761	2	.000
Linear by Linear Association	13.055	1	.000
(N) Valid Cases	191		

a. 0 cells (.0%) counts < 5. The count is >= 9.82.

Followingtheobservedsignificantdifference,acomparisonofthefrequencycountsin tables 3 and 4 showed that most of the errors could be traced back to the first language interference (interlingual errors). In other words, in line with AbiSamara (2003) and Crompton(2011), we can conclude that the primary sources of Arab ESL learners’ errors with regard to the article system is the fact that learners’ first language (Arabic) is negatively transferred into the second language (English in thiscase).

4.4 Comparisons between the TwoGroups

In this part a comparison was made between level one and level two students with respect to the errors committed. Table 6 shows the types of errors observed in each group.

Table 6. Error types between the two levels

Error type / Level	Level one	Level two
interlingual	67	49
intralingual	46	29
Total	113	78

Following, the two groups of students (intermediate students of level one versus the upper-intermediate students of level two) were compared through the application of a chi square test.

Table 7. Chi-Square Tests between the two levels

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.241[a]	1	.624		
Continuity Correction [b]	.116	1	.734		
Ratio of Likelihood	.241	1	.623		
Fisher's Exact Test				.654	.368
Linear by Linear Association	.240	1	.624		
(N) Valid Cases [b]	191				

a. 0 cells (.0%) counts < 5. The count is >=30.63.

b. Computed only for a 2x2table

Chi square test results gave a statistical value of .368 with 1 degree of freedom which shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of the error types they have committed.

4.5. The View of Teachers Regarding the Errors

The above-mentioned analyses were enriched through an inclusion of a qualitative analysis of the interview data with five teachers at Taibah University. Excerpts from teacher interviews were selected to shed light on our discussion of Arab ESL learner errors regarding theEnglish articlesystem.RegardingthechallengefacedinthelearningandteachingoftheEnglisharticle system, most teachers believed that explicit teaching of articles is usually ignored except in grammar classes of students majoring in English. As one teacherexplained:

"Teaching of the English articles is usually limited to the grammar classroom. In other cases students are just sometimes provided with corrective feedback (mostly written) towards the errors they have made"

Even in grammar lessons there are problems when it comes to the teaching of the article system:

"..Students are not able to generalize the rules to new contexts when it comes to the rules of thearticlesystem.Forexample,conceptssuchasdefinitenessorpluralityarenoteasytodefine and they are difficult for students to grasp and apply to newcontexts"

Another concern is raised by Hayat (an experienced teacher):

"The teaching of the article system is challenging because of the large number of inconsistencies and exceptions governing thesystem"

Thesechallengesbroughtustothepossiblesourcesoftheerrorsthatstudentsmake.Regarding the sources of article errors that Arab ESL learners make, one interviewee pointed to the role of learner's first language as manifested in thisstudy:

"I think one problem is with the students' first language. In Arabic we don't have the articles "a" or "an" and most of the times students overuse the article "the" and replace it for the other articles".

The nonexistence of explicit lessons on articles in also regarded as an issue:

"For students whose major is not English we usually don't have explicit teaching of grammar includingthearticlesystem.Studentsmaynotevenreceivecorrectivefeedbackontheirerrors regardingarticles"

In line with the issues and concerns raised, several suggestions were put forward by teachers to help students reduce making errors with the articles:

"I think it would be nice if we had certain criteria that could be used when we evaluated students' oral and especially written performances. Among these it would be helpful to have itemsaboutarticleerrorcorrections.Studentscouldbenoticedinadvanceaboutthesecriteria to draw their attention to the correct use ofarticles"

Yet another suggestion is to have explicit grammar lessons complemented with the provision of regular corrective feedback:

“If students had the chance to notice the rules of article use in their lessons and then receive feedback especially in their writings, they would certainly be better off.”

This chapter elaborated on the major results of the study. In the next chapter (chapter five) the conclusions are made, limitations discussed, and suggestions for further research were given.

Chapter Five

Conclusions, Implications and Limitations

5.0. Introduction

This chapter includes the following four parts. In the first part the conclusions of the study are elaborated upon. Following, pedagogical implications as well as limitations of the study are dealt with in the next two parts. Finally, suggestions for further research are presented.

5.1. Conclusion

This study reports on an effort to understand the nature and sources of English article system errors made by Arab learners of English in KSA. The proposed approach is grounded in the theory of language transfer and involves comparisons between the Arabic article system (L1) and that of English (L2). We identify major differences acrossthetwolanguages,whicharebelievedtoheightentheperceivedinterferenceor transfer features and lead toerrors.

For example, it was discovered that students overuse the definite article ‘the’ in places where it is not necessary. Similarly, two other errors (although less frequent than the addition of “the”) found in the study were the omission of “a” or an” as well assubstitutionof“the”for“a”or“an”.Thesearearegardedasinterlingualerrorssince thedefinitearticle“the”isthemainarticleinArabicbesidesthezeroarticle.Therefore

Arab learners of English tend either to overuse it or substitute it for other articles. Moreover,theabsenceofindefinitearticlesinArabicmayleadtotheomissionof“a” or “an” in thedata.

Therefore, there is proof that the students’ L1 (Arabic) have an impact on their developing interlanguage which in turn leads to errors in the production of the article system of English. In other words, the data demonstrate that there are some examples in which language transfer was obvious. Consequently, the participants transferred some characteristics of the article system from their L1 to their L2. However, numerous cases demonstrated that the students made some article system errors that the CAH did not foresee and for which other accounts must be given.

For example, it was also found that there are many cases in which the definite article“the”isomitted.ThisreflectsthedifficultyintheuseofdefinitearticlebyArab ESL learners. In other words, it seems that the learners in this study have serious problems with the appropriate use of “the” and are in fact confused. Therefore, sometimes they tend to overuse it (labeled as in interlingual error previously) and at other times they delete it (an intralingual error which could be attributed to learners’ hypercorrection or even improper learning strategies). In addition, there were two other cases (although rare) in the data that cannot be explained by the negative influence of the firstlanguage.

Theseincludetheadditionoruseoftheindefinitearticlesinareaswhentheywerenot necessary. These possible explanations for these errors include overgeneralization, defective teaching,etc.

Finally, a comparison of the level one and level two students demonstrated a developmentintheuseofarticlesasstudentsbuilduptheirproficiencylevels.Inother words, students of a higher proficiency level made fewer grammatical errors than students with lower proficiency levels. This suggests that instruction is in fact helpful in improving students' learning of the English article system. However, the existence of article errors at upper-intermediate level also draws our attention to the inefficacy of our instruction regarding articles and the possibility of language fossilization to occur.Therefore,measuresshouldbetakentoimproveourinstructionalpracticesand thereby reduce thispossibility.

In general the findings of this study confirm those of previous ones (Kharma, 1981; Alhaysony 2012) in that Arab learners of English usually have considerable difficulty in the use of the English article system. In addition, both interlingual and intralingualerrorsaredetectedwhichisagaininlinewithpreviousliterature(Alsulmi, 2010;Alhaysony2012;Bataineh,2005)onerroranalysisstudiesoftheArablearnersof English.Thepresenceoferrorsathigherlevelsoflanguageproficiencycallsformore attention by teachers and educational decision makers on the issue of article acquisition by Arab EFL learners in KSA. The following section elaborates on the pedagogical implications that can be beneficial with thisregard.

5.2. Pedagogicalimplications

The results of this research have some pedagogical implications. The findings can go aboutasamodeltoassistbothArabteachersandlearnersinEnglishlanguageteaching andlearning.ThediscoveriesofthisresearchhaveobviouslyshownthattheArabESL learnersstrugglewithmanyproblemsassociatedwiththeEnglisharticlesystem resulting from Two major sources: (a) the differences between the English language andtheArabiclanguage,(b)theproblemsintheprocessoflearningtheEnglisharticle system. At the high schools, the article system gets almost no consideration in ESL instruction and evaluation. Subsequently, many of problems that Arab ESL students have with English articles may be credited to absence of formal instruction regarding the article system. We have to tackle these problems to alleviate the difficulties in the use of articles and to improve teaching of EFL article system to students. Teachers oughttoconsiderallofthe exerciseswhichassiststudentstoovercometheseproblems and enhance their ability in the correct use of articles. In order to develop awareness in the use of articles among ESL students, they have to be given formal instruction in articles. Instruction with the article system should include specific information about different articles that students have difficulty in their use. This instruction could be went with writing courses or thelike.

It would be better to incorporate article system difficulties in the curriculum based on their importance and priority. It’s important for the English teachers to have an inclusive awareness of the article system features of target language and first language of the learners. In addition, the teacher should have sufficient expertise in showing the problematic areas related to the system of articles. The findings of this study may allow teachers to acquire an attention to the probable errors committed by Arab learners because of absence of familiarity with the differences between the learners’ownuseofarticlesandEnglish.Thisawarenessofstudents’difficultiesmay helpteacherstodetectArabESLlearners’problemswiththearticlesandtrytotackle them. Furthermore, teachers should be prepared to get an intensive information of the Englisharticlesystemandsupportthemtodedicatemuchmoretimespecificallyon areasthatareidentifiedtohavecausedproblemsforArabESLlearners.Similarly,the materials and course books which are going to be taught to students ought to be designed catering for students’ needs in mentionedzones.

Therefore, it is necessary to use specific teaching strategies to reduce the problems in the use of English article system among ESL Arab students. In other words, teachers could apply some pedagogical strategies to enable their students use the article system more correctly. To do this, teachers must be familiar with the problems and their possible sources. Trying to keep abreast of latest developments in the field and more specifically getting familiar with research findings related to the article acquisition can help empower the teachers.

Finally, as a result of the interviews conducted with teachers in this study some suggestions can be made to help teachers improve their students’ knowledge of the article system. For example, it would be helpful if the teaching of the articles is done in real contexts.

It is also good idea to do the teaching in a way that learners’ attention is drawn to the correct use of articles in authentic materials. This will be in line with our current understanding of second language teaching with a focus on form (Long, 1989) and noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990). Similarly, the provision of corrective feedback (Ellis, 1994) on students’ performance regarding the article system especially the applicationofwrittencorrectivefeedbackonstudents’writingpracticeswilldefinitely be helpful to the development of a better understanding of the English article system by Arab learners ofEnglish.

5.3. Limitations and delimitations of thestudy

This study is intentionally delimited to Arab ESL learners in two proficiency levels. Therefore, errors in the use of English articles at other proficiency levels are not addressed in the current study. In addition it is worthy to point out that the generalizability of the results should be done with caution due to the limitations the study is faced with. The first limitation lies in the fact that the number of the participants is limited to 50 students from two levels of proficiency. In addition, the researcher had to study only the female students because of the limitations she faced in the ESL context of KSA that she could not have access to male students. Finally, the selection of teacher interviewees was mainly based on convenient sampling proceduresastheyweretheexperiencedteachersthattheresearchercouldhaveaccess to.

5.4. Suggestions for furtherresearch

ThepresentstudywaslimitedtoonlyoneUniversity,twolevelsofproficiency,18-19 year-oldfemaleparticipants.Inthelightoftheselimitationsandfindingsofthestudy, future researchers may further investigate the English article errors made among the maleArablanguagelearners.Similarly,anotherstudycanmakeuseofalargersample size to better investigate the performance of male and female students and even students with different majors on their use of the articlesystem.

In addition, it is suggested that a study is conducted to specifically compare and contrast the articles in English with those of Arabic. The results can be used to pinpoint the similarities and differences between English and Arabic regarding the article system. Following, results can be used to develop better strategies for teaching the English article system to Arab ESL learners. Similarly, a study on the best strategies for English article instruction in the KSA is needed to find about the best ways of teaching the article system to the Arab ESL learners.

Finally, the importance of individual differences as a major factor towards understanding the errors needs further investigation. When it comes to examining the factors associated with individual differences, a lot of elements are included. Among them future researchers can focus on analyzing the role of variables such as motivation, anxiety, and language aptitude as factors that may influence the learners' making of such errors as well as teachers' understanding of error types and their possible sources.

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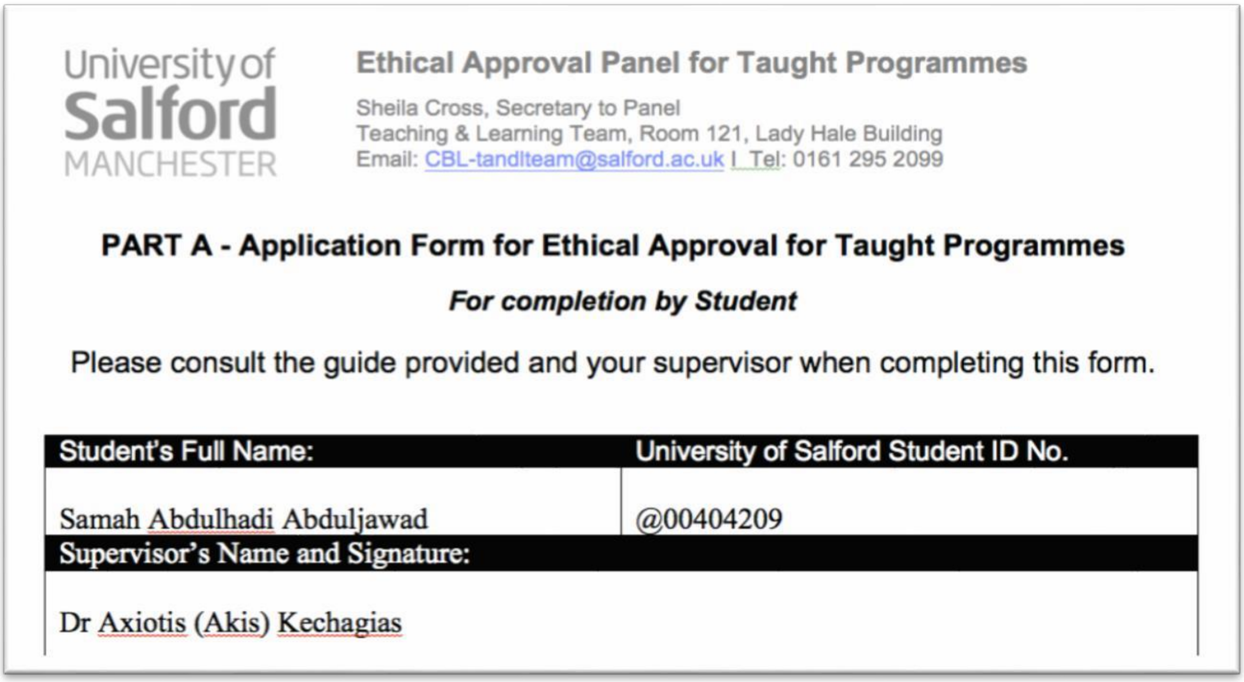
Appendix A



University of Salford MANCHESTER

Ethical Approval Panel for Taught Programmes

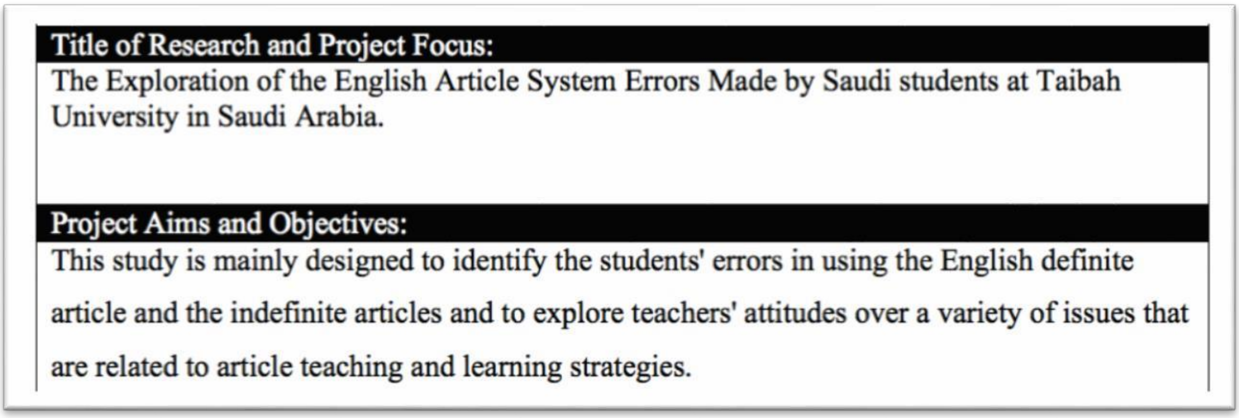
Sheila Cross, Secretary to Panel
Teaching & Learning Team, Room 121, Lady Hale Building
Email: CBL-tandlteam@salford.ac.uk I Tel: 0161 295 2099

PART A - Application Form for Ethical Approval for Taught Programmes

For completion by Student

Please consult the guide provided and your supervisor when completing this form.

Student's Full Name:	**University of Salford Student ID No.**
Samah Abdulhadi Abduljawad	@00404209
Supervisor's Name and Signature:	
Dr Axiotis (Akis) Kechagias	

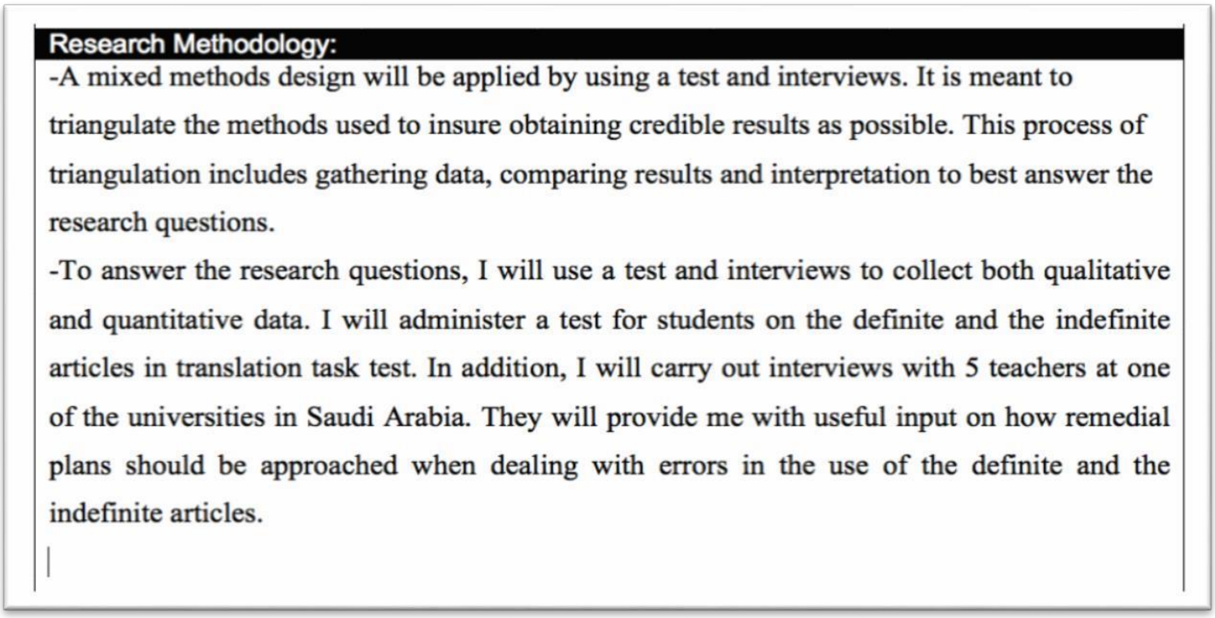


Title of Research and Project Focus:

The Exploration of the English Article System Errors Made by Saudi students at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia.

Project Aims and Objectives:

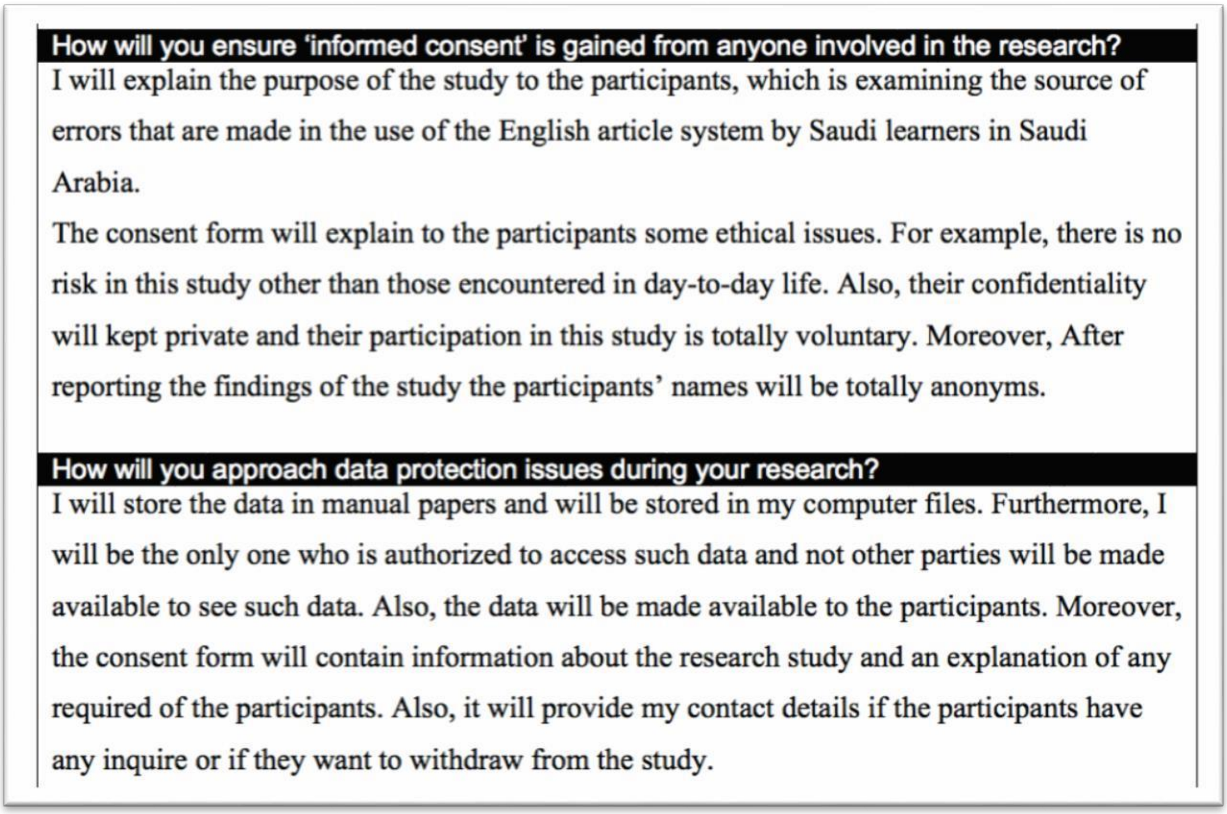
This study is mainly designed to identify the students' errors in using the English definite article and the indefinite articles and to explore teachers' attitudes over a variety of issues that are related to article teaching and learning strategies.



Research Methodology:

-A mixed methods design will be applied by using a test and interviews. It is meant to triangulate the methods used to insure obtaining credible results as possible. This process of triangulation includes gathering data, comparing results and interpretation to best answer the research questions.

-To answer the research questions, I will use a test and interviews to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. I will administer a test for students on the definite and the indefinite articles in translation task test. In addition, I will carry out interviews with 5 teachers at one of the universities in Saudi Arabia. They will provide me with useful input on how remedial plans should be approached when dealing with errors in the use of the definite and the indefinite articles.



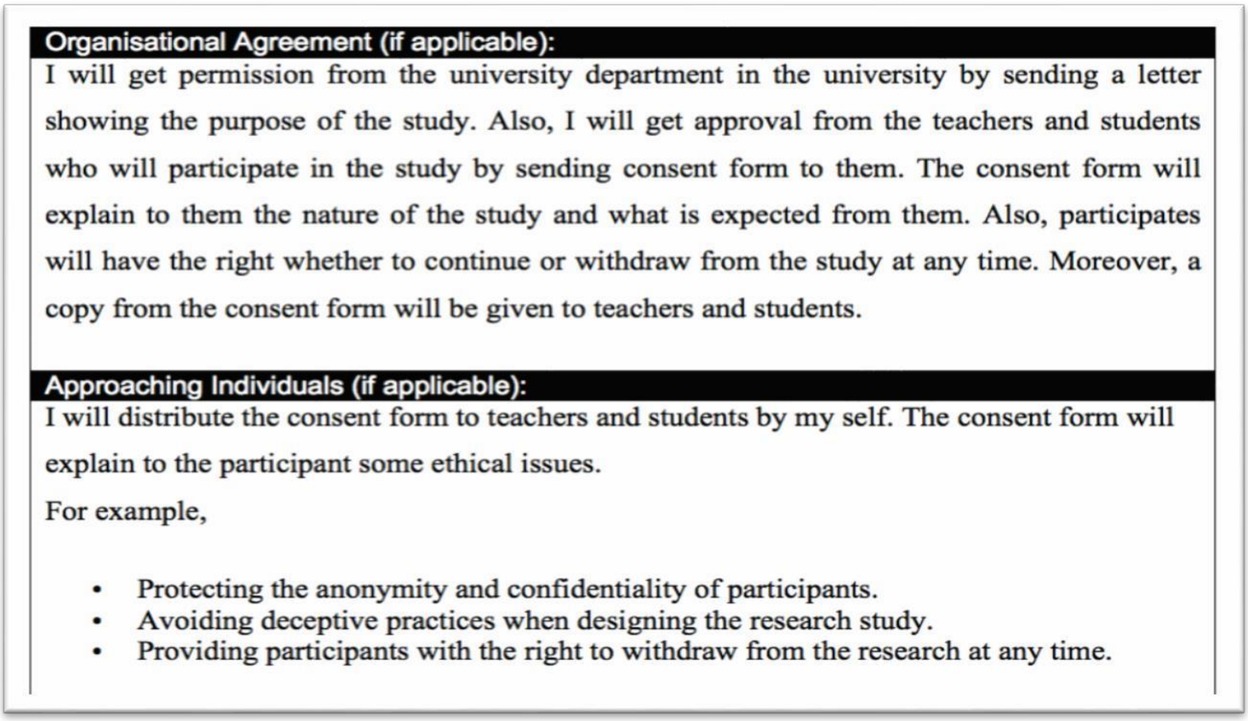
How will you ensure 'informed consent' is gained from anyone involved in the research?

I will explain the purpose of the study to the participants, which is examining the source of errors that are made in the use of the English article system by Saudi learners in Saudi Arabia.

The consent form will explain to the participants some ethical issues. For example, there is no risk in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life. Also, their confidentiality will kept private and their participation in this study is totally voluntary. Moreover, After reporting the findings of the study the participants' names will be totally anonyms.

How will you approach data protection issues during your research?

I will store the data in manual papers and will be stored in my computer files. Furthermore, I will be the only one who is authorized to access such data and not other parties will be made available to see such data. Also, the data will be made available to the participants. Moreover, the consent form will contain information about the research study and an explanation of any required of the participants. Also, it will provide my contact details if the participants have any inquire or if they want to withdraw from the study.



Organisational Agreement (if applicable):

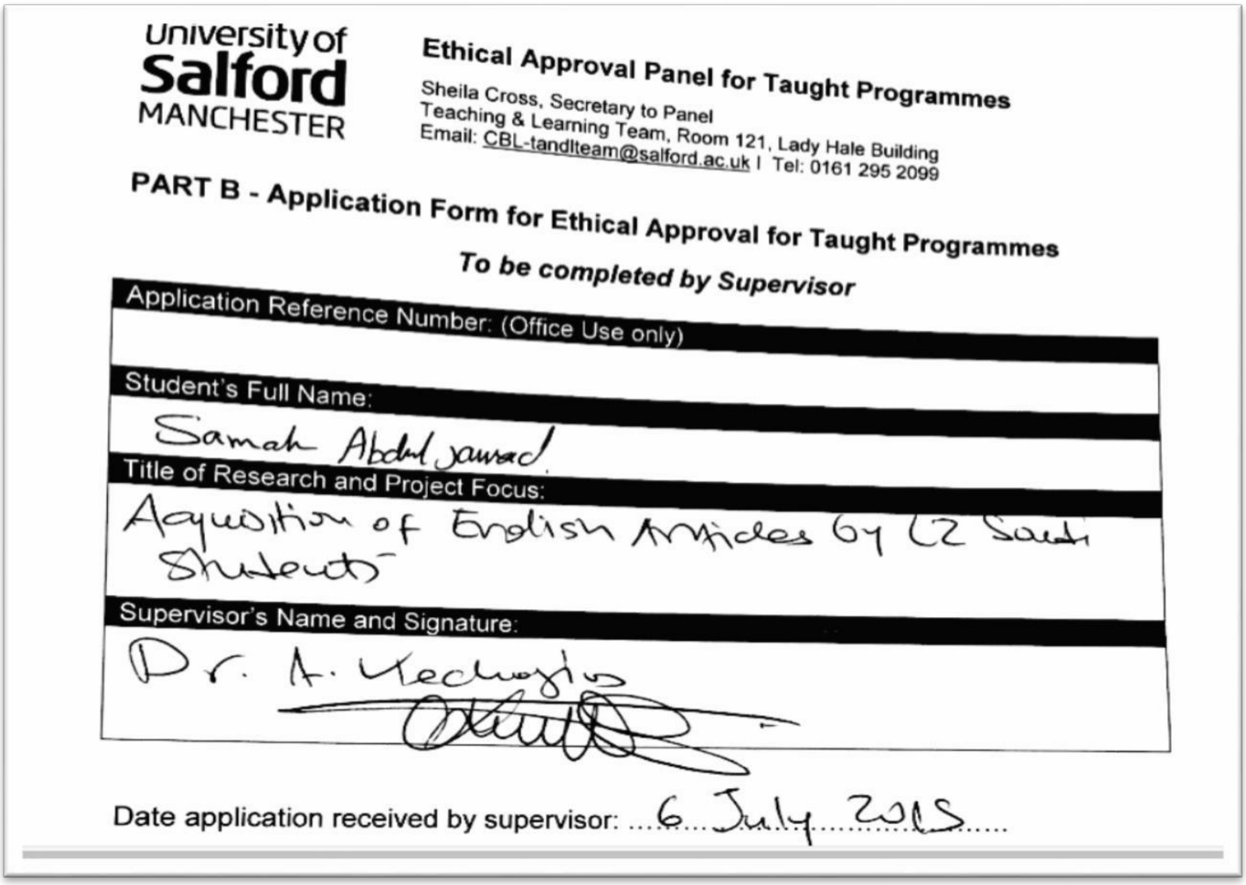
I will get permission from the university department in the university by sending a letter showing the purpose of the study. Also, I will get approval from the teachers and students who will participate in the study by sending consent form to them. The consent form will explain to them the nature of the study and what is expected from them. Also, participates will have the right whether to continue or withdraw from the study at any time. Moreover, a copy from the consent form will be given to teachers and students.

Approaching Individuals (if applicable):

I will distribute the consent form to teachers and students by my self. The consent form will explain to the participant some ethical issues.

For example,

- Protecting the anonymity and confidentiality of participants.
- Avoiding deceptive practices when designing the research study.
- Providing participants with the right to withdraw from the research at any time.



University of Salford MANCHESTER

Ethical Approval Panel for Taught Programmes

Sheila Cross, Secretary to Panel
Teaching & Learning Team, Room 121, Lady Hale Building
Email: CBL-tandlteam@salford.ac.uk I Tel: 0161 295 2099

PART B - Application Form for Ethical Approval for Taught Programmes

To be completed by Supervisor

Application Reference Number: (Office Use only)

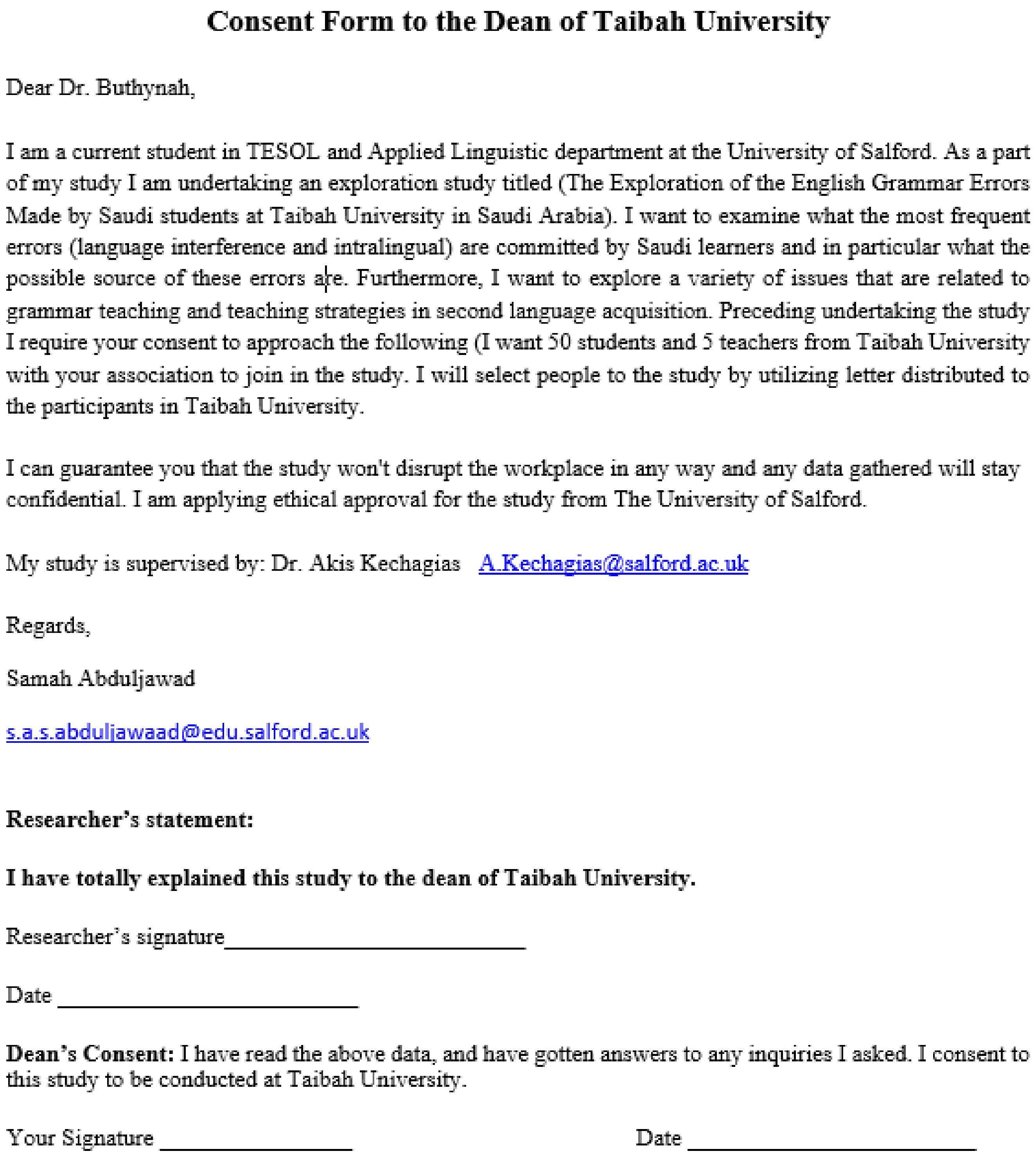
Student's Full Name:
Samah Abdul jawad

Title of Research and Project Focus:
Aquisition of English Articles by L2 Saudi Students

Supervisor's Name and Signature:
Dr. A. Kechagias

Date application received by supervisor: ....6....July....2015.....

Appendix B



Consent Form to the Dean of Taibah University

Dear Dr. Buthynah,

I am a current student in TESOL and Applied Linguistic department at the University of Salford. As a part of my study I am undertaking an exploration study titled (The Exploration of the English Grammar Errors Made by Saudi students at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia). I want to examine what the most frequent errors (language interference and intralingual) are committed by Saudi learners and in particular what the possible source of these errors are. Furthermore, I want to explore a variety of issues that are related to grammar teaching and teaching strategies in second language acquisition. Preceding undertaking the study I require your consent to approach the following (I want 50 students and 5 teachers from Taibah University with your association to join in the study. I will select people to the study by utilizing letter distributed to the participants in Taibah University.

I can guarantee you that the study won't disrupt the workplace in any way and any data gathered will stay confidential. I am applying ethical approval for the study from The University of Salford.

My study is supervised by: Dr. Akis Kechagias A.Kechagias@salford.ac.uk

Regards,

Samah Abduljawad

s.a.s.abduljawaad@edu.salford.ac.uk

Researcher's statement:

I have totally explained this study to the dean of Taibah University.

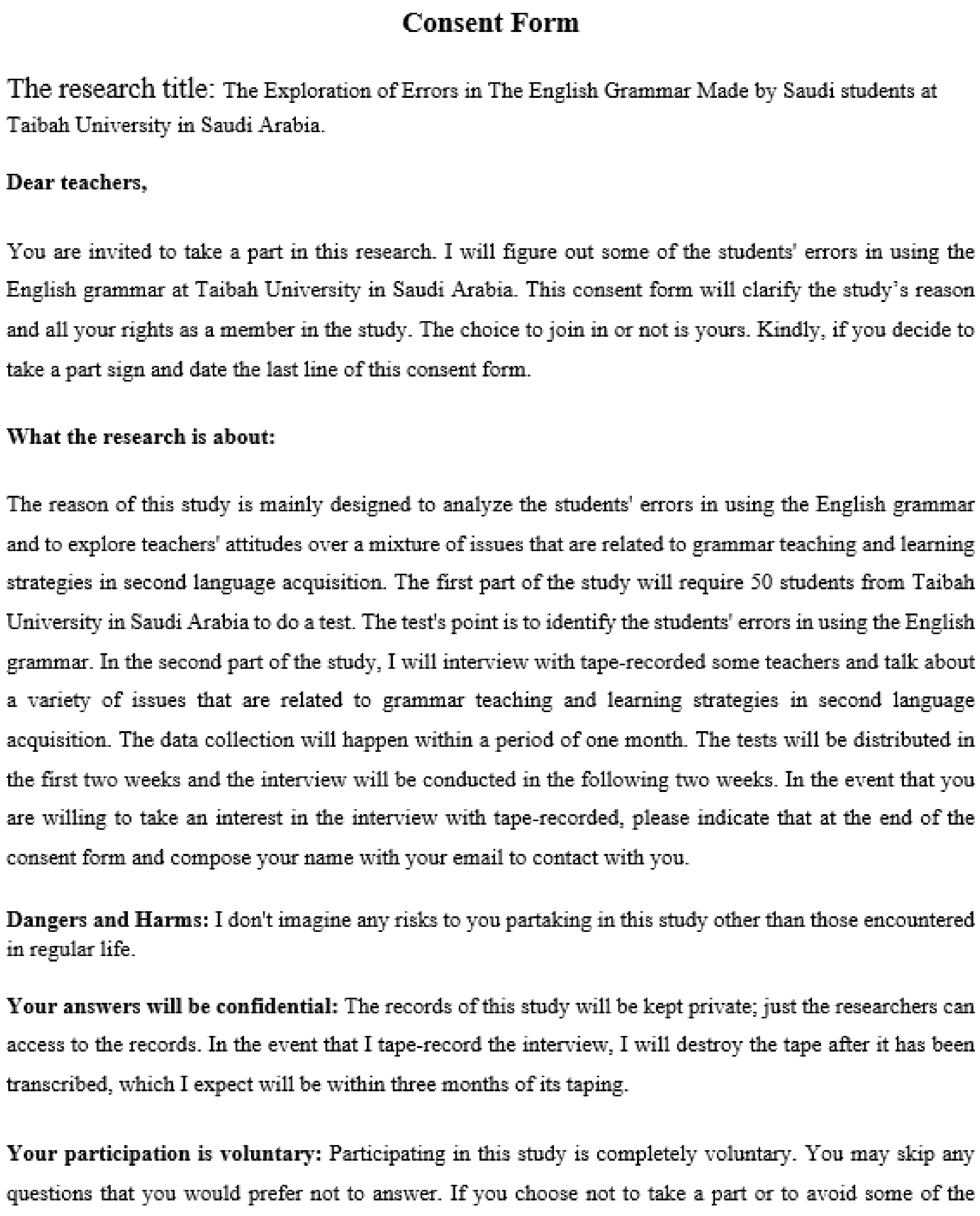
Researcher's signature______________________________

Date ______________________________

Dean's Consent: I have read the above data, and have gotten answers to any inquiries I asked. I consent to this study to be conducted at Taibah University.

Your Signature ___________________ Date _____________________________

Appendix C



Consent Form

The research title: The Exploration of Errors in The English Grammar Made by Saudi students at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia.

Dear teachers,

You are invited to take a part in this research. I will figure out some of the students' errors in using the English grammar at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia. This consent form will clarify the study's reason and all your rights as a member in the study. The choice to join in or not is yours. Kindly, if you decide to take a part sign and date the last line of this consent form.

What the research is about:

The reason of this study is mainly designed to analyze the students' errors in using the English grammar and to explore teachers' attitudes over a mixture of issues that are related to grammar teaching and learning strategies in second language acquisition. The first part of the study will require 50 students from Taibah University in Saudi Arabia to do a test. The test's point is to identify the students' errors in using the English grammar. In the second part of the study, I will interview with tape-recorded some teachers and talk about a variety of issues that are related to grammar teaching and learning strategies in second language acquisition. The data collection will happen within a period of one month. The tests will be distributed in the first two weeks and the interview will be conducted in the following two weeks. In the event that you are willing to take an interest in the interview with tape-recorded, please indicate that at the end of the consent form and compose your name with your email to contact with you.

Dangers and Harms: I don't imagine any risks to you partaking in this study other than those encountered in regular life.

Your answers will be confidential: The records of this study will be kept private; just the researchers can access to the records. In the event that I tape-record the interview, I will destroy the tape after it has been transcribed, which I expect will be within three months of its taping.

Your participation is voluntary: Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you would prefer not to answer. If you choose not to take a part or to avoid some of the questions, it won't impact your present position with university. In the event that you decide to take a part, you are permitted to pull back at whatever point you need.

For further inquiries: Kindly pose any questions you have now. In the event that you have addresses later, you may contact with me at s.a.s.abduljawad@edu.salford.ac.uk or at 053- 571-3986.

Researcher's statement:

I have totally explained this study to the teachers. Likewise, I have clarified what they will be obliged to do and I have addressed all requests that they inquired.

Researcher's signature ___________________________

Date ___________________________

Teacher's Consent: I have read the above data, and have gotten answers to any inquiries I inquired. I consent to take a part in the study.

Your Signature _________________

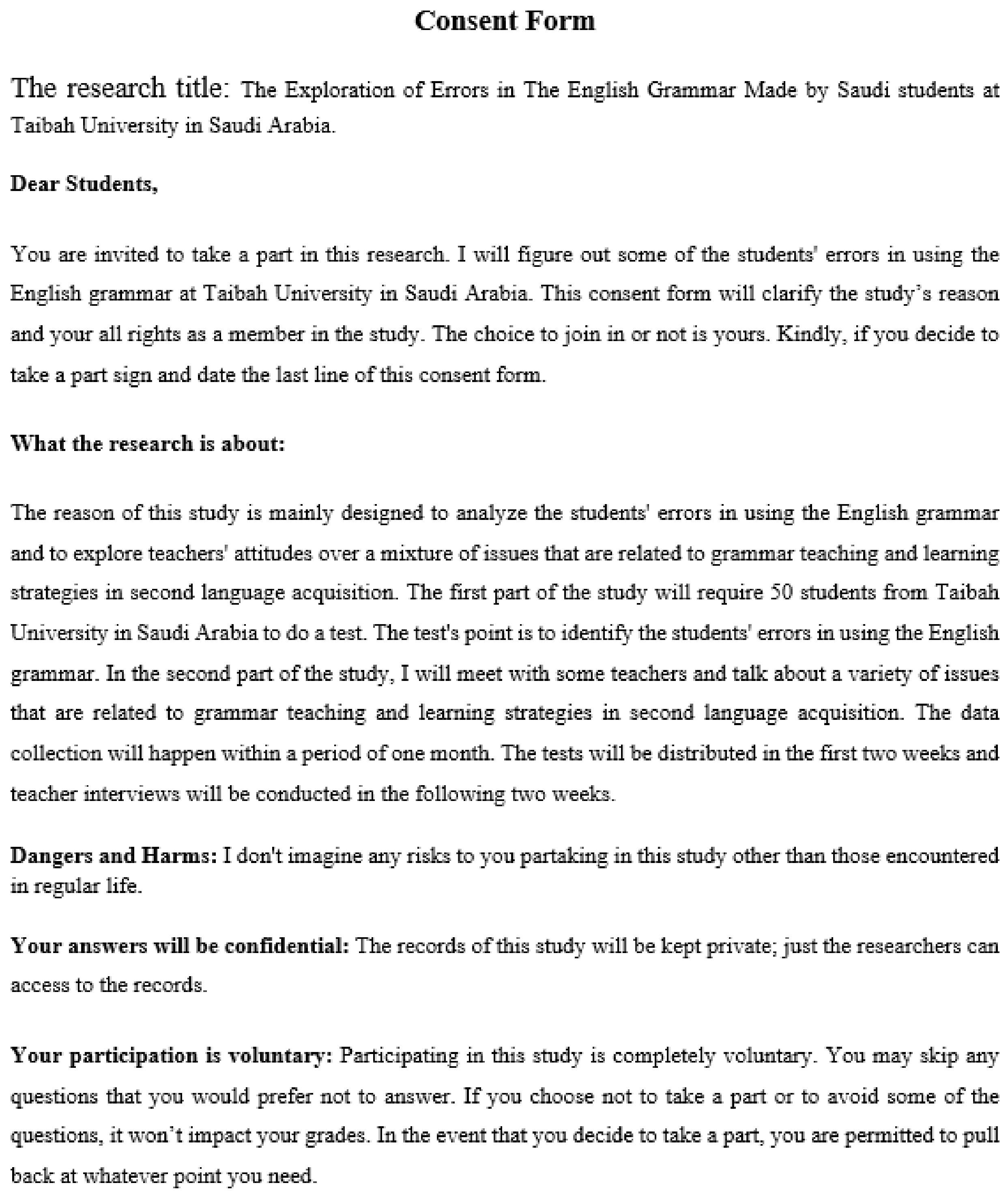
Date __________________________

Include your name and your email address in the event that you might want to be interviewed with tape-recorded.

Name

Email Address:

Appendix D



Consent Form

The research title: The Exploration of Errors in The English Grammar Made by Saudi students at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia.

Dear Students,

You are invited to take a part in this research. I will figure out some of the students' errors in using the English grammar at Taibah University in Saudi Arabia. This consent form will clarify the study's reason and your all rights as a member in the study. The choice to join in or not is yours. Kindly, if you decide to take a part sign and date the last line of this consent form.

What the research is about:

The reason of this study is mainly designed to analyze the students' errors in using the English grammar and to explore teachers' attitudes over a mixture of issues that are related to grammar teaching and learning strategies in second language acquisition. The first part of the study will require 50 students from Taibah University in Saudi Arabia to do a test. The test's point is to identify the students' errors in using the English grammar. In the second part of the study, I will meet with some teachers and talk about a variety of issues that are related to grammar teaching and learning strategies in second language acquisition. The data collection will happen within a period of one month. The tests will be distributed in the first two weeks and teacher interviews will be conducted in the following two weeks.

Dangers and Harms: I don't imagine any risks to you partaking in this study other than those encountered in regular life.

Your answers will be confidential: The records of this study will be kept private; just the researchers can access to the records.

Your participation is voluntary: Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you would prefer not to answer. If you choose not to take a part or to avoid some of the questions, it won't impact your grades. In the event that you decide to take a part, you are permitted to pull back at whatever point you need.

For further inquiries: Kindly pose any questions you have now. In the event that you have addresses later, you may contact with me at s.a.s.abduljawad@edu.salford.ac.uk or at 053- 571-3986.

Researcher's statement:

I have totally explained this study to students. Likewise, I have clarified what they will be obliged to do and I have addressed all requests that they inquired.

Researcher's signature ___________________________

Date ___________________________

Student's Consent: I have read the above data, and have gotten answers to any inquiries I inquired. I consent to take a part in the study.

Your Signature _________________

Date __________________________

Appendix E

Consent Form for students in Arabic

دراسي بحث في المشاركة على موافقة

عزيزتي الطالبة عليكم السلام

ندعوك للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة والقائمة في جامعة طيبة والتي تهدف الي معرفة الأخطاء اللغوية التي تقع فيها الطالبة

الانجليزية وذلك من خلال الاجابة على أسئلة الاستبيان. هذا الاستبيان سوف يوزع على شريحة مقدارها طيبة. لذلك أرجو التكرم بالاجابة على الاسئلة بعناية حيث ان ذلك سينعكس على اكتشاف السعودية عند تعلم اللغة خمسين طالبة من طالبات السنة التحضيرية بجامعة

النتائج بصورة دقيقة .

اذا قررتي المشاركة فأرجو التوقيع بالموافقة اسفل هذا الطلب .

في استبيان البحث اختياري ولن تؤثر على درجاتك في الجامعة في حال تقرري عدم المشاركة او التوقف عن ولك علما ان مشاركتك

اي وقت أردتي وان جميع المعلومات في هذا البحث سوف تكون في غاية من السرية ولن يطلع عليها احد غيري. المشاركة في

لكل لديكي أسئلة عن الاستبيان او البحث فأرجو التواصل على البريد الالكتروني :اذ

عبدالجواد/S.a.s.abduljawad@edu.sa

lford.ac.uk

تذكري عزيزتي الطالبة :

هذا الطلب انك توافقي اختياريا على التعاون مع الباحث المشاركة في هذا الاستبيان وأن المعلومات السابقة ذكرها بمجرد امضائك على
شرحت لكي شفهيا .

ولكي الشكر ...

امضاء المشاركة في البحث	**امضاء صاحبة البحث**
التاريخ	**التاريخ**

Test questions:

Section:____

Level:_____

Date:_______

A)- Read the following sentences. Translate them to English as accurately as possible:

1	هل تملك قلم وممحاة في حقيبتك؟		1
2	انتظرته لمدة ساعة.		2
3	نحن نذهب الى المدرسة بالباص.		3
4	أين ذهبت القطة؟ اعتقد انها ذهبت الى المطبخ.		4
5	هو يعمل في شركة ارامكو السعودية.		5
6	تعتبر مدينة جدة من اجمل المدن في السعودية.		6
7	أصبحت اللغة الانجليزية لغة عالمية.		7
8	احتاج معلومات عن الفنادق بجدة.		8
9	الشمس عبارة عن نجم في السماء.		9
10	ماذا سيعرض اليوم في التلفاز؟		10
11	يقع البحر الاحمر بين مصر و السعوديه.		11
12	ماذا تناولت اليوم في وجبة الغداء؟		12
13	يحتاج الفقراء دعم اكثر من الحكومة.		13
14	هناك هرة في القبعة.		14

Model Answer:

1	Do you have a pen and an eraser in your backpack?	هل تملك قلم وممحاة في حقيبتك؟	1
2	I have been waiting here for an hour.	انتظرت هنا لمدة ساعة.	2
3	We go to ‘ø’ school by ‘ø’ bus.	نحن نذهب الى المدرسة بالباص.	3
4	Where is the cat? I think it is in the kitchen.	أين ذهبت القطة؟ اعتقد انها ذهبت الى المطبخ.	4
5	He is an Aramco worker.	هو يعمل في شركة ارامكو السعودية.	5
6	‘ø’ Jeddah is a beautiful city in ‘ø’ Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.	تعتبر مدينة جدة من اجمل المدن في السعودية.	6
7	‘ø’ English has become an international language.	أصبحت اللغة الانجليزية لغة عالمية.	7
8	I need ‘ø’ information about ‘ø’ hotels in ‘ø’ Jeddah.	احتاج معلومات عن الفنادق بجدة.	8
9	The Sun is a star in the sky.	الشمس عبارة عن نجم في السماء.	9
10	What is on ‘ø’ television tonight?	ماذا سيعرض اليوم في التلفاز ؟	10
11	The Red Sea is between ‘ø’ Africa and ‘ø’ Saudi Arabia.	يقع البحر الاحمر بين مصر والسعوديه.	11
12	What did you have for ‘ø’ lunch?	ماذا تناولت اليوم في وجبة الغداء؟	12
13	The poor people need more ‘ø’ help from the government.	يحتاج الفقراء دعم اكثر من الحكومة.	13
14	There is a cat in the hat.	هناك هرة في القبعة.	14

Interview questions:

Section 1: General information

1- Could you please tell me some general information about your teaching experience? For example (What level do you teach, and how long have you been in teaching English?)

Section 2: Questions

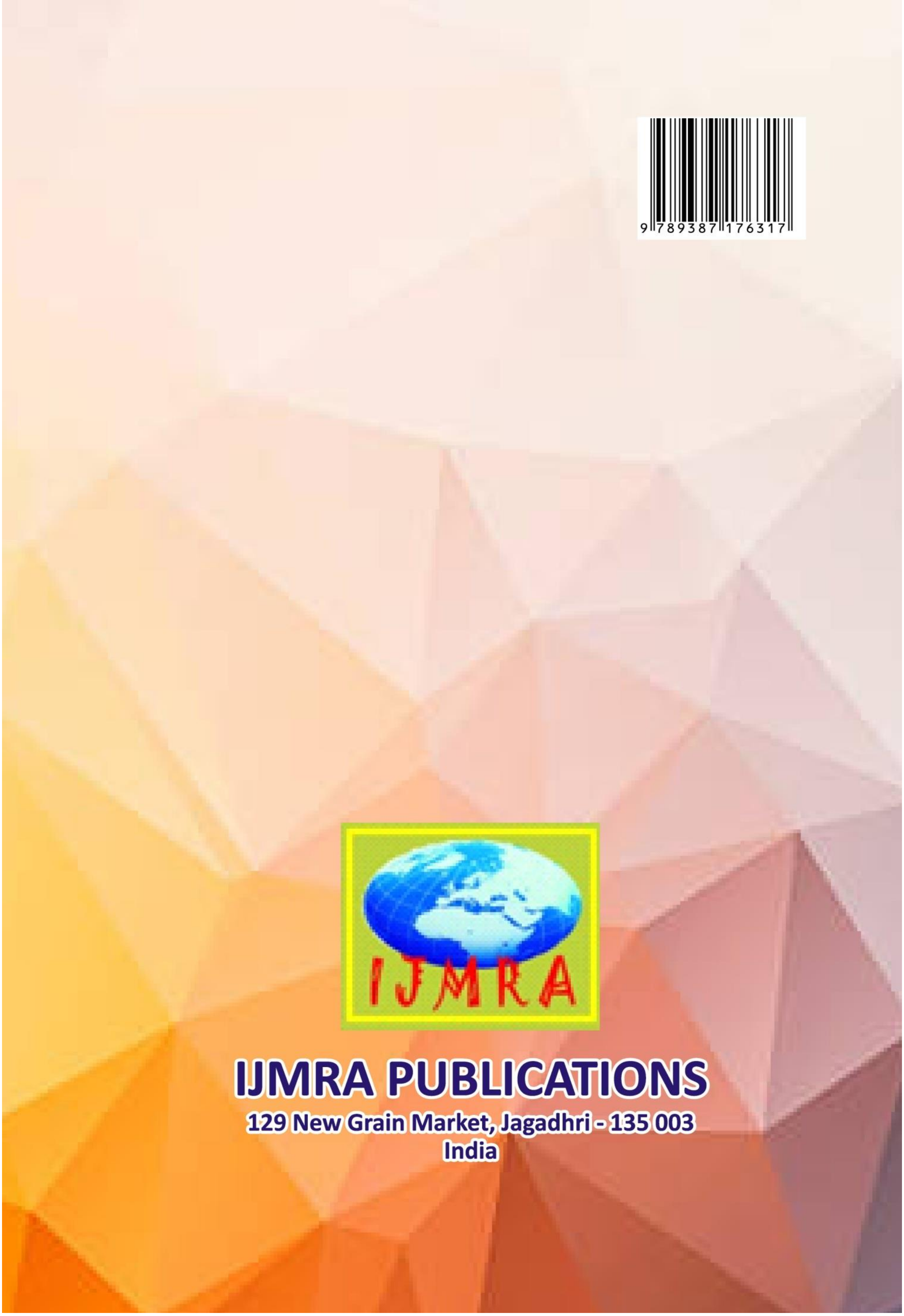
1. In your opinion, do you think that teaching the English article system is challenging? Why?

2.Could you tell me please some of the teaching strategies that you use in teaching the English articles?

3. Based on your teaching experience, what are the most noticeable errors students make when they are learning the English article? What do you think are possible sources of these errors?

4.What methods and teaching and learning strategies do you believe are more viable in reducing the students' misuse of the English article system?

Would you like to add any suggestions or comments?



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