How Do Non-native Speakers of Arabic Language Acquire and Learn Morphology in Arabic? Evidence from Analysis of Three Young Acquirers: An Argentinean and Two Beninois

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Abstract

Purpose: To describe the earliest and latest morphological elements acquired by non-native speakers of Arabic language.

Methods: Three young non-native speakers (a Spanish and two Beninois) were tape-recorded, twenty-minutes each and tested based on traditional classification of words in Arabic: nouns-class, verbs-class, and function-words class. Face-to-face observations were also noted down.

Results: Results indicated that case-one had many problems regarding plurality, duality, gender, agreement between adjectives and nouns, number in general except simple numbers when used separately. Case-two produced a large number of the content-words, but again with many atypical ones. Case-three had only a few errors in patterns like broken-plural and diminutives. Additionally, case-one demonstrated a limited use of verbs, a very few or no function-words, case-two showed a quiet number of verbs compared to case one's   poor use of verbs, and function-words as well, and case-three proved to have good command of nouns-class, verbs-class and function-words-class.

Conclusions: Cases 1-3 are alike yet dissimilar in terms of acquired and non-acquired morphological patterns. These variances were shown clear through the produced morphological patterns by each and may be affected by the period spent in the Saudi Arabia

and amount of language each one of them has been exposed to.

1. Introduction

How language is acquired in general is a very fascinating yet mysterious topic that linguists and specialists from other fields struggle to know. Yet, what is more fascinating and mysterious is acquiring or/and learning a second language by L2 acquirer and/or learner. This study focused on morphology acquisition and/learning by L2 learners. It is an embedded-multiple-case study, where in three cases whose first languages are different have been recorded and then the data-collected have been analyzed in terms of similarities and dissimilarities among acquired morphological patterns.

Actually, it is being observed that both acquirers and learners of Arabic language as a second language (ASL) face many problems during acquisition and learning processes. However, one of the major problems which non-native speakers meet is acquiring and learning the morphology of Arabic language, that is, they may come and leave to any of the Arab countries, with same problems. Due to this, it is worthwhile to investigate this area which will help first to see how this component of language is acquired or/and learned by young non-native speakers of Arabic language, and also to decide on the nature of the difficulties met by such L2 acquirers/learners of the Arabic language.

Very little data has been written about the acquisition of morphology in Arabic by L2 learners or/and acquirers. Following this claim, the researcher does this research with the hope that it will draw the attentions of other researchers to work in this field and investigate such area.

1.1 First Language Acquisition

How each and every one of us acquires his/her first language is still an unanswerable question till now. In spite of the made attempts and theories which have been evolved explaining such world phenomenon; they all have reached questionable findings, controversial conclusions, even if they are plausible. However, from the major theories of first language acquisition can be mentioned here to help then explaining theories of second language acquisition in relation to this research-paper.

Generally, the major language acquisition theories are four, namely: behaviourims, innatism, interactionsim, and connectionism. Skinner who was pioneer in proposing this approach assumes that language is acquired through imitation which then develops into habits. Later on, these habits will go under practice and then the language is formulated. However, this approach has greatly succeeded in interpreting what goes on when a child acquires the first language in simple linguistic levels but not complex ones. For that matter, a new theory has evolved proposed by Chomsky. Chomsky thinks from an innate perspective that a child's brain is not a blank slate which is filled by imitation, habits and practice concluded by language behavior. Instead, a child mind is biologically prepared with a universal grammar, more accurately as Chomsky describes it Language Acquisition Device (LAD) which enables him/her to acquire the language used in his/her society just like any other process like walking for example. To continue this argument, interactionists like Slobin, Piaget, Vygotsky and others argue that language acquisition mechanism can be explained in terms of cognitive development. For Piaget, for example, language is developed just like other cognitive

abilities are being developed; he uses terms like (egocentric) ability of the child for explaining him/herself. Dissimilar to this opinion, yet following the same approach, Vygotsky claims that it is social interaction rather than psychological or cognitive as Piaget has described it which can describe the mechanism of first language acquisition. Well, for connectionists (e.g. Jeffrey Elman), they will argue against both Chomsky and Piaget and Vygotsky who actually have in common in having the idea that language requires a separate module in the mind. So, for a connectionist, language is acquired through exposure to as many associations to a linguistic pattern as possible.

To conclude, the above mentioned theories, mainly their findings, still beyond the real, plausible and enough interpretation for first language acquisition, yet they have served a lot and still are helping many researches to works on their results to develop language pedagogy, teaching and learning language, etc.

1.2 Second Language Acquisition and Learning Theories

Principally, acquiring a second language is entirely and externally different from acquiring a first language, though some would think they would go under the same processes. Despite this, this claim is controversial for the same theories used to explain first language acquisition are actually the same which are being used to explain second language acquisition, albeit, each first language acquisition theory in second language acquisition is being extended with the help of an additional hypothesis/hypotheses as it will be shown below.

To start with behaviourism, in second language acquisition, it has been proposed and emphasized to be applicable for second language acquisition by both Nelson Brooks and Robert Lado. Lado hypothesizes in his proposed model Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis CAH that similar patterns in two languages will be learned and/or acquired more easily than different patterns in two languages which will be learned and/or acquired more difficultly. Furthermore, what Brooks and Lado have called as mimicry and memorization towards formation of habits has been criticized later by those who prefer to follow Chomsky's theory for explaining second language acquisition.

In comparison and with reference to the above criticism for both behaviourims and second CAH, those who consider Chomsky's theory offers the best view for explaining second language acquisition support this biasness with a worth number of researches. For instance, Lydia White and Cook, assumes that second language acquisition has also a kind of logical acquisition just as it happens in the first language acquisition [Cook]. Again, what happens in the first language acquisition regarding Universal Grammar is applicable to happen in the second language acquisition, [White]. Another supporter for the Chomskyan perspective include who Krashen proposes the monitor model which consists of five hypotheses to explain second language acquisition, namely, 1) acquisition-learning hypothesis, 2) monitor hypothesis, 3) natural order hypothesis, 4) input hypothesis, and 5) affective filter hypothesis.

One more perspective towards explaining second language acquisition following the interactionists' approach is information processing. Actually, in this approach, there different models: 1) Norman Segalowitz: learners should pay attention to what they want to learn

and/or acquire from among the presented linguistic patterns, 2) Anderson, DeKeyser and some others: second language acquisition starts with Declarative Knowledge which has to be developed into Procedural Knowledge by practice and learning processes, and 3) Transfer Appropriate Processing: learners store, retrieve language patterns in similar situations that the first language was acquired.

Models derived and/or have been proposed depending on the connectionism theory, are also competitive in their views regarding second language acquisition. Consider, for example, Ellis's emphasis on frequency and input of features a learner being exposed to. Actually and according to this model, learners do not only learn, rather they have the ability of making generalizations and predictions about the second language they are acquiring. One more model is the Competition Model, described by Bates and MacWhinney in terms of approaching both meaning and form. Say it another way, it is only by exposing learners to thousands of meanings of what they are learning so that meaningful connections are formulated.

Additionally, three other models influenced by the cognitive/developmental perspective are: 1) the interaction hypothesis: Long support this hypothesis; we learn through interaction, correct feedback, etc., 2) the noticing hypothesis: Schmidt proposed this hypothesis, supported by Susan Gass also; unless we notice what we want to learn, we will not learn it, and 3) the processability theory: proposed by Meisel, Clahsen, and Pienemann and developed by the last one; there is a certain system for transfer of first language knowledge to second language acquisition by learners.

The last theory for second language acquisition to be mentioned here is the socio-cultural perspective influenced by the Vygotskyan theory mainly Zone Proximal Development ZPD. Lantolf explained this model using what he called as Collaborative Interaction. Similar to Lantolf are Swain and Lapkin who introduced Collaborative Dialogue with the help of socio-cultural perspective; learners acquire second language by being involved in productive language aspects/tasks/skills.

1.3 Arabic Language

Basically and with reference to comparative linguistics, Arabic language is one of the Semitic languages. Originally, Arabic language has at least five forms: Classical Arabic Language (refers to the language of the Holy Quran and the language which was used in the pre-Islam period, Islam period, etc., Standard Arabic Language (refers to the language which has been used mainly from the times after Abbassi period), Modern Standard Arabic Language (refers to the language which is used in media in nowadays, and language used by sophisticated people, Spoken Arabic (used by day-to-day communication among all native speakers of Arabic language in all the countries where in Arabic language is used as the first language[all dialects of Arabic), and Foreign Arabic Language (used by learners of Arabic language either as second or for specific purposes, as it happens in the case of non-native speakers of Arabic who are Muslims), [it should be noted that there is always exception, some non-native speakers can speak Arabic language better than Arab themselves]. Linguistically, Arabic language is majorly an inflectional language from a morphological perspective, case-marking

dependent from a synaptic point of view, from right to left writing, graphically, [more details about the linguistic system of Arabic will be provided below when accounting for the morphology of Arabic language).

In principle, Spanish language is one of the Romance languages family, the sister of languages like French, Italian, etc.. Spanish language is used and spoken in different countries including: Spain, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, United States, and Puerto Rico.

Like Spanish language, French language is also one of the Romance languages family. Actually, French language is used as both a mother-tongue language in 30 countries distributed around Europe, Africa, North America, and Oceania. Additionally, it is also used as an official language in other dependent entities and territories in Asia, Oceania, Africa, North America, Europe, and Antarctica (Africa). Needless to say, from among the countries where in French is used as an official language of the country is Benin, a Wes African country.

Dendi or Dandawa as one of the Songhay dialects language which is one the Nilo-Sahran languages, a minor one actually which according to Dalby (2004) has no 'close relatives', (p. 572), is the mother language of people in some areas in northern Benin, Niger and Nigeria. For Dendi language, they use the Latin script, just like French, and Spanish which have make use also of the Latin scrip but with French and Spanish variants for both language. Unlike these three languages, in the case of Arabic language: Arabic and Syriac alphabets are used in addition to the Latin script in the writing system of Arabic language.

Linguistically, Arabic like other languages has its own unique features and shared features with other languages as any other language in the world. For instance, graphically it has 28 eight letters written from right to left starting with [aalif] and ending with [yaa]. Phonetically, Arabic mainly Standard Arabic has 30 consonants and 6 vowels; three short and three long. Phonologically, Semitic languages in general and Arabic as one of them is characterized pharyngeal and guttural sounds, again with major sounds and minor vowels. Syntactically, the typical structure of the sentence in the form of statement in Standard Arabic Language is (V+S+O/Comp.) with allowance of (S+V+O).

Morphologically, Arabic language is a root-pattern inflectional language. Ryding, (2005) defines morphology as the linguistic level system which 'pertains to the organization, rules, and processes concerning meaningful units of language, whether they be words themselves or parts of words, such as affixes of various sorts', (p. 44). In Arabic however, the study of morphology refers to two things: one is derivational or lexical morphology and this refers exactly to word formation, and inflectional morphology which in turn refers to interaction of these words with syntax.

Morphology as a component of language acquired by a child in his/her childhood in whatever language can be problematic for a learner when it is either acquired or learned by a person as a second morphology. In spite of this fact, when it comes to native speakers children who

have certain language disorder such as those with specific language impairment (SLI) one stands surprised wondering whether such problems mainly morphological ones can be similar to those a second language learner will meet when learning or acquiring this the morphology of this or that certain language. Thus, the following are five studies which have been conducted in different settings, environments, and with different objectives and research methodologies, but all share the idea of searching in morphology acquisition in L2 learners and/or acquirers. It should be noted that these five studies are arranged here by data of publication starting by the most recent one.

To start with Shirai's (2010) study, s/he accounts for the acquisitions of tense-aspect morphology suing empirical data to support the claim(s) of this paper. Therefore, accounting for the interaction of the two aspects of past tense acquisition, namely, semantic bias in early past tense marking and the regular/irregular asymmetry in the acquisition of past tense morphology, and testing the claim of both Pinker (1984) and Bickerton (1981) which provide specific predictions regarding how verb semantics and regularity interact in the acquisition of tense-aspect systems, were the main objectives of this study. Hereby, some major conclusions which the researcher has come up with are: 1) overregularization is observed even at the stage when the morphology is restricted to its semantic prototype, 2) in L1 acquisition, there is no clear pattern of regular-irregular dissociation in past tense acquisition, and there are individual variations,   and 3) in L2 acquisition, it is argued that there is some evidence for regular-irregular dissociation in relation to semantic bias, regular morphology being more strongly tied to semantics, but the evidence is not conclusive.

This study by both Jacobson and Schwartz also accounts for morphology acquisition in comparison and contrast, that is, between normal children whose native tongue is not English (it is Spanish) and children with language impairment who again learn and acquire English as a second language. Major conclusions of this study are: 1) overall accuracy was higher for children in the TD group on all verbs types, 2) TD children produced regular verbs with 80% accuracy, irregular verbs with 47% accuracy, and novel verbs with 49% accuracy, 3) children with LI produced regular verbs with 11% accuracy, irregular verbs with 28% accuracy, and novel verbs with 5% accuracy, 4) the groups differed in the overall accuracy of past tense use according to verb type and the types of errors produced, and 5) children with LI performed proportionally and absolutely lower than their TD peers on all verb categories which indicates that TD children performed better than their LI peers.

One more study is by Paradis (2005) who investigates the claim whether errors and/or mistakes made by L2 learners and/or acquirers are similar to those made by person with language disorders. However, in this paper he presents data for longitudinal studies of cases from different nationalities living in Canada. The paper has been concluded with the following indications: 1) the ESL children in this study seemed to be learning English at variable individual rates, 2) early ESL children can be expected to make errors with grammatical morphology, and these errors can extend into their second year of experience speaking the language, 3) difficulties in producing grammatical morphology will be evident regardless of L1 background, although there is some indication that difficulties may be more pronounced in children whose L1 is not RI language, such as Mandarin or Cantonese, 4)

difficulties in producing grammatical morphology will be more pronounced for morphemes that mark the grammatical category tense, like auxiliary verb and verb inflections with the exception of [-ing], and when children make errors they usually omit them more often than substitute the wrong morpheme, 5) ESL children will alternate between correct use and omission of a morpheme in their speech until they gradually achieve native-speaker accuracy levels with them, 6) such characteristics which describe typical English-language learning overlap largely with the characteristics of monolingual impaired language, and 7) it is advisable to be cautious when considering the presence of errors with grammatical morphology as a sign of SLI in early ESL children.

In addition to the studies which have been mentioned above about morphology acquisition by L2 acquirers is Parodi, Schwartz and Clahsen's (2004) study who explore some morphological aspects acquisition mainly L2 acquisition of the morpho-syntax, but not of English language, it is about German nominal instead. Thus, the researchers attempted investigating the acquisition of morpho-syntax by adult L2 speakers of German whose native languages are: Korean, Turkish, Spanish and Italian [Romance], compared after that to those of L1 speakers of German language. the study is concluded with that: 1) in early stages, plurality is often expressed via lexical, uninflected forms, as determined by the high ratio of quantifiers and numerals to other D-elements, 2) while there is some noun plural inflection present at this point, the incidence of noun plural morphology increases over time, 3) there were only few clear cases of (attempted) number concord in nominals, even at more advanced stages of L2 development, 4) the role of L1 transfer in adult L2 acquisition is greatly valid in the findings of this study, 5) adults L2 acquirers with subject-verb agreement, plural inflection, etc., in their L1 grammars do not have an advantage in the acquisition of similar TL Phenomena over L2 learners who do not, 6) adults L2 learners, despite having structurally different L1s, behave in much the same way towards inflectional morphology, 7) regardless of the L1 inflectional systems of the L2 learners, they essentially start from the same point in regard to acquiring inflectional morphology, and 8) a general indication of this study seems to be that in both the nominal and the sentential domains, syntactic transfer is in evidence but morphological acquisition is problematic regardless of the properties of the L1.

Last but not least, Jia (2003) also attempts for the acquisition of plural morpheme by native Chinese-speaking children. In spite of this and unlike the above mentioned studies, this study had no atypical children, though the researcher has accounted for this issue analytically, that is, by reviewing, discussing and inferring predicted results and generalizations from results of previous studies about the acquisition of morphology compared to children with language impairment. In brief and according to the results of this study, errors made by the participants of this study can be classified into: required omitted errors RO and OG errors; the former ones constituted the majority of errors that occurred; whereas in the latter types all participants made OG errors documented in the L1 acquisition, again within this type there are two sub-types: obligatory and non-obligatory plural contexts, yet in each sub-type, there sub-sub-types. Moreover, the results of this research also indicate that variable performance in different task situations was another aspect in which L1 and L2 learners differed. Moreover, L2 learners made similar types of OG errors as L1 learners do in both obligatory plural and

non-plural contexts. More generally, there are some similarities and differences between L2 learners and L1 learners with SLI in various aspects of plural morpheme acquisition.

2. Methods

2.1 Participants

The participants in this study are three young non-native speakers of Arabic language. They are from different countries and even continents. Actually, one of them is an Argentinean whose first language L1 is Spanish. The other two are Beninese, but one his first language is Dendi and the second one his first language is French. Needless to say, both the two Beninese do speak French language with difference that is for one of them it is his first language and for the second one it is his second language. So, these three are actually students of Arabic language. Thus, the students have three different levels: one is in level 1, the second is in level 2 and the third has graduated and is preparing to join any department to obtaining a bachelor degree.

2.1.1 Sample

The researcher has followed the *stratified sampling* technique for selecting the participants in this study. In other words, the students are actually grouped in their classes when learning Arabic into four levels, because they study for four years as a diploma for learning the Arabic language. So, only three groups have been identified first: level one, level two and level four (about to graduate or have just graduated). Then, the researcher has selected a case from each group since this study is a case and large number of participants will not allow for detailed description and investigation of the chosen topic. Of course, each one is from a different nationality or if from the same nationality, his mother tongue language is different from the language of his peer.

2.1.1.1 Case 1

Case 1 who is 30 years old Argentinean is a scholarship student at King Saud University, College of Arts, Department of Arabic Language and Literature, Institute of Arabic Language for Non-Native Speakers. He has come to learn Arabic language, a diploma for two years according to the designed programme in this institute. His mother-tongue language is Spanish, the first language in Argentina. According to IAS, he was not able to speak Arabic language or use it in day-to-day communication except using it for religious purposes, that is, reciting some verses of the Holy Quran and performing the prayers as he is Muslim and embracing this religion requires knowing Arabic language. Till now, IAS has spent about a year in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, (Arabic native-speakers country). Needless to say, IAS and all other cases are learning and acquiring the Modern Standard Arabic as most of their exposure is to language performed by teachers who communicate with them mostly with the MSA. Finally, IAS knows also English and can use it effectively as his second language which means, Arabic for him now is as a third language prospectively.

2.1.1.2 Case 2

Case 2 is the second case in this study; he is 25 year old Beninion. Like the IAS, he has come

to the Kingdom as a scholarship student for the purpose of studying Arabic language. In other words, he is being enrolled in the same programme just like IAS. His mother-tongue language is Dendi or Dandawa, and his second language is French, which is the official language in the whole Benin. Again, like IAS, HBD has not learnt Arabic formally before coming to the Kingdom, except being able to use it for performing the prayers as a Muslim and reciting verses from the Holy Quran. Unlike IAS who is still in level 2, HBD is now in the 3rd level. At last, HBD is also like IAS, he is learning and acquiring Arabic language as a third language as his first is Dendi and second is French language.

2.1.1.3 Case 3

Case 3 is the third participant in this study and he is 22 years old. He is Beninion, but his mother-tongue language is French. Once again, he has come to the Kingdom as a scholarship student of Arabic language. He can use English language as a foreign language. Compared to his peers, he is the most advanced one regarding Arabic language acquisition and learning; he has finished his diploma with excellent grade.

2.1.2 Setting

This study has been conducted in the Department of English Language and Literature, Applied Linguistics Section, College of Arts, King Saud University, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, early 2011. Moreover, the participants in this study are students of Arabic language as a second language ASL in the Institute of Arabic Language for Non-native Speakers, College of Arts, King Saud University, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The cases have been interviewed and recorded after taking their permission, each in his own room, in the Students' Housing Campus, King Saud University.

2.2 Measures

Two techniques have been used for data-collection for this study, namely personal interviews (*spontaneous speech*) and designed questions for eliciting data about morphology acquisition and/or learning. Each one of the participants has been recorded for 20 minutes, yet has been given a five minutes to say/talk about anything he prefers. The extra five minutes for spontaneous speech were not recorded, instead observed mistakes and/or errors were noted down immediately.

2.3 Design

This research-paper is *an embedded-multiple-case-study* (a number of cases are introduced relatively to form an embedded unit of research or idea) where in the researcher has followed the approach of *case-study research*. Yet, the study is an *explanatory* one, rather than *descriptive* and *exploratory* since the subjects were *reachable* and *accessible*.

2.4 Procedures

However, the students were recorded using a mobile recorder. The researcher, then, has first sent the data via Bluetooth device to the laptop, then transcribing it in Arabic. After that, the data has been translated into English, mean language of writing this research paper. Finally,

this study is actually purely qualitative which is natural in the case study approach.

The researcher has followed the *parallel procedure* during data-collection for this study. Say it another way, all the three cases who are the main source for the data of this study have been identified earlier before starting the study. Of course, this was on the basis that they all share the concerned topic in this research, that is, morphology acquisition and/or learning in Arabic language by L2 learners.

With reference to what has been mentioned above (tools and measures), the researcher has first transcribed the data. Secondly, the data was translated into English language taking into consideration (the morphological aspects of Arabic language will not change or will not be affected after translation). Then, the researcher, has made a map-draft, that is, classifying morphological elements by topic, classifying correct uses and wrong uses, classifying the wrongs uses according to degree of difficulty of the misused morphological element, and finally searching for differences and similarities among the three cases. To this end, the researcher then has attempted both intuitive and inductive analysis, yet discussion for the data towards certain conclusions to answer the raised questions in this study.

3. Results

In each case, two tables will be presented. Say it another way, the first table in each case will show samples of typical morphological produced items. The second table shows samples of atypical morphological produced items, (all shaded tables represent atypical produced morphological patterns).

Tables (1-6) represent the selected data of case one where tables (1-3) illustrate samples of typical produced morphological patterns and tables (4-6) illustrate samples of atypical morphological patterns. Again, tables (1 & 4) are examples for the noun class, tables (2 & 5) are examples for the verb class, and tables (3 & 6) are examples for the function words class. Thus, each column to the right in each table shows English translation of the example, and each column in each table to the left shows the original example in Arabic language.

Table 1. Typical produced patterns in nouns class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
هما إيفان وعبد الكريم	They are Iffan and Abdulkarim.
أنا في المستوى الثالث	I am in the 3rd level.
ثلاث محاضرات	three lectures
في طريقتين للعمل	There are two ways for getting a job.
لكن مسلم يمني	buy a Yemeni Muslim
الحاسوب فقط	computer only
قاعات، الكتب	classes, books
مدرس	a teacher
سورة صغيرة	a short Surah
بنيني، صومالي، صيني	Beninion, Somali, Chinese

Table 2. Typical produced patterns in verbs class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
لم أدرس	I have not studied before.
سأدرس	I will study.
سمعت كثيرا	I have heard a lot.
ذهبت	I went.
أتكلم	I speak.
درسوا	They have studied.
رأيته	I saw him.
كان لدينا	We had.
ساعدنا كثيرا	He helped us a lot.
كان الحج سهلا	Hajj was fine.

Table 3. Typical produced patterns in function words class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
في العاصمة	in the capital
لا لا	No, no
كلية التربية	college of education
هذا الأمر	this issue
أو	or
الفرق بين الغرب والمسلمين	the difference between Westerners and Muslims is...
لكن ما شعرت	but I didn't fell
بطريقة الإسلام	in Islamic way
تلاوة وتعبير إلخ...	recitation, dictation, etc.
ليس الآن	not now

Table 4. Atypical produced patterns in nouns class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
أنا في أرجنتينا	I am in Argentina.
درس/درسوا في الأرجنتين	They studies at Argentina.
نحن كله جداد في الإسلام	We are all new to Islam.
فطريقتين جيدة...جيدة؛ اللغة أو التربية	The two ways are good, good; language or education
يختلف الأخلاق	Morals are different.
العقل والفكرة هن نفس الشيئ	Mind and ideas are both the same.
أنتم تحفظ كثيرا	You memorize a lot.
عبدالقادر من صومالي	Abdullqadir from Somali
خمسة مواد، سهل من الماضي	five course, easier than before
ثلاثة مرة في الإسبوع	three times a week

Table 5. Atypical produced patterns in verbs class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
يوجد شاشة	There is a projector.
مافي فرق بيننا (لايوجد/ لافرق)	There is no difference between us.
(إستخدام الجمل الأسمية أكثر من الفعلية)	in Arabic language, verbal sentences are more frequent than nominal sentences
ندرة جمل المبتدأ والخبر	very rare use of equational sentences
سمعت كثير من المسلمين عندما يشهدون الكعبة، هم سعيدون	I heard a lot about Muslims when they walk around the Ka'abah, they look happy.
الجنازة في المدينة المنورة... بطريقة إسلامية	funeral in Madinah... in Islamic way
يوجد شاشة	There is a projector.
مافي فرق بيننا (لايوجد/ لافرق)	There is no difference between us.
(إستخدام الجمل الأسمية أكثر من الفعلية)	in Arabic language, verbal sentences are more frequent than nominal sentences
ندرة جمل المبتدأ والخبر	very rare use of equational sentences

Table 6. Atypical produced patterns in function words class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
لا لا...	No, no...
قسم عقيدة	faith department
كلية لغة العربية	College of Arabic Language
نحن كله	all of us
شعرت ما في شيئ	I felt nothing
في مدينة المنورة	at Madinah
ليس جيد	not good
لا لا...	No, no...
قسم عقيدة	faith department
كلية لغة العربية	College of Arabic Language

Tables (7- 12) present the selected data of case two where tables (7-9) present examples of the typical produced morphological patterns. On the other hand, tables (10-12) show examples of the atypical morphological patterns. Once again, tables (7 &10) represent the nous class, tables (8 &11) represent the verb class, and tables (9 & 12) represent the function word class.

Table 7. Typical produced patterns in nouns class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
طالب من بنين	a student from Benin
معهد اللغة العربية	Arabic language institute
اللغة الفرنسية	French language
أساعد المريض	I help the patient...
من أسرتي	from my family
مدينة طيبة	good city
الرجل يذهب للأسرة	a man goes to the family
هذا عربي، بلدان	this an Arabian, countries
مرتبة سادسة	sixth rank
ماذا يريدون	what do they want

Table 8. Typical produced patterns in verbs class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
كنت في بنين...	I was in Benin.
عرفت	I knew
وصلت	I have arrived
درست	I have studied
أتحدث	I speak
تتكون من	consists of
سأكون	I will be
الذين درسوا	who studied
نغادر المملكة	leave the Kingdom
لا أفهم، أنا أفكر	I do not understand, I think...

Table 9. Typical produced patterns in function words class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
في جامعة الملك سعود	at King Saud University
عرفت عن المملكة	I knew about the Kingdom
ولكن هنا	but here
أن أدرس	to study
لإن	Because
حتى	Even
يذهب للأسرة	go to the family
هناك بعض الكلمات	there are some words
إلا باللغة العربية	only in Arabic language
إذا أهل...	if the family of...

Table 10. Atypical produced patterns in nouns class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
المملكة، بلد وطيب وأحسن	the kingdom, good and better country
أتخصص بجانب طبية	to be enrolled in a medical field
أسرتي تتكون من أب وأم وأنا الثالثة	my family consists of a father, mother, and I am the 3rd
سأكون كبار...سأكون مايحتاج أسرة	I will be the paterfamilias
سأكون مربية بالبيت	I will be a housewife
لإنهم درست فرنسية	because they have studies French language
كثيرة مدن	a lot of cities
ثلاثة أو أربعة مدينة للمسلمون	three or four cities for Muslims
هذا مدينة، أحبها جيدا	This city, I like it too much
الذي كان مشهورون، هي اللغة أفضل في العالم	which were famous, it is the best language in the world

Table 11. Atypical produced patterns in verbs class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
درسها من حيث أتيت وحتى المتوسطة	I studied it since the first grade till the 9th grade
سأكون بها	I will do it
يكون قويا	be strong
سيكون قويا	will be strong
كتب بالإنجليزية	books in English
ترجمة بلغتهم	have been translated into their language
هنا درسها	he studied it here
درسها من حيث أتيت وحتى المتوسطة	I studied it since the first grade till the 9th grade
سأكون بها	I will do it
يكون قويا	be strong

Table 12. Atypical produced patterns in function words class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
في مستوى السادس	in the 6th level
أسمع المملكة العربية	I hear about the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
ذهبت في سوق	I went to a shop
كلام بإشارة	communication using sign language
هذه اللغة جعلوا مرتبة سادسة	they make this language in the 6th rank
هذا الكتب	these books
هم الذين يأتون شيئ جديد	they innovate things
	I have changed my mind
	till they agreed
سوق بطحاء وتميمي	Batha and Tamimy shops

Tables (13-16) illustrate the selected data for case three where tables (13-15) are examples of the typical produced morphological patterns, and table (16) consists of examples for atypical

morphological patterns. While, tables (13-15) show noun class, verb class, and function word class respectively, table 16 consists of examples for the three classes of words in morphology.

Table 13. Typical produced patterns in nouns class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
أيام العطلة	during holidays
هذا السؤال مهم جدا	this question is important
الأساتذة	Teachers
تفاوت المستويات	variance in levels
مع أبنائها	with its native speakers
الناس يتكلمون	people speak
نيجريا دولة قديمة في الإسلام	Nigeria is an old country in embracing Islam
طموح كثيرة	many ambitions
هذا الهدف هدف الطالب المخلص	this aim was the aim of a sincere student
مجتهدون جداً	very hardworking

Table 14. Typical produced patterns in verbs class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
سمعت بالجامعة عبر الزملاء	I heard about it from friends
أناقشهم في الجامعة	I discuss with them in the university
نجد مشاكل	we find problems
قد درسوا كثيرا	they have studied intensively
لديهم حياء يمنعهم	they have shyness which stop them
يقرأ كثيرا	He reads extensively
نحتاج الى التطور من حيث الدين	we need development awareness regarding religion
نحن نفكر في كيفية حلها	we think how to solve it
لدي طموحات كثيرة	I have many ambitions
سنقوم بهذه المسئولية	we will carry this responsibility

Table 15. Typical produced patterns in function words class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
سمعت بالجامعة	I heard about the university
بمثل هذا المعهد	like this institute
كلهم متميزين	all of them are distinguished
في مستوى واحد	in the same level
وخاصة مع ابنائها	especially with its native speakers
لو كانو... لكنا..	have they..., we were
لذلك	So
قد يكون...	it might be
يوما بعد يوم	one day after another
للأسف	unfortunately,

Table 16. Atypical produced patterns in content, verb and function class

Example in Arabic Language	English translation of the Example
مدراس اللغة العربية نعد في أصابع اليد	schools of Arabic language can be counted with fingers
(أب الإبن ووالد البنت)ـ عليه أن يتفق	the father of the boy and the father of the girl- they have to make an agreement between them
أنشطات	Activities
مركز التعليم	teaching centre
مدراس اللغة العربية نعد في أصابع اليد	schools of Arabic language can be counted with fingers
(أب الإبن ووالد البنت)ـ عليه أن يتفق	the father of the boy and the father of the girl- they have to make an agreement between them
أنشطات	Activities
مركز التعليم	teaching centre
مدراس اللغة العربية نعد في أصابع اليد	schools of Arabic language can be counted with fingers
(أب الإبن ووالد البنت)ـ عليه أن يتفق	the father of the boy and the father of the girl- they have to make an agreement between them

4. Discussion

In fact, acquiring and/or learning a second language is not very easy, yet not that difficult. However, to what extent it is difficult or easy can be determined by certain aspects, features, etc. including the environment of learning. To be brief, morphology as one component of language plays an important role not only at the level of vocabulary; it extends to integrate with phonology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics also. Thus, it is still argued regarding the mechanism(s) of acquiring morphological aspects and patterns. Yet, it is also controversial whether same learners of a certain language share exactly the same difficulties and also simple items of language. In this study, three young L2 acquirers of Arabic language between ages 22-30 have been compared and contrasted searching for similar and dissimilar typical and atypical produced morphological patterns.

In general, IAS, HBD, and AABF are more dissimilar to each other rather than similar to one another. Phonetically and phonologically, they all replace the sound [ط-ta] with [t], [ث-tha] with [s], [ع-ain] with [a], and [ح-ha] with [h] especially HBD, and AABF, and with more insistence HBF who is still in level 2. It is actually strange why the IAS case who is from Argentina did not show such sound replacements, thought he is still in level 2.

Syntactically, IAS has just started level 2, so his syntax is still very poor in general. Say it another way, he only uses simple sentences, nominal ones, in spite of the fact that in Standard Arabic language, the typical use of sentence is verbal sentences in addition to the equational ones. It seems that he is still transferring his knowledge in his first language (Spanish), only nominal sentences.

In comparison, HBD is better than IAS regarding sentence structure. However, both cases

still have serious syntactic errors in case-marking and in producing and comprehending compound, complex and ambiguous sentences even the simple ones.

Compared to the IAS and HBD, AABF who is a graduate shows only a very few syntactic errors and atypical productions and comprehended items as well.

To return to the main topic which is morphology, to start with content word class excluding verbs and with reference to figures (1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16), IAS still have many problems regarding plurality, duality, gender, agreement between adjectives and nouns, number in general except simple numbers when used separately (no context) like (one, two, three, etc.). Unlike IAS, HBD produced a large number of the content words, but again with many atypical ones. Needless to say, for AAFB, he only has a few errors in patterns like broken plural and diminutives.

Regarding verbs, when looking at figures (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 16), it is very clear that IAS uses a very limited number of verbs. It indicates that his lexicon is still very restricted. In contrast, HBD, produces more verbs, shows somehow good use of aspect and tense, but still have problems in verbs selection and appropriate use of verbs. For AABF, he shows very good use of verbs, tense and aspect except in the case of agreement and passive in certain patterns.

The last place where in these three cases can be compared and contrasted is function words. With reference to figures (3, 6, 9, 12, 16), they all indicate again how the acquisition and learning of these patters by all L2 acquirers is greatly affected by their levels. Put it differently, AABF proves to be a competent user, he is even able to play with words and use them in ways that make his language more attractive. For the other two cases especially IAS, a very little number of functions words have been produced, whereas HBD has tried to manage using his knowledge regarding these patterns, but it seems that such patterns have not been processed well in a way that make its user use them effectively and correctly.

To conclude, IAS, HBD, and AABF are more different than each other, yet less similar to one another. These variances were shown clear through the produced morphological patterns by each one of them and may be affected by the period spent in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and amount of language being exposed to.

5. Conclusion

In this study, the researcher has investigated the morphology acquisition by L2 acquirers who speak three different languages as their first languages. To achieve this, the researcher has first recorded each case for 20-25 minutes, free speech and five minutes for each one (directed questions). The collected-data have been transcribed in Arabic, translated into English and then have been presented in figures in terms of content words excluding verbs, verbs and function words. Needless to say, this classification was based on the Arabic language system and the traditional works of Arab grammarians who accounted for morphology following such criterion.

Therefore, after analyzing the data, it has been shown that all the three cases still have atypical produced and comprehended morphological patterns which are governed by both the

period spent in the Arabian country and the amount of the language each one of them has been exposed to. Regardless of the errors they make, IAS who has just started level 2, shows very poor communication and language comprehension. On the other hand, HBD shows poor communication skills, but good comprehension skills. It goes without saying, AABF who is a graduate student shows both good communication, production and comprehension of the language mainly here morphological patters.

Thus, it is recommended that more data from each case must be collected. Say it another way, a better selected methodology must be designed so that more reliable and valid results regarding morphology acquisition and/or learning could be found and inferred towards building a map-based framework for morphology acquisition in Arabic language.

Acknowledgement

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