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A Form Oriented Study of the Acquisition of Tense and Aspect by Algerian Adult Learners' of English

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Dedication

In the name of God, Most Merciful, Most Compassionate

This work is dedicated to:

- *My dear mother who has always supported me in every project in my Life. She is the most courageous woman I ever knew.*
- *My father without whom I wouldn't be who I am. He is the best person I ever met.*
- *My Three sisters to whom I wish the best.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

This thesis is intended to investigate the process of acquisition of Tense and Aspect Related to the Past in the written production of adult learners of English. It is concerned with analysing this acquisitional progression in form and meaning. It attempts to draw the map of the emergence of tense and aspect morphology, then it evaluates the quality of the learners mastery of the target temporal system. Finally, it goes verifying the claims of the lexical aspect hypothesis pointing out the way Lexical aspect influences the pattern of distribution of verbal morphology throughout the evolutionary stages of the learner's morphological development.

The research was led through the analysis of the learners' written production over two years of study and data collection. It includes three main parts. They are all involved under the incidental Form oriented studies of tense and aspect related to the past. They represent three different approaches to interlanguage analysis, so that the collection of the three of them within one same research given a more complete vision of the subject under study. The learners' written production was analysed through a longitudinal study, a cross-sectional study and an error analysis study. The research involved the use of qualitative and quantitative statistical means.

The results obtained highlight the steps of acquisition of verbal morphology. They reveal that lexical aspect influences the distribution of verbal morphology in initial and later stages of morphological develop-ment through proficiency progression. They also show that the temporal

system is mastered quite adequately and when it is misused the errors are more frequently of use than of form. They are mainly due to the inherent complexity of the target language with some slight effect of the first language.

On the basis of these findings, pedagogical advice and some suggestions are presented to the grammar teachers of a foreign language.

List of Abbreviations

- *ACC: Accomplishment.*
- *ACH: Achievement.*
- *ACT: Action.*
- ***C A**: Contrastive Analysis.*
- ***C** = $\dfrac{Outspread}{1+\ 3.32\ \log N}$ = Law of Sturge*
- ***E A**: Error Analysis.*
- ***Eg**: Example.*
- ***FL**: Foreign Language.*
- ***IL**: Interlanguage.*
- ***L1**: First Language.*
- ***L2**: Second Language.*
- ***MT**: Mother Tongue.*
- ***N**: Number of Students.*
- ***NL**: Native Language.*
- ***Pr.S**: Present Simple.*
- ***Pr.C**: Present Continuous.*
- ***P S**: Past Simple.*
- ***PC**: Past Continuous.*
- ***Pr. Perf. S**: Present Perfect Simple.*
- ***Pr.Perf. C**: Present Perfect Continuous.*
- ***P. Perf. S**: Past Perfect Simple.*
- ***P. Perf. C**: Past Perfect Continuous.*
- ***S.L.A**: Second Language Acquisition.*

- ***STA****: State.*
- ***St. Ar****: Standard Arabic.*
- ***TL****: Target Language*
- ***X****=* $\underline{fixi}$ */* $xi = \underline{a+\ b}$ *for a class [a, b[*

       fi   *2*
- ***Σ*** *: Sum.*
- ***%****: Percentage.*

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1. Statement of the Problem

All activities take place in time and all languages have ways to express time. Language users may distinguish between the moment of utterance and the time in which an event takes place. This could be before, after or simultaneous with the utterance referring to it. Language users have means to distinguish the different temporal organisations. The same event could be viewed as a bounded whole or specific attention could be given to the inside. Scholars refer to these two notions as *Tense* and *Aspect*. Linguists have looked inside the verb phrase to investigate their realisation in linguistic form.

The temporal and aspectual systems of English are problematic areas to English language learners. The problems encountered are due to a variety of reasons, the main ones being the lack of identification of the context and the semantic differences existing between the various tense and aspect combination forms. Every English sentence must have both tense and aspect . It must be in the past or the non-past. It must have perfective or non-perfective aspect. It becomes obvious, then, that to master the English language, a learner must handle tense and aspect.

The study of tense and aspect morphology has been the focus of many descriptive and pedagogical accounts of language. Tense and aspect occupy an essential position in the curricula of many language programs. It is not uncommon for language teaching programs to include the mastery of tense and aspect as major assessment criteria.

The acquisition of any part of language system affects the rest of the language parts . The emergence of new tense-aspect forms will certainly have an effect on all other form-meaning associations and on other means of

temporal expression such as adverbials or sequential organisation of verbs. Thus, the acquisitional process of tense and aspect most certainly affects the evolution of the learners' temporal semantic system.

Learners of English progress through the acquisitional process with a metamorphosis of their interlanguage. An important part of the metamorphosis is the acquisition of tense and aspect in form as well as meaning.

2. Aims of the Study

This research aims at investigating the acquisitional process of tense and aspect related to the past in the written production of Algerian adult learners of English. It is concerned with analysing this acquisitional progression in form and meaning.

The development of research on the evolution of interlanguage in terms of acquisition of the temporal system plays a major role in the evolution of research in second language acquisition as a whole

There seems to be an unquestionable connection between the mastery of English and the acquisition of its grammar. I would like to cement this link by arguing that the learner will not be able to communicate properly in the language if s/he does not go through a complete and successful process of acquisition of its grammatical system and that every subsystem will unavoidably affect the learner both in terms of competence and performance.

3. Hypotheses

We hypothesise that :

1. The Algerian adult learners of English go through precise evolutionary steps in acquiring the morphology of tense and aspect related to the past.

2. The Algerian adult learners go through evolutionary steps in acquiring the semantics of tense and aspect related to the past.

3. Lexical aspect influences the pattern of distribution of verbal morphology throughout the evolutionary stages of the learner's morphological development :

    3.1.   The perfective past starts with events (accomplishments and achievements) , then it extends to activities and states.

    3.2.   Tense use is increasingly targetlike with the progressive and the association of the progressive with activities goes progressively reinforced.

    3.3   The use of the progressive is overgeneralised with states.

4. The Algerian learners erroneous production of English tense and aspect structures includes more use than form errors.

4. Means of Research

This research is carried out with Algerian adult students of the department of English in the higher school for teachers. This investigation is conducted through the first two years of the BA program. During this period, the students are subject to intensive language instruction to develop both their receptive and productive skills before they are introduced to any pedagogical, didactic or psychoeducational content.

To test our hypothesis, we have analysed the written production of Algerian adult learners of English collected all along their two first years of undergraduate studies .

The research includes three main parts. They are all involved under the incidental studies of tense and aspect related to the past. They represent three different approaches to interlanguage analysis, so that the collection of the three of them within one research given a more complete vision of the subject under study.

Research on language temporal systems can be meaning-oriented or form-oriented. We have chosen to focus on the form oriented side of investigation. Our form-oriented studies attempt to answer the questioning about the distribution of the emergent verbal morphology related to the past.

Our first practical work deals with the acquisitional sequence. The second one analyses the nature and distribution of errors in the learners written production after the acquisitional process is completed in the sense that that the two years of intensive language instruction are over. And the third one goes checking the claims of the aspect hypothesis.

5. Structure of the Study

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one deals with the various languages existing in Algeria going through the main evolutionary steps the Algerian linguistic scene has experienced and passed through to end up with the present complex but most representative picture of the cultural background and the revolutionary and open to change nature of the country. It draws the linguistic profile of the learners subject to our study.

Chapter two is devoted to the place of tense and aspect in grammar. It relates the various schools of grammar and their compatible teaching methods. Then, it clarifies the difference between tense and aspect before exposing grammatical aspect as distinct from the theory of lexical aspect . It ends up by showing the complementarily between these to main sides of aspect in the English grammar.

Chapter three deals with error analysis and second language acquisition. It refers to the nature of the study of second language acquisition and relates the various models highlighting the distinction between the monitor and the competition models. Then it goes exposing the various learning strategies. After that it gives a historical overview of the evolution from contrastive to error

analysis before relating the various types of transfer and going into the definition of the main aspects of transfer.

Chapter four is a longitudinal study the emergence of tense and aspect related to the past. In this chapter, we observed the sequential emergence of the tense and aspect morphological forms. We analysed the order of emergence of the forms and we attempted to draw up the semantic map of the emerging system. To end-up, we looked at the influence of the source language in the evolutionary process.

Chapter five is an error analysis of the learners' use of tense and aspect related to the past. Interest was first devoted to the language production in general. After that, correct production was dissociated from wrong production. Finally, form errors were separated from use errors.

Chapter six is a cross-sectional study of the use of tense and aspect related to the past. It goes checking the claims of the aspect hypothesis concerning the spread of the perfective past, the predominance of the progressive with activities and the overgeneralization of the progressive in states.

Chapter seven presents pedagogical implication and advice coming out of the research results. It starts with highlighting the influence of instruction, then, it details the implications of every one of the three practical parts of the study. It also suggests a model lesson and gives some practical drills and recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE
THE LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND
OF THE LEARNERS

Outline

Introduction

1.1 The Algerian Linguistic Context

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1.1.1.1 Varieties of Arabic

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Introduction

An error analysis (EA) of a group of learners entails a close look into their linguistic background. In this sense, we will analyse the linguistic context of the Algerian learner with all throughout history.

This chapter will include a detailed description of the various elements of the Algerian linguistic scene, including Arabic, French and Berber as major components. We will also deal with such phenomena as bilinguals, borrowings and arabisation. These phenomena have significantly affected the Algerian linguistic picture and have contributed an important an important part to the present day resulting in the linguistic profile of the Algerian learner.

1.1 The Algerian Linguistic Context

Language is a set of human habits with the purpose of giving expression to thoughts and feelings and imparting them to others (Jespersen 1933). It is certainly the essential means of communication of the human world. The Algerian linguistic scene is rich with a variety of languages including Arabic, Berber, French and English.

1.1.1 Arabic

1.1.1.1 Varieties of Arabic

In Algeria, the linguistic situation is such that we can distinguish three essential varieties of Arabic: Algerian Arabic, Classical Arabic, Standard Arabic.

Algerian Arabic is the most widely spread form of Arabic; it includes lexical and phonetic regional varieties. This language form includes a great amount of Arabic vocabulary and Berber syntax. This is the result of the contact of classical Arabic and the various spoken forms of Berber during the spread of the Islamic civilisation over the North African territories invasion (Cheriguen,

1992). In terms of vocabulary, we note a great amount of borrowing from French. This is the result of the French colonisation that has lasted for a century and a half. After independence, this form of language -Algerian Arabic - could not become the official language of Algeria because it has no written form (Bouras, 1999). Speaking about the evolution of Algerian Arabic, Laraba (1992,96) says:

> *It is interesting to note the growing tendency to find*
> *lexical and structural elements from colloquial Arabic*
> *in informal writings such as correspondence.*

In spite of its non-official status, this form of language represents the everyday language of the vast majority of Algerians, whether educated or non-educated. It is without contest, the major medium of oral communication throughout the country. Even Berber, the original language of the country, could not compete it. Referring to this point, Redjala M'Barek (1972:112) says :

> *Neither Punic, nor Latin, nor even French acquired*
> *this privileged position of Arabic dialect which*
> *became popular in Algeria to the extent of usurping*
> *Berber's first place as a spoken language.*

Classical Arabic is the language of the Muslim empire , Algeria became part of in the eighth century. It is the language of the Coran , also referred to as the holy language of God. This language form has maintained itself essentially in and through its written form (Cheriguen, 2002).

Standard Arabic is the new form of Classical Arabic . It is used in education, the mass media and the various administrations. It is the official language in Algeria. In fact, Standard Arabic is the result of the effect of modernisation on classical Arabic. It is a kind of bridge between Classical

Arabic and Popular spoken Arabic – Algerian Arabic. Referring to this form of Arabic, Laraba (1992:57) says:

> *Standard Arabic is both oral and written. It is the variety used in the mass media of communication and all formal occasions. What characterises this variety is the overwhelming wish to speak or write classical Arabic. Indeed, Standard Arabic is a typical example of many deviations from classical Arabic norms and much admixture of colloquial Arabic.*

1.1.1.2 Characteristics of Arabic

Arabic belongs to the Semitic group of languages. It is characterised by its inflectional nature. The semantic value of the concept expressed lies in the "root". It is modified by the changing of vowels, the adding of some vowels and consonants and the adding of suffixes and prefixes. For instance, the verb /*akala*/ carries the general idea of "eating". It could be inflected to obtain a variety of meanings and forms as follows:

Arabic Transcription	English Equivalent
/akala/	he ate
/nakulu/	we eat
/sanakulu/	we will eat
/satakulu/	she will eat
/maku:latun/	dishes
/maku:lun/	eaten

Table 1 : Inflectional System in Arabic

The verb in standard Arabic is inflected according to number (singular, dual or plural) and gender (feminine or masculine). When it is in the form of a participial, its variation will depend on its function (subject or object).

Gender & Number / Function	Feminine	Masculine
Subject singular	/fa:?ilatun/ (¹)	/fa:?ilun/
Subject dual	/fa:?ilata:ni/	/fa:?ilani/
Subject plural	/fa:ila:tun/	/fa:?ilu:na/
Object singular	/maf ?u:latun/	/maf?u:lun/
Object dual	/maf ?u:lata:ni/	/maf?u:lani/
Object plural	/maf ?u:la:tun/	/maf?u:luna/

(¹) /fa?ala/ is the root used for the various conjugations in

Arabic

Bouras (1999:9)

Table 2 : Gender / Number/ Function

Distinction in Standard Arabic

The Arabic alphabet is made of twenty eight letters as illustrated in the following table :

Letter	Phonetic Symbol
ا	a:
ب	b
ت	t
ث	θ
ج	dj
ح	h
خ	x
د	d
ذ	ð
ر	r
ز	z

س	s
ش	ʃ
ص	S
ض	d
ط	t
ظ	Z
ع	?
غ	g
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n

هـ	h	
و	w	u :
ي	y	i :

Table 3 : Arabic Alphabet

All the characters of the Arabic alphabet are consonants. Short vowels /u/(damma), /a/ (fatha) and /i/ (kasra) are represented by symbols placed on top of or under the consonants. To transform them to long vowels, we add « ا » to obtain /a:/, « و » to obtain /u:/ and « ي » to obtain /i :/. In the absence of vowels, the symbol used is « ° » (soukoun) placed on top of the consonant.
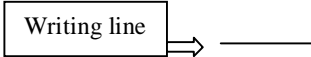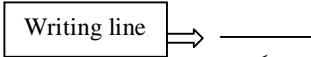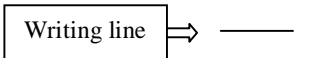
Arabic Symbol	Phonetic Symbol
Writing line ⇨ ‾‾‾	/a/
Writing line ⇨ ‾‾‾	/i/
Writing line ⇨ ‾‾‾	/u/

Table 4 : Short Vowels in Arabic

Arabic Symbol	Phonetic Symbol
ٱ	/a:/
وُ	/u:/
ي	/i:/
َ	

Table 5 : Long vowels in Arabic

When short vowels are doubled , they give the following sound except the « fatha » which must be long in order to be doubled.

Arabic Symbol	Phonetic symbol
اً	/an/
ٍ	/in/
ٌ	/un/

Table 6 : Doubled Vowels in Arabic

An essential feature of the Arabic syntax is the tense and aspect system which gives the distinction between complete and incomplete actions. This system has a different attitude to time from the English one. (Bouras,1999) This will be dealt with in detail in chapter Two.

1.1.2 Berber

Berber is a group of languages spoken in North Africa. (Morocco Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt) . In Algeria, this language is spoken by the "Imazighan"(the people who have been living in Algeria before any

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recorded history; they were called Berbers by the conquerors including the Arabs and the Europeans).

The four main Berber dialects spoken in Algeria are the kabyle, the Chaoui, the M'zabi and the Targui. Abderrahim developed a table including the various tribes, dialects and geographic positions.

Names of the Berber Tribes	Names of the Dialects	Names of the regions
1.The Kabyles	Kabyle	In Kabylia ; mountain East of Algiers.
2.The Chaouis	Chaoui	In the Aures mountain ; south West of Constantine
3.The Mozabites	Mozabite	Ghardaïa , Northern Sahara
4.TheTouaregs	Targui	In the Central Sahara, A Haggar Massif

(Abderrahim, 1978: 22)

**Table 7 : Algerian Berber Tribes, Dialects
and Geographic Positions**

Although they share some structures and vocabulary, the Berber dialects are totally distinct .The distinction can be explained in terms of geographical situation. The tribes living in distant regions, had little or no communication. In the 1970's, the recorded density of the Berber speaking community was of about three millions.. Among the four dialects , two require a specific attention; the Targui and the Kabyle. The Targui is said to be the dialect that has best survived any type of influence from any other language spoken in Algeria (Cheriguen, 2002) . The Kabylian dialect , spoken by the fifth of the Berber speaking community has become a linguistic norm. Thanks to the efforts made to bring this language back to the cultural and linguistic scene, the late 1980's saw the birth of a Kabyle speaking broadcasting station. Later, by 1996, a daily news bulletin in Kabyle could be seen on T.V at a time of high audience. The latest evolution recorded is the introduction of the Tamazight language as an optional subject of study in the public schools in the region of Kabylia in 1997. The birth of the new international Algerian channel in 1999 broadened the scope of spread of this language to a world-wide scale as it included in its programs several news bulletins and varied shows and round tables in Tamazight. A cultural raise of creativity came with the new millennium with the publication of many literary publications in this language.

Concerning the linguistic aspect, a written form using Latin characters has been developed .

Berber Notation	French Notation	API Value
a	a , e	a
i	i	i
u	ou , o	u
e short	e	e
w	ou	w
b	b	b
m	m	m
n	n	n
l	l	l
k	k , c , q	k
q	k , c, q	q
r	r	r

r	r	r emphatic
γ	gh , rh , r' , r	r
x	kh	x
h	h	h
h	h	
d	d	d
d spirant	dh , d	∂
d	dh	
t	t	t
t spirant	th	θ
ṭ	t	t emphatic
t	ts , tz	ts
s	s , ç	s
ṣ	s , ç	s emphatic

c	ch	ʃ
č	tch	t ʃ
j	j	3
g	g	g
ğ	dj , j	d3
y	y	j
ԑ	aa	
z	z	z
z	z	z emphatic
ž	dz	dz

Table 8 : The Tamazight Alphabet (Cheriguen 2002 : 23)

1.1.3 French

When the French colonisation of Algeria started in1830, it found a rich and varied linguistic context including Classical Arabic, Algerian Arabic, Berber and Sabir (a mixture of Arabic, French, Italian, Spanish and Greek spoken in the port coast regions) .

At that time, Arabic literacy was of about 40 to 50 % of the whole population. (Djite, 1992). Arabic was taught in the medersas (educational vocation) and the zaouias and mosques (religious vocation). But these kinds of establishments hardly survived the French policy, for example, the Jules Ferry law of 1872 stipulating that the French primary school was obligatory. In addition to that, the French language was becoming the language of administration and social promotion , reducing Arabic and Berber to the status of vernacular Languages. As Djite (1992: 17) states it : « The French imposed a system of direct administration, seized control of the educational system and undertook to displace Arabic".

Since 1962, the date of the Algerian independence, many efforts have been displayed to bring back Arabic to its strategic position . A good example of this is the policy of arabization . In spite of this, it must be recognised that French never disappeared from the Algerian linguistic scene. Up to now, for the intellectual elite of the country (especially those who have been educated in French) French remains the most spontaneous means of communication in a professional environment. This part of the society is bilingual with a preference for Algerian Arabic as means of oral expression when dealing with local contextual realities (Lanly, 1962) and French for oral reference to scientific, technical or institutional realities .In fact, the quantity of language items coming from Arabic or from French will vary depending on the referee theme of the

piece of expression produced. French will be the essential means of written expression for these people.

Concerning this aspect, Djite (1992: 2) says :

> *There is an overriding attitude of the elite who regard French as an " habitude de société" a part of their culture that they find very difficult to deny. To this day many of them purchase parabolic antennas and transcoders to view French television programs.*

It must be mentioned that in 2004, the French programs are no longer exclusive to this elite. They are now part of the everyday life of the whole Algerian community. The educational policy with its decision to introduce French earlier (2nd year)to the primary school brings back French to the cultural and linguistic scene more strongly then ever before (the rejection factor has disappeared because the colonisation element is no longer characteristic of the French language). On the contrary , it seems to represent, in the minds of the people, a feature of modernisation, culture and update.

1.2 Languages in Contact in Algeria: Bilingualism and Borrowings

Arabic and French in contact in Algeria gave birth to a kind of transplantation of the language that goes beyond simple borrowing. This bilingualism has been practised with the mixture of Arabic and French words within the limits of a sentence. This phenomenon is apparent in oral communication when reference to French terms with the topic involved is scientific, technical or institutional. When the reference of the discussion is a local reality , the amount of Arabic terms used will grow higher. The use of idiomatic expressions of one of the languages when the other represents the

essential medium of communication can also justify the resulting mixed piece of language.

This kind of language is used very spontaneously by the community without any effort or consciousness on the part of the speakers. Borrowings and linguistic metamorphosis are sociolinguistic phenomena. According to Lanly (1962), the contact between human societies leads to an evolution of the values and a long modification of the forms. In agreement with this, Marcellesi and Gardin (1974) believe that when a linguistic fact involving when an old form of living or thinking is in contradiction with a new one resulting from social or economic change, the result will be a modification of the linguistic structure.

According to Meillet (1924), borrowings are particularly notable when they occur between two very different languages . He says that the case of Arabic and French is a particularly interesting one. In agreement with this, Cheriguen (2002) says that borrowings can take diverse proportions and that it would be difficult to delimit the range of vocabulary shared by the two speech communities.

1.3 Arabization

Arabization is the process of bringing back Arabic to a strategic position on the linguistic scene of the country. After independence, the leaders of the country were particularly concerned with restoring the cultural identity of the country. Arabic was , of course, an essential variable to be considered in the process. As described by Djite (1992 : 21) : " In the Tripoli program of June 1962, the FLN* restated that the role of the revolution was to restore Arabic, the very expression of the cultural values of the country, its dignity and its sufficiency as a language of civilisation".

_____

* Front de liberation National : National liberation Front

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The policy was to be introduced progressively because the small educated class of the country was instructed in French. Nyrop (1972:122) refers to this aspect as follows : " …having adopted a deliberately moderate and pragmatic position on the language issue , the Boumedienne government is not likely to enact drastic measures". This policy was in perfect harmony with the socialist trend of the country. As Ageron (1974: 122-123) states it clearly : " It is not possible to build socialism without arabizing".

A progressive program with smooth steps was to be applied . The following table shows the first initiatives to be put into practice :

Date	Step
1964	1. Creation of a school of translation
1968	1. All administrations had to prove themselves competent in Arabic. 2. Arabization of media (time allocated to French speaking programs dropped to 43 %). 3. Arabization at the university (Literature, philosophy, history).
1973	1. Progress in the arabization process at the university level (Geography, sociology, pedagogy) in addition to a partial arabization of 40 % of the students in the faculties of law in Algiers, Constantine and Oran.
1974	1. Public Primary school system arabized , French was to be taught as a second language starting from the third year. 2. Arabization of al the literary subject at the secondary school level.

Table 9: The Evolutionary Steps in the Arabisation Process

The progression went on until the BAC (exam of the end of the secondary cycle and leading to the university) was to be taken in all specialities in Arabic in 1990. At the university level , very few technical subjects remain to be taught in French : a field still dominated by French is biology and all its branches.

T.V parabolic programs that we referred to as maintainers of French in the Algerian growing generation, are also playing an essential part in developing the Arab Islamic culture thanks to the middle east programs that constitute a rich cultural and linguistic bath and to which all the population is very attracted.

Conclusion

After having explored the linguistic scene in Algeria, we can say that the unifying element in all this diversity for the growing generations is Standard Arabic in Writing and Algerian Arabic in oral communication. In relation to the learners' production of a piece of writing in a foreign language, Standard Arabic needs to be considered in the acquisition process and evaluated as a variable in the production process.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PLACE OF TENSE AND ASPECT
IN GRAMMAR

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Introduction

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Conclusion

Introduction

Grammar is the skeleton of language , it is the set of rules upon which it is built. Learning tense and aspect is part of learning grammar. This process is influenced by the teaching method and the role played by the teacher

Tense and aspect are obligatory categories in the sense that whenever we encode an event through a piece of language , we need to select one tense or another, one aspectual category or another. They represent two angles of vision on our experience of events in time. However, these systems are language specific. Thus , they can be problematic to the learners of a FL, especially if it has a system different from that of the source language. This can be applicable to Algerian learners of English. In this chapter, we will see in detail how tense and aspect function in English then in Arabic. We will investigate the areas that can be problematic to the learners due to an absence of equivalence between the two systems, either at the level of form or at the level of meaning.

2.1 Grammar

2.1.1 Definition

Grammar is viewed by the research community as a multidimensional phenomenon involving elements like, meaning, language use and language learning. Batstone (1994: 224)conceives it as :

> *…essentially a formal framework, a set of categories and forms which helps us to see language as structured and systematic…or a source which language users exploit as they navigate their way through discourse*

Grammar is thus looked at from the product or the process perspective as Batstone (1994, 224-225) explains

> *The fundamentally analytic way of looking at grammar has been enormously influential in language teaching where it is often called a product perspective...looked at this way (through discourse), we can observe how grammar impinges on the choices language users make, how it is called upon in different ways at different points through the flow of language use and how grammar helps us to make our developing meanings more precise...I refer to this as the process perspective*

What does grammar involve exactly? Hudson (1992: 27) claims that there are no natural boundaries to grammar. However, the most common aspects of a word to be covered by grammar, he says, are:

> *1.classes to which they belong (eg, nouns)*
>
> *2.abstract distinctions that are sometimes signalled by those word-structure differences (eg, singular versus plural);*
>
> *3.abstract relations among words in sentences, which I have called their grammatical function (eg, subject);*
>
> *4.order in which words occur(eg, 'too' + adjective precedes 'a';*
>
> *5.certain parts of word meaning, when those can be related to other matters listed earlier (eg, the difference between 'dog' and 'dogs);*

6.relations between the meanings of words in a sentence (eg, the different roles of 'dogs' and 'cats' in 'dogs chase cats');

7.informational structures signalled for instance by differences in word order (eg, the difference between 'I can't stand cats' and 'cats I can't stand');

8.register differences between word patterns (eg, this is Dick Hudson here' used only on the telephone, versus the synonymous 'I'm Dick Hudson' used elsewhere').

Other aspects which have, sometimes, a direct effect on grammar are stress and intonation. Putting the stress on a syllable rather than another of the same word could change this word from one category (word class) to another. For example

Works ‾‾‾ Verb (present simple, third person singular).

Works ‾‾‾ Noun (plural).

Giving a rising intonation pattern to an affirmative declarative sentence makes it sound interrogative.

For example:

He has come   Affirmative (neutral intonation).

He has come   Interrogative (rising intonation).

2.1.2 Contemporary History of Grammar

Grammar has been subject to investigation and analysis from the very ancient times to the present day. In this section, we will focus on the contemporary history of grammar.

2.1.2.1 Grammar in the Nineteenth Century

In the nineteenth century, grammar was known as Diachronic grammar. Lyons (1981:35)defines it as

> *a diachronic description of language traces the historical development of the language and records the changes that have taken place in it between successive points in time.*

The nineteenth century knew the birth of many historical and comparative linguists. Among these theoreticians, we can site Ramsus Rask (1787-1832), Jacob Grimm (1785-1867), August Shleicher (1821-1868), Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), and many others.

These grammarians were not interested in bringing pedagogical recommendations to the grammar teachers and learners. As stated by Moumene (2004: 39):

> *...Historical linguists were not interested in the well known traditional grammar which served as a pedagogical aid in learning languages, they were exclusively concerned with a scientific method, the objective of which was to*

> *compare languages and classify them into groups an d families in order to find their common ancestor. Apparently, this new enterprise did not have any direct application in the field of education and the teaching of grammar in that period.*

Despite the prevailing dominance of Historical Diachronic Linguistics during that period, the educational community with its grammarians, teachers and learners remained convinced that grammar is an essential element for language learning.

Describing the nineteenth century grammar textbooks, Richards and Rodgers (1986:2) say:

> *By the nineteenth century, this approach based on the study of Latin had become a standard way of studying foreign languages in schools. A typical textbook in the mid-nineteenth century thus consisted of chapters or lessons organised around grammar points. Each grammar point was listed, rules on its use were explained and it was illustrated by sample sentences.*

2.1.2.2 Grammar in the Twentieth Century

By the end of the nineteenth century, the linguistic community came to realise that the prevailing approach of that time was not appropriate for the study of language. This raise of consciousness led to the Synchronic linguistics.

After the publication of *Cours de Linguistique Générale* by Ferdinand de Saussure in 1916, Synchronic linguistics saw sound and grounded development. As stated by Moumene (2004:40): " Modern linguistics came on the scene as a reaction against both traditional grammar and Historical linguistics". This new position was mainly focussing on scientific methodology, i.e., observation, hypothesis, experimentation and then theory. Allen (1958: 32) states:

> *Linguistics is the scientific study of language. It is inductive, objective, tentative, and systematic; it is concerned with reportable facts, methods, and principles; it works by means of observation, hypotheses, experiments, postulates, and inferences, its products are descriptive verbal or algebraic statements about language.*

In this period, the words grammar and linguistics were used interchangeably. As described by Moumene (2004: 41):

> *In the course of the twentieth century, the words 'grammar' and 'linguistics' are sometimes used interchangeably . One may say historical grammar or historical linguistics, comparative grammar or comparative linguistics, structural grammar or structural linguistics. Of course, although some linguists are fully aware that they are dealing with linguistics.…, they had rather utilised the word 'grammar'. The following linguistic theories are by no means strange: Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar,*

Fillmore's   Case   Grammar,   Pike's
Stratificational Grammar.

The twentieth century saw the birth of numerous grammatical models North America and Western Europe. All of them were in strong opposition to the traditional and historical grammar. In North America, Bloomfield developed Descriptive Linguistics, Harris developed Distribution Analysis, Pike developed Tagmemics, Lamb developed Stratificational Grammar, Chomsky developed Transformational Generative Grammar, Fillmore developed Case Grammar, Lakoff, McCawly, Postal and Ross developed Generative Semantics, and Katz developed Interpretative Semantics. In Western Europe, many schools of linguistics were growing. Among them ,we can speak about the Geneva school, mainly associated with de Saussure, the Copenhagen school developed by Hjelmslev, the Prague school initiated by Mathesius and the London school founded by Firth.

Grammar pedagogy experienced a wind of revival in the second half of the twentieth century. As stated by Moumene (2004:44):

> *The second half of the twentieth century has been marked by a new look at the scope of grammar pedagogy. It is by no means always the parts of speech and sentences in isolation which exclusively receive the lion's share, but other units larger than the sentence begin to attract the attention of language specialists who set about studying semantic, pragmatic, functional and discoursal factors.*

2.1.3 Schools of Grammar

All along its history, grammar has been widening the scope of its coverage of the characteristics of the linguistic elements it was describing and analysing.

Starting with form and moving to content, distinguishing *langue* from *parole* and *competence* from *performance.* It has considered the genetic and biological foundations of language, its rule governed creativity as well has its social dimension giving birth to *communicative competence* and *cultural awareness.* The sum of all these elements makes-up the grounding of the three essential schools of grammar: traditional grammar, structural grammar, transformational (generative) grammar.

2.1.3.1 Traditional Grammar

Traditional grammar has started in the fourth century B.C with the study of Greek and Latin. Grammatical distinctions which constitute the foundations of today's grammar have been elaborated: words classified according to number (singular/plural), gender (masculine, feminine, neutral), patterns of inflection, tense, voice (active/passive) and mood distinctions, transitive and intransitive verbs, the function of the nominative and oblique cases. Speech was divided into noun, verb, participle, article, pronoun, preposition, adverb and conjunction. In 1660, Port Royal Grammaire Générale et Raisonée developed the philosophy that the structure of language is the product or reason and that all the languages of the world belong to one universal logical and rational system. By the end of the eighteenth century, a number of scholars have noted that there were similarities between words in English, German, Celtic, Greek and some other European and Middle east Languages. They brought the idea that all these languages belong to a common origin which came to be known as the Indo European family of languages. This gave rise to the general theory on linguistic relationships and language change.

Traditional grammar books written during the twentieth century by such authors as Sweet, Curme, Poutsma and Jespersen and school books written by such authors as Nesfield and Lindley were essentially criticised for the subjectivity of their methods and for what were considered too simple versions

of grammar to use in schools. The grammatical definitions found in such books were considered imprecise, notional in their definitions (by notional we mean the description of the relationship between the words and the real-world phenomena they refer to). In addition to this, the work of the grammarians of that period suffered a flagrant lack of coherent theoretical grounding leading to logical conclusions.

It must be noted that modern linguistics give much interest to the methods used in traditional grammar, particularly concerning the description of the abstract system of rules underlying the surface form of utterances. Al-Mutawa and Kahlani (1989: 70) sum-up the impact of traditional grammar as they say:

> *the contribution of traditional grammar to foreign language learning is considerable. Thus, along with the practical definitions of the parts of speech, it also gives useful definitions of the basic structures such as phrases, clauses and sentences. Furthermore, it provides the teacher with simple rules to teach the language. Probably, for some reasons, traditional grammar is still used in one form or another in foreign language classes.*

2.1.3.2 Structural Grammar

Structural grammar started with Ferdinand Dessausure (1916). He based his description of language on two concepts: *langue* and *parole*. *Langue* refers to the set of passively acquired habits of the members of the language community acquired in conformity with the conventions of that community enabling them to understand other speakers of the community. *Parole* includes all what the speakers might say – his utterances whether spoken or written.
Structural grammar demonstrates how all the forms and meanings are interrelated at a particular point in time in a particular language system (Lyons,

1974); it considers the relationships existing between the entities rather than what is within the entities themselves. The Prague school (1926) with scholars such as Trubetzkoy and Yackobson hold the view that the phonological, grammatical and semantic structure of languages is determined by the functions performed in the society they operate in. The description of the different aspects of a language has to be done in relation to where the language is used. Bloomfield and his followers maintain that Structural Grammar is descriptive. This is claimed by Al-Mutawa and Kahlani (1989:70):

> *This type of grammar is descriptive. It postulates that language has a set of grammatical patterns in which words are arranged to convey meaning which is determined by word form, function words, word order and intonation patterns such as stress, pitch and junctions.*

Descriptive structural grammarians have analysed the structures of sentences and the lexical as well as the functional form of their constituents. They have developed a variety of strategies which resulted in Immediate Constituent Grammar, Systemic Functional Grammar, Tagmemic Grammar, Phrase-Structure grammar. Class words, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs,…etc, carry the basic lexical meaning and inflect to express varieties of that meaning, for example, boy-boys, happy-happiness-happily-happier. However, not all words ending in 's' are plural, as there are plural words which do not take an 's' at the end [eg, children (plural), news(singular)]. This means that defining words by their forms can be misleading. The part of speech a word belongs to varies according to its function in the sentence (eg, 'hard' can be an adjective or an adverb depending on the context (eg, he learns <u>hard</u> (adjective) <u>rules </u>(noun)/ he <u>works</u> (verb) <u>hard</u> (adverb)). When we analyse parts of speech, we should consider several factors underlying grammar signals, word order, inflectional

and derivational suffixes. To find the function of a word, we need to look at it in the perspective of the piece of language it belongs to (phrase, sentence).

 This way of looking at language plays an essential part to teach the different structural as well as morphological variations of language, as it facilitates the substitution of elements and their replacing by others.

2.1.3.3 Transformational (Generative) Grammar

Transformational (Generative) Grammar was introduced in 1957 by Chomsky. It is called *generative* because it generates structures and «makes a precise distinction between the structures that it allows and those that it does not»(Hudson, 1992, 18). Defining this type of grammar, Richard (1985: 145) says:

> *The theory of transformational grammar captured our ability to realise propositions in sentence structure through rules for the construction of words, phrases and clauses; through the choice of grammatical categories, such as subject, predicate and complement; and through grammatical processes such as ellipsis pronominalisation, reordering and transformation.*

Chomsky's theory is based on the belief that language systems are productive in the sense that from these grammatical processes of transformation, we can get an infinite number of meaningful sentences. Basing himself on this viewpoint, he considers that language learning is not a simple initiation process based on a stimulus response pattern as advocated by behaviourism. Language production , according to him, is free from stimulus control. The creative aspect of the brain has an important role in the language acquisition data. This creativity is rule-governed in the sense that the utterances we produce have a

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grammatical structure; they obey rules of well-formedness. This constitutes the basic principle of Transformational (Generative) Grammar.

Chomsky introduced the concepts of *competence* and *performance*. Linguistic competence is an «…abstract system underlying behaviour, a system constituted by rules that interact to determine the form and intrinsic meaning of the potentially infinite number of sentences» (Chomsky,1972a: 197). Performance, on the other hand, is related to language behaviour involving psychological and physiological mechanisms used to build-up utterances resulting from the underlying mental reality competence. The distinction between *competence* and *performance* , as drawn by Chomsky (1972b), is similar to De Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole* in that the two separate between what is linguistic and what is not. However, Chomsky gives a valuable status to syntax considering that sentences must be well-formed syntactically, an essential part of linguistic competence, Whereas De saussure does not make any specific reference to the rules used to build-up the sentences. The relation between *competence* and *performance* is disturbed, Nofal (1988) argues, by noises of the system i.e., the grammatically irrelevant condition s such as memory limitations, motivation, interest, tiredness.

The concept of competence, which originally covered the syntactic and grammatical dimensions, was extended to communicative competence. Jackobovits (1971: 242) defines it as :

> *(a) Paralinguistic factors (how the*
>   *speaker says something).*
> *(b) Kinesic factors (the different values*
>   *related to say a certain facial gesture).*
> *(c) Sociolinguistic factors that pertain to*
>   *the socio-economic background.*
> *(d) Psycholinguistic factors such as the*

resentment the foreigner feels among

the native speakers...

Hymes (1972; quoted by Richards, 1985: 145) used the term communicative competence «…to refer to knowledge both of rules of grammar, vocabulary, and semantics, and the rules of speaking – the patterns of sociolinguistic behaviour of the speech community».

Indeed, knowing a language involves much more than the mastery of its formal rules. Wolfson (1983: 61) argues that:

…knowing when it is appropriate to open a conversation and how, what topics are appropriate to particular speech events, which forms of address are to be used, to whom and in which situations, and how such speech acts as greetings, compliments are to be given, interpreted and responded to.

Transformational (generative) Grammar is not commonly used at the level of the Algerian secondary school because it requires the manipulation of symbols, numbers, abbreviations and formula-like description which makes it too difficult for learners to understand (Al-Mutawa and kahlani, 1989). Through this approach, the language learner will need to master the process of *Induction* (extracting the rule from the form) and *Deduction* (extracting the form from the rule) because, as observed by Scott (1965: 9), «…if this were not so, then one could never utter sentences unless one heard an absolutely identical one previously». Besides,

it is really difficult to think that foreign language learners will acquire proficiency in all the language skills beside catching something of the cultural content

of the target language which count as two of the highly
–cherished- goals amongst the course designers of our
time (Nofal, 1988: 76)

2.1.4 Teaching Methods

2.1.4.1 Overview of the Language Teaching Methods

The twentieth century has been the scene of considerable evolution in the field of language teaching methodology. The Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method and the audio-lingual method have all preceded what used to be known as the age of methods (comprising the last decades of the century) (Richards and Rogers, 1986). Many researchers reacted to this over-prosperous period of birth teaching methods. They introduced the notion of no-method teaching. They considered that the era of methods was over. Rogers (2000: 3) says: « Inevitably, a reaction set in to what some saw as scatter-fire approaches to language teaching, leading to an 'anti-methods' view of language». Long (1989) stated that methods do not matter because they do not exist. Woodward (1996) noted that the profession is now in a period of post-method thinking.

As an alternative to method centred teaching, some believed that methodology should focus on general good language teaching principles derived from research and observation (Brown, 1994) . Another alternative proposed was to build models of the practices of expert and experienced teachers to be followed by less experienced ones (Freeman, 1992).

Recent developments in the field of teaching methodology have taken into consideration such variables as the psychological profile, the emotional charge, the sense of leadership, self-esteem, the situational and social context…etc (Weber, 2005). Rodgers (2000: 3) makes some predictions about the new millennium methodology of language teaching through the observations of the

evolution that occurred all along the twentieth century. According to him, there are ten possible orientations which he describes as follows:

1. Teacher/Learner Collaboration: Using matchmaking techniques to link learners and teachers who have

 similar styles and approaches to language learning.

2.Method Synergistics: Crossbreeding elements of various methods to find those practices which best support

 effective learning.

 3.Curriculum Developmentalism: Viewing methodology as an integrated component in a larger view of instructional design.

4.Content basics: Assuming that language learning a by-product of a focus on meaning, on acquiring some specific topical content.

5.Multi-intelligencia: Basing instruction on a 'multi-intelligences' view, in which different approaches play

 to different learner talents.

6. Total Functional Response: Reconstructing the Notional/Functional idea with some new systemic twists.

7.Strategopedia: Teaching learners the strategies they need so that they can learn on their own.

8.Lexical Phraseology: Recrafting both the nature and substance of language learning (LL) to focus on lexical phrases and collocations.

9.0-zone Whole language: Engaging all aspects of language study -literature, language history, linguistic analysis, and so forth – in support of second language learning.

10.Full-Frontal-Communicativity: Engaging all aspects of human communicative capacities –expression, gesture, tone, and so forth in support of second language learning.

Is the use of the First language (L1) a help or a hindrance to FL learning. Greenbaum (1988: 32) believes that:

> *…the foreign learner's first language is both a help and a hindrance to their learning of English: a help because they understand the nature of language and can draw analogies with the patterns and processes of their own languages; a hindrance because sometimes the analogies are false.*

Taking this into consideration, we should work on the development of «…an interlingua or facilitating bridge between the two languages»(James, 1994: 213), which is an error-avoiding facilitator and make use of the L1 rules:

> *…showing them that they know already something that superficially might appear to be exotic in the L2, but has parallels in the L1. We have to show*

> *learners that parts of the FL grammar are already*
> *theirs, and they are its. (ibid.)*

The learner's L1 , whether close to the FL or very distant from it, has an effect on the learning of the FL. In agreement with this view, Decoo (1996: 112) argues:

> *If the mother tongue of the student knows*
> *identical distinctions, it would be unreasonable*
> *not to recognise the transfer effect. If this is not*
> *the case, the distance to the mother tongue could*
> *be evaluated in order to see to what extent*
> *transfer effect can help or disturb the learning*
> *process*

2.1.4.2 Explicit versus Implicit Grammar Teaching

The various schools of grammar provide us with the various viewpoints related to the concept of grammar. This enables us to consider how grammar should be taught. Should we teach grammar explicitly-deductively or implicitly-inductively? Dekeyzer (1995: 379) argues that the nature of the subject determines the manner in which it will be taught.

> *…explicit deductive learning would be better than*
> *implicit inductive learning for straight forward*
> *categorical rules, and implicit inductive learning*
> *would be better that explicit deductive learning for*
> *fuzzy rules…Whereas inductive can be either implicit*
> *or explicit, deductive learning is necessarily explicit.*

Explicit teaching, Schmidt (1990: 49) argues, is the deliberate study of a grammar rule, either by deductive analysis or by inductive analogy. It refers to

those instructional strategies employed to raise learners' consciousness of the form or structure of the target language (TL) (Tsay-Yu-Chen, 1995).

In the Explicit Method, the grammatical rule of pattern is explicitly stated at the beginning of the lesson then follow examples and exercises. Sometimes,

> *the students first encounter various examples, often sentences, sometimes embedded in a text. The conscious discovery of the grammar is then directed by the teacher: on the basis of examples, he normally asks a few questions and the students are led to discover and formulate the rules. (Decco, 1996: 97)*

The situation in which Explicit teaching has been found appropriate have been the source of debate.

> *The rules that we can learn and carry around in our heads for use as a monitor are not those that are the earliest acquired, nor are they those that are important for communication. Rather, they are simple rules, rules that are easiest to describe and remember. (Krashen, 1982: 97)*

Reber (1989) supports Krashen's view. He claims that conscious explicit learning is only effective when the structures are simple and salient to the learner's mind.

In fact, it seems that the problem between the word rules and explicit teaching is descriptive. The rule statement requires the description of the grammatical phenomenon and the conditions of its occurrence, which is not easy to do with the fuzzy rules. As stated by James (1994: 207):

…those forms that perhaps do not need to be explained because they are obvious can be taught, whereas, conversely, those that are hard and need to be taught are not easy to describe.

Hulstijn and Graff (1994) claim that the rules that should be taught explicitly are the complex rules, those with a large scope and high reliability, and those for the teaching of which we cannot rely on simple item memorisation and analogy.

It has been found that the use of the Explicit method raises consciousness of grammar rules, which is necessary before acquiring the ability to control these rules automatically. McLaughlin and McLead (1983) point-out that complex skills become automatic only after earlier use of controlled processes. Dekeyser (1997: 218) found that:

…the sequence of explicit rule learning , followed by a short period of activities focussed on using explicit knowledge during performance of the target skills, and finally by a long period of repeated opportunities to use that knowledge is likely to yield knowledge that is highly automatized.

This explains why Scott (1989) noticed that the students exposed to explicit grammar performed better than those exposed to implicit grammar and why Decco (1996: 98) maintains that : « Explicit teaching works preferably for mature, well-motivated students, or for adult students in intensive courses». Robinson (1996)considers that explicit teaching is appropriate for both simple and complex structures. He argues that «Explicit learning of simple and complex stimulus domains is possible if the underlying rules are made salient».(Robinson, op-cit: 27).

In the Implicit Method, the student learns the language without resorting to the rules:

> *Implicit learning occurs without concurrent awareness of what is being learned, through memorisation of instances, inferring of rules without awareness or both. (Dekeyzer, 1995: 380)*

Implicit learning works on the principles of similarity-based generalisations (Rumelhart, 1989), a process involving the drawing of analogies between the various language items present in a specific grammar lesson. Learners instructed under the Implicit Method can classify the structures as grammatical or ungrammatical; in other words, they can learn rules underlying the grammatical pattern , but they cannot state the exact rules which govern the correctness or incorrectness of a given form (they cannot think in terms of rules). A number of cognitive psychologists have shown that learners can grasp complex structures but remain unable to verbalise or describe them.

In what situation do we use the Implicit Method? Krashen (1994) maintains that hard rules and complex structures are most efficiently taught through this method. However, as the application of the Implicit Method requires massive input, it consequently needs a larger scope of time. As stated by Robinson (1996: 52):

> *Longer periods of exposure to greater quantities of input may also have improved implicit and incidental learning, particularly given Krashen's characterisation of acquisition as a process that takes more time than instructed learning,*

requiring massive exposure to comprehensible input.

2.1.4.3 The Role of Grammar and the Grammar Teacher

It is agreed on among language teachers that «Grammar is the means through which linguistic creativity is ultimately achieved» (Wilkins, 1976: 22). The role of grammar according to Greenbaum (1988: 31) is:

> *...to provide some control in the early stages in the acquisition of English. At a later stage, it can help to guide students away from permanently internalising wrong generalisations about English.*

Learners build-up hypothetical rules from the language data which is given to them. Some of those rules are correct whereas others are not. Through further exposure to the FL, the incorrect rules are modified.

> *...the teaching of grammar can add to , confirm or modify the hypothetical rules, which the learners discover by themselves. The newly added rules together with the confirmed and modified ones can then help the learners in achieving accuracy and creativity and hence linguistic competence. (Mohammed, 1996: 284).*

Linguistic competence cannot develop unless an awareness of the language has been developed (Abderrahim, 1996).

Grammar has occupied a central position in language teaching. Although great changes have occurred concerning theoretical linguistics as well as

teaching methodology during the last decades, the teaching material remains largely built on grammatical grounds. Richard (1985) noticed that despite the impact the communicative approaches have had on methodology in recent years, a bulk of the world's Second Language (L2) and FL learners continue to learn from materials in which the principles of organisation and presentation are grammatically based. Teachers «…have lost none of their faith in the value of grammar teaching»(Green & Hetch, 1996: 168). They notice that grammatical structures are very important to determine the right punctuation of a given piece of language. Clifford and Higgs (1982; in Richards, 1985: 156) found that grammar has more importance than the other aspects which make-up language proficiency : vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and sociolinguictic factors at various levels in the process of acquisition.

Should we concentrate on the teaching of grammar and neglect the other elements? Richards (1985: 157) supports the idea that: « Grammatical skills are seen as a component of language proficiency rather than as an end in itself».

The foreign language teacher is the most essential source of information for the learners. He plays several roles. He is the guide, the explainer, the presenter, the interlocutor, the receptor, the producer, the corrector, the assessor,… etc. To cover all these functions is not an easy task, and to cover all of them adequately is even one step more difficult. The teacher must have a good mastery of the language s/he is teaching. For this, the knowledge of grammar is a necessary condition.

> *…teachers need an understanding of grammar as offering a tool either for prescriptive or descriptive; which they need a set of concepts, and a metalanguage, which will allow them to deal with pragmatic, discoursal and the rhetorical features of texts , as well as with sentence level features. (Mitchell, 1994: 222)*

They must be «…both confident in their grammatical knowledge and confident that they know how to share their conceptual map of language as a system with their pupils in a productive way». (ibid.).

However, it should be noted that grammar rules are sometimes inconsistent and the teachers are very often confronted with examples contradicting the rules. Thus, instead of being disturbed by such discrepancies, the teacher should tell the students that they may en counter such situations in their learning of the language grammar and that this is part of the learning process. About the inconsistency of the grammatical rules, Abderrahim (1996: 41) says:

> *Grammar is a set of rules used to describe the language. These rules are not always very precise, nor systematic…This is very important information the students should have right from the beginning.*

So, knowing the grammar of the language is important for the language teacher, but it is not enough. The teacher must know how to transmit this knowledge to the students. The language teacher, being an essential input element in the teaching process, he must have an important role to play as regards the difficulty that the differences between the mother tongue (MT) and FL can cause. Concerning this point, Mitchell (1994: 222) argues that «… foreign language teachers need to be ready to comment on key points of contrast between mother tongue and target language».

2.2 Tense and Aspect

2.2.1 Tense and Aspect in English

2.2.1.1 Definitions

2.2.1.2 Tense

Tense is represented by some language expressions changing form to convey information about the time location of the topic situations(Comrie , 1985). It is a grammatical form referring to a set of grammatical markings which are used to relate the time of the events described in a sentence to the moment when the words are uttered. Tense is , thus deictic, that is it points towards time now or time then . In this sense, as Salaberry and Shiray (2002:2) say, « Tense is a deictic category that places a situation in time with respect to some other time, usually the moment of speech». Greenbaum (1991) defines tense as the form taken by the verb so that it indicates the time at which the events described are taking place. Strang (1974,134) who shares this view, argues :

> *Tense is anyone of the verb forms in the conjugation of the verb which serve to indicate the different times at which the action is viewed as happening or existing.*

Downing and Locke (1992: 352) consider that :

> *Tense primarily involves visualising events as points in a sequence, preceding or following a central point which is usually the present moment.*

They also see that :

> *Tense systems are language specific and vary*
> *from one   language to another, both in the*
> *number of tenses they distinguish and in the way*
> *in which these reflect temporal reference.*

Aspect «concerns the different perspectives which a speaker can take and express   with regard to the temporal course of some event, action, process, etc»(Klein, 1994:16). It is the grammatical form which depicts how an action unfolds. Strang (1974:143) defines aspect as :

> *Any one of the several groups of forms in the*
> *conjugation of the verb which serve to indicate*
> *the manner in which the «action» denoted by the*
> *verb is considered as being carried out.*

In other words, aspect does not refer to when an action is done (i.e. the time of the action) but rather to the moment of speaking or to a specific point of reference, how this action is done, the internal nature of the events. Downing and Locke (1992: 333) explain that aspect: «…focuses on such contrasts as durative (extending in time) or non-durative , whether the event is seen in its initial stage or its final stage , whether it is completed or uncompleted and that it :

> *…involves the notion of boundness: whether the*
> *action is visualised as having limits or not,*
> *whether it is seen as an ongoing process or   as*
> *completed. Different aspects will center on the*
> *expression of the beginning, middle or end points*
> *of the event or action.*
>
> (*Downing and Locke, ibid.: 352)*

The notion of tense in English includes to basic distinctions: They are the *past* versus *non-past* distinction, and the *absolute* versus *relative* distinction.

2.2.1.2.1 Tense Distinctions

All tenses of English map time with points of reference roughly indicating the relation of one time to another (Lyons, 1974; Leech, 1987; Downing & Locke, 1992). The primary point of orientation is either the moment of speaking «now», or the moment at which the speaker imagines himself to be speaking. As described by Hoffman (1993: 121) : «*In principle, tense shows when an event happens: before now(happenED), right now(is happenING), after now(will happen) or even all the time(happenS)*»

The past is all that comes « before now». This form is morphologically and semantically marked. Concerning the morphological aspect, the vast majority of verbs have a distinctive past form(*stem + ed* for regular verbs and irregular form for irregular verbs). Semantically speaking, the past tense refers to an action that is visualised as remote either in time or in unreality (Downing & Locke, 1992). Distinguishing past and present , Hoffman (1993,125) explains that the past :

> *…does not have any special connection to the present time, i.e. the moment of speaking and really means [not-preterit]. This so called «present tense» is commonly used for future events that are taken as assumed facts…It can also be used for past events if no time is mentioned.*

The present (also referred to as the non-past) can refer to right now, after now or all the time. It can be used to make a special reference to a future event

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but not normally to a past event (Downing & Locke, 1992).

In English, we have two tenses: past and present. They are used to express the three references to time: past, present and future. We cannot really speak about a future tense because it is morphologically parallel to those verbs that express our inner attitudes, the modal verbs. (Blair, 1984). The future cannot be included in the tense system because of its uncertain nature. (Lock, 1996). The future is expressed by means of the function word WILL, and this can only be included under modality. This must be due to the closeness of the future to modal meanings such as likelihood and intention.

The conceptualisation of tense brings two essential and complementary notions: absolute tense and relative tense. Absolute tense specifies a relationship between speech time and event time: event time prior to speech time defines past , event time simultaneous with speech time identifies present and event time subsequent to speech time identifies future (Comrie, 1985; Weist, 2002). This is what we were referring to as the deictic nature of tense. In fact, for absolute tense, the deictic centre is the time of the speech act.

Relative tense specifies the relationship between event time and reference time. Absolute _ relative tenses include an additional link to speech time . The past perfect , for instance, has an event time prior to a reference time and a reference time prior to a speech time (Comrie 1985).

Every tense form has a relative tense and an absolute tense. Lock (1996) believes that there are three absolute tenses:

- Present: at the moment of speaking or writing or an extended period including the moment of speaking or writing.
- Past: before the moment of speaking or writing.

- Future: after the moment of speaking or writing.

and two relative tenses:

- Present: at the same time as the absolute tense selection.

- Past: before the absolute tense selection.

Lock represents this conceptualisation in the following table :

Relative Tense	Absolute Tense	Example	Usual Name
Present in	Present	Is walking	Present continuous/progressive
Past in	Present	Has walked	Present perfect
Present in	Past	Was walking	Past continuous/progressive
Past in	Past	Had walked	Past Perfect
Present in	Future	Will be walking	Future continuous progressive
Past in	Future	Will have walked	Future perfect

Table 10: Absolute and Relative Tense Selections (Lock,1996: 149)

2.2.1.2.2 Tense and Time Reference

Time is an important research topic in logic. Many researchers have worked on the way temporal information can be conveyed (Van Benthem, 1991; Gabbay,Hodkinson & Reynolds, 1994; Gabbay, Reynolds and Finger,2000).Time is shared by all human beings.

whatever their language is, whereas tense varies from one language to another (Jespersen,1933). According to Huddeleston (1988), tense is grammatical, and time is the semantic basis for the grammatical category of tense. He believes that a language has tense if it has a set of systematically contrasting verb inflections with the primary semantic function of relating the time of the grammaticalization of time relations, and he describes it as a grammatical category with time relations as its semantic basis.

Time is the essential element in probably all actions and events. We specify when something took place relative to the time of speaking or writing and we may specify other time related factors, such as whether an event (or action) was instantaneous or lasted over a period of time. (Jackson,1990: 76-77) believes that :

> *States, too, are specified for time, though some*
> *may be considered to be 'timeless'...Equally,*
> *some events may be regarded as «timeless» in*
> *that   they   express   an   unending*
> *regularity...Few actions can be «timeless», not*
> *least given   the mortality of human beings,*
> *unless we predicate them of   humans (or,*
> *animals) in general, or of god.*

The time indicated by a given tense does not necessarily express real time , it could and does in many occasions express the speaker's use of distinctions of time in accordance with the conventions of his/her language, often for

grammatical purposes that have nothing to do with time (Strang, 1974). In agreement with him, Downing and locke (1992:353) say :

> *Tense systems are language specific and vary from one language to another, both in the number of tenses they distinguish and in the ways in which these tenses reflect temporal reference. In English, for instance, it would be erroneous to imagine that the past tense refers exclusively to events in past time , that there is a present tense to refer exclusively to events in the present time.*

Indeed, the present tense is not limited to present actions and events, and the past tense is not limited to past actions and events. For example, when we narrate, i.e. report past events, we may use the historical present to describe events vividly as if they were happening in our presence (Leech and Svartvick, 1975).

Tense is the grammatical means of expressing time. However, it is not the only means of expressing this notions. «Tense differentiation should not be thought of as a property of the verb action alone. But as a system signalled by patterns of co-occurrence between verbs and adverbials».(Strang,1974:143). There are many other linguistic means in the language system that contribute a great deal in the expression of time. They are mainly adverbials, temporal adjectives and temporal nouns.

A variety of adverbials, temporal adjectives and temporal nouns are used to express time. Crystal (1966) demonstrated that in 70% of cases where tense differentiation is clearly established , an adverbial is not merely present but required . Leech and Svartvick (1975) subdivide adverbials denoting time into three categories:

- Time when adverbials denote :

    - A point or period of time :

      E.g.: Do come and see us <u>again</u> .

    - A point of time and the point from which that time was

      measured :

      E.g.: <u>Recently</u>, they had an accident.

  - Time duration adverbials: They denote duration from some

  preceding point in time or length of time . They normally have

  an end position.

    - Denoting length of time :

      E.g.: I'll be in California <u>for the summer</u>.

    - Denoting duration from some preceding point in time:

      E.g.: Britain has had decimal currency <u>since 1971.</u>

- Time frequency adverbials : They denote definite and indefinite frequency.

    - Definite frequency:

      E.g.: Committee meetings take place <u>weekly</u>.

    - Indefinite frequency:

      E.g.: I'm rarely in my office <u>after five.</u>

There are some adjectives of a special nature that have a temporal reference value, like *current, earlier, previous*. Some of them refer to duration, like *brief , long* . Some others refer to frequency , like *daily , weekly, annual* (Androutsopoulos, 2002). Some nouns can convey information about time reference. . Nouns like *development* are similar to verbs like *to develop* in that they introduce world situations that occur in time. Other nouns
 can bring temporal order or start and end points like *predecessor/successor, beginning/end*. Other nouns refer to time periods or points like *minute, hour, event, year*.

2.2.1.3 Aspect

According to Salaberry and Shirai (2002), Aspect can be expressed lexically by the inherent lexical semantics of the verb and its interaction with direct and indirect arguments and adjuncts (generally referred to as lexical aspect) or morphosyntactically through verbal endings and periphrastic constructions(known as grammatical aspect or view point aspect)(Dowty 1986; Smith, 1991; Tenny, 1994; Verkuyl, 1994).

2.2.1.3.1 Lexical Aspect

Lexical Aspect represents the lexical semantic means that a language uses to express and describe the manner in which temporality functions through morphological means for the representation of various meanings.

According to Van Vallin and Lapolla (1997), lexical aspect refers to the inherent temporal properties of verbs. The German term *Aktionsarten* (kinds of action) is often used to refer to this notion. Vendler (1957) classifies verbal predicates into four main semantic categories:

- states : be, love.

- activities: run, smile.

- accomplishments: paint a house, build a bridge.

- achievements: reach the top, notice something.

According to Binnick (1991), Vendler's classification (states, activities, accomplishments, and achievements) is the most familiar attempt at a definitive Aristotelian classification. Each of the four categories proposed by Vendler has specific characteristics:

- States are not interruptible and if a state stops a new one must begin (e.g. seem, need, be red, be tall).

- Activities involve a span of time, and have no specific end point (e.g. snow, rain, study, play).

- Accomplishments share the end point characteristic with achievements . But, in addition to it, they have an inherent duration

(a characteristic they share with activities).Examples of accomplishments include: *draw a picture, built a house* .

- Achievements capture the beginning or the end of an action (Mourelatos, 1981) as in *the party begun* or *the lecture ended.* Andersen (1991) says that achievements are reduced to a point (e.g. notice, arrive, leave, fall asleep)

The four categories can be can be viewed as two main groups:

- Achievements and accomplishments can be grouped together as telic predicates commonly known as «events» (Mourelatos, 1981).

- States and activities on the other hand are labelled atelic predicates(Dowty, 1979; Freed, 1979; Harlig, 1989).

The classification of verb types can also be made in terms of three semantic dimensions(Comrie,1976; Andersen,1989; Smith,1991) :

- dynamicity

- durativity

- telacity

Salabery and shirai (2002) apply the second classification to the first one as follows. They say that of Vendler's four classes, only achievements are non-durative(punctual).Dynamicity contrasts stative and dynamic verbs (activities, accomplishments, achievements). Finally, concerning telicity , they say that states and activities are atelic and have no inherent end point, whereas accomplishments and achievements are telic . Andersen (199: 311) illustrates the three semantic elements Vendler uses to distinguish the four lexical categories as follows:

	States	Activities	Accomplishments	Achievements
Punctual	-	-	-	+
Telic	-	-	+	+
Dynamic	-	+	+	+

Table 11 : Semantic Features of Aspectual Categories   (Andersen 199: 311)

The semantic feature *punctual* distinguishes achievements from all the other lexical categories. The feature *telic* distinguishes predicates with end-points from those without. Thus, it separates between events (accomplishments and achievements) from activities and states. The feature dynamic distinguishes between dynamic predicates (*watch a movie, write a story*) from stative predicates (*know, believe*).

Research in the field of lexical aspect has brought several diagnostic tests to draw the distinction between the four categories (Dowty,1979; Mittwoch, 1991; Vendler, 1957; Robinson, 1990, 1993; Bardovi-Harlig, 1998; Bardovi-Harlig & Berström, 1996) . Based on Vendler (1957) and on Dowty (1979),

Shirai & Andersen (1995,749) used the following test:

Step1:State or nonstate
Does it have a habitual interpretation in the
simple present?
   If no   State (e.g. I love you)
   If yes   Nonstate (e.g. I eat bread)
Go to step 2

Step 2: Activity or nonactivity
Does ' X is V-ing' entail ' X has V-ed' without
an iterative habitual meaning? In other words,
if you stop in the
middle of V-ing , have you done the act of V?
   If yes   Activity (e.g. run)
   If no   Nonactivity (e.g. run a mile)   Go
to step 3

Step 3: Accomplishment or achievement
[If test (a) does not work, apply test(b) and
possibly (c).]
(a)If «X V-ed in Y time (e.g. 10 minutes)», then
  « X was V-ing during that time.»
   If yes   Accomplishment (e.g., He
painted a
   Picture).
   If no   Achievement (e.g., He noticed a
   picture)

(b)Is there ambiguity with almost?

If yes   accomplishment (e.g., 'He almost

painted a picture' has two readings: he almost

started to paint a picture/

he almost finished painting a picture)

If no   Achievement (e.g., ' he almost noticed

a picture' has only one reading)

(c) « X will VP in Y time (e.g., 10 minutes)»=

«X will VP after Y time»

If no   Accomplishment(e.g., ' he will paint a

picture in an hour' is different from 'He will

paint a picture after an

hour' because the former can mean that he will

spend an hour painting a picture, but the later

does not)

If yes   Achievement (e.g., ' He will start

singing in two minutes' can have only one

reading, which is the same as,

he will start singing after two minutes' with no

other reading possible).

2.2.1.3.2 Grammatical Aspect

2.2.1.3.2.1 Definition

Grammatical aspect (or view point) aspect refers to the presentation of events through grammaticalized view points : the perfective view points, the imperfective view points and the neutral one.The perfective view points focus on the situation as a whole ,with special importance given to start and end points. The imperfective ones, on the other hand, focus on part of the situation with no stress on initial or final points. The neutral is flexible and includes the

starting point and at least one internal stage (when it is possible)(Weist,2002 ; Andersen, 2002; Smith, 1991; Dahl,1985; Klein, 1995).

Robinson (1995:345-346) defines grammatical aspect as the type which :

...encompasses the ways in which the temporal characteristics of a situation are viewed independent of any reference time...Grammatical aspect is expressed through grammatical markers such as verb inflections or auxiliaries. The perfective / imperfective distinction common in Slovanic languages examplifies this type of aspect, as does the English progressive and semantic aspect, as the features inherent in a particular conception of a situation as expressed by an unmarked predicate, independent of any grammatical marking or time frame.

Some other linguists believe that there is only one type of aspect and that this type is grammatical aspect. With respect to this, Nehls(1992: 260) explains that the speaker of an aspectual language can express a situation linguistically, either as a complete and invisible whole, or as something in progress and thus consisting of several phases . In the first case, the situation is represented as a clear-cut fact. This is achieved by the perfective aspect . In the second case, the situation is presented as having no clear limit , its beginning and end are irrelevent for the speaker . This is expressed by the imperfective aspect .

Smith (1991) makes an aditional distinction between situation aspect (verb+arguments+adverbials) and view point aspect .Situation aspect is a covert grammatical category instantiated in all languages, while view point aspect

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refs to the partial or fullview of a particular situation type as marked by an overt grammatical morpheme (Salaberry& Shirai, 2002).

2.2.1.3.2.2 Perfective versus Imperfective Aspect

Comrie illustrates the perfective/imperfective opposition as follows :

Perfective   **Imperfective**

Habitual   **Continuous**

Progressive   **Non-progressive**
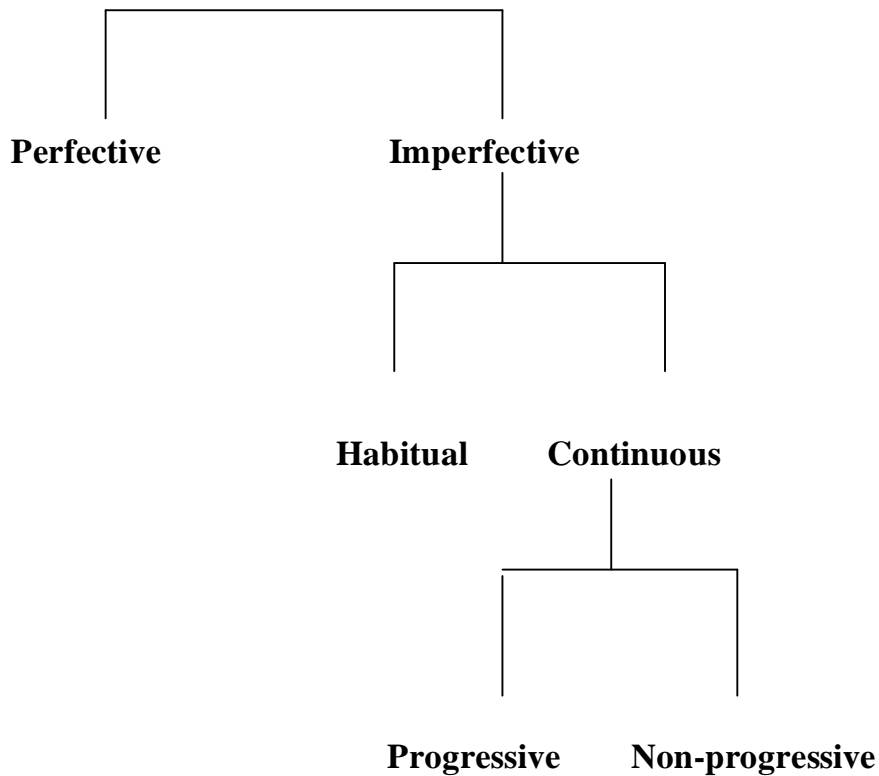
Diagram 1 : Classification of Aspectual Opposition   (Comrie ,1976: 81)

The formal rule for the formation of the **Perfective** in English is:

to have (present or past)+ past participial

The Perfective is the expression of a complete situation, with beginning, middle and end. This term is used to show that the situation expressed by the predication is viewed as a single whole without any specific interest to the inner phases that make up the situation (Downing and locke 1992: 363).

This aspect type is also viewed as a means to draw the link between two successive actions . Thus, we can say that:

- the past perfect describes a past action in connection with another past.

- the present perfect links a past action to the present moment of speaking.

Richards (1985, 171) refers to the latter as occurring in four main situation types:

(1)We regard an event as a state leading up to the present…

(2)We regard an event as occurring at an unspecified time with a time period extending up to the present…

(3)We regard events as repeated within a time period leading up to the present…

(4)We regard an event as having results that extend up to the present…

It should be mentioned that the notion of boundness itself is not brought by the perfect but by some surrounding elements and that the perfect only brings precision about the time span of the action (Iatridou, Anagnostopoulou & Izvorski, 2003). In their own words, they say(2003: 175):

The perfect itself does not contribute (un)boundness, in other words, when a perfect sentence conveys the meaning of completion, this meaning comes from features asserting boundness that are embedded below the perfect and not from the perfect itself. The perfect merely sets up a time span, in which an (un)bounded eventuality occurs...there is an interval (perfect time span) in which there is a bounded/unbounded eventuality.

As opposed to the perfective, the **imperfective** looks at the internal structure of the situation. This includes habituality and continuousness (progressiveness and non-progressiveness).

The formal rule for the formation of the **Habitual** in English is:

used to + infinitive.

According to Comrie (1976: 27-28), all habituals , whether iterative or not, describe a situation which is characteristic of an extended period of time . In fact, the situation is so extended that it cannot be considered as incidentally momentary but as characterising a whole period. He considers that not all situations can or need to be interpreted as iterative. As he explains:

If the individual situation is one that can be protracted indefinitely in time, then there is no need for iterativity to be involved...If the situation is one that cannot be   protracted, then the only reasonable interpretation will involve iterativity.

To distinguish the two subcategories of the **continuous**, we need to have a close look at the stative / dynamic division of verbs. The following diagram illustrates this division:

```
                          ┌──────────┐
                          │  Verbs   │
                          └──────────┘
                               │
              ┌────────────────┴────────────────┐
        ┌──────────┐                      ┌──────────┐
        │ dynamic  │                      │ stative  │
        └──────────┘                      └──────────┘
              │                                 │
      ┌───────┴────────┐                        │
┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐               │
│ B. Whole     │ │ A. Part      │               │
│ Complete     │ │ Incomplete   │               │
│ Non-         │ │ Developmental│               │
│ developmental│ │              │               │
└──────────────┘ └──────────────┘               │
      │                │                         │
┌──────────────┐ ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│ Simple Form  │ │ Progressive  │      │ Simple Form  │
└──────────────┘ └──────────────┘      └──────────────┘
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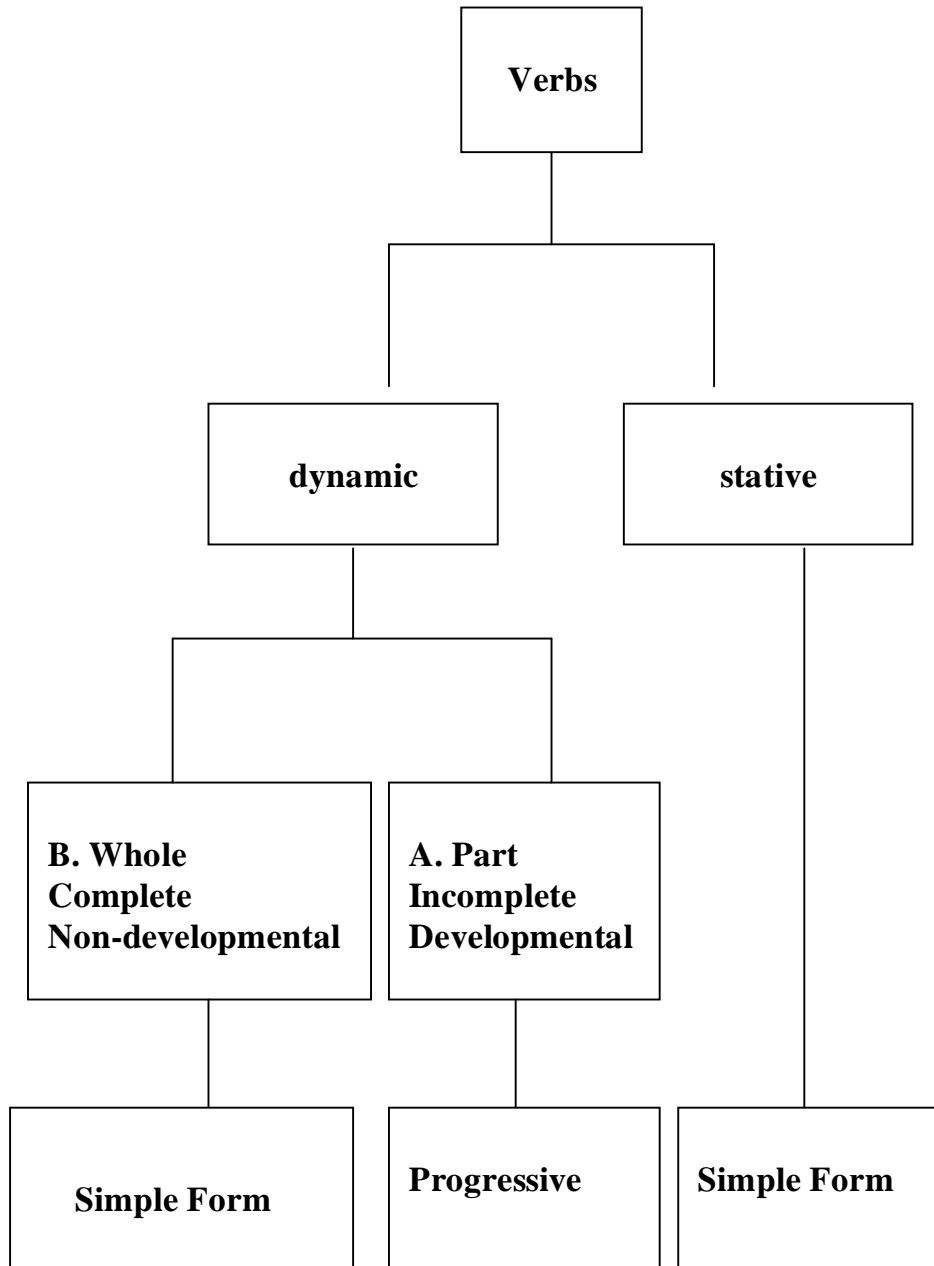
Diagram 2 : Aspectual Association to Stative and Dynamic Verbs

(Richards, 1985: 161)

Another categorisation between stative and dynamic verbs includes various possible situation types under each type.

Stative
- Involuntary perception —— See, hear, smell
- Cognition —— Understand, know
- Affection —— Like, want, wish
- Relation —— Be , belong, seem, cost, depend, own
- Position —— Stand, lie

Dynamic
- **Durative**
  - **Agentive**
    - Bounded Activities —— write out, eat up, decide, pay, pack
    - Unbounded Activities —— play, whisper, sew, walk, run
  - **Non-agentive**
    - Bounded Processes, —— grow up, ripen, dry up
    - Unbounded Processes —— rain, shine, boil, flow
- **Punctual**
  - **Agentive**
    - Bounded transitional Acts —— sit down, stop, shut
    - Unbounded momentary acts —— tap, nod, fire
  - **Non-agentive**
    - Bounded Transitional Events —— die, catch a cold
    - Unbounded Momentary Events —— flash, bounce, click, Stumble

Diagram 3: Verbal Situation Type
(Downing and Locke, 1992: 320)

The formal rule for the formation of the **progressive** in English is:

to be (present or past)+ Present participle (v+ing)

The progressive aspect puts in evidence a situation in progress. The situation lasts for a period of time and is not finished. Leech and Svartvick (1975) explain that the progressive can be used to show that there is a change of direction in a given situation,

for example: *the woman was sleeping but I woke her up.*

In fact, it refers to a change of state , indicating the movement towards the change rather than the actual completion of this change. According to Sharwood (1974: 88), « It fulfils a descriptive function describing «what was going on» at a given point in time». The semantic functions of the progressive are divided into: duration, limited duration and imperfectivity (Vogel and Bahns, 1989). Downing and Locke (1992: 368) believe that the progressive describes an action in process and focuses on its middle. They say :

> *The basic function of the progressive aspect is*
> *to indicate a dynamic action in the process of*
> *happening. Attention is focused on the middle*
> *of the process, which is seen as essentially*
> *dynamic.*

The choice of the progressive does not involve any time perspective. An action can be described as in progress in the past as well as in the present .Very often, a verb (or a series of verbs) in the progressive is acompanied by a verb in the simple form. This is necessary for the constitution of the contextual form of the events in progress.

> *The progressive form depends on this point in time being given by nearly non-progressive verb. In the simple narrative text, the non-progressive verbs form the basic frame work on which the progressive verbs,rather like boundmorphemes, depend for their existance.*
>
> *(Sharwood , 1974: 88)*

The presence of these verbs in the simple form is very important because the reader or listener is always searching for some specific time or action to be directly related with the situation in progress. These verbs may come before or after the progressive verbs . For example:

- Before : I <u>drew</u> the curtains apart . The sun <u>was shining</u> , the children <u>were playing</u> in the yard.
- After : The coach <u>was coming</u> round the bend. Its <u>wheels were bumping</u> against the side of the road. The driver <u>was shooting</u>. John <u>drew</u> his gun.

The actions in the progressive, in the two examples, are perceived as being moreor less simultaneous and occurring during the event described in the simple form.

Not all verbs can occur in the progressive. Stative verbs , due to their inherent nature, cannot occur in the progressive. Rather than an action, event or process, these verbs refer to the state of things (Lyons, 1974) . They also include verbs of perception(hear), cognition(think), affection(like), relation(marry), position(stand). Downing and Locke (1992: 365) say: « States are durative in that they last throughout time. They are unbounded in that no end point is implied in the

verb itself». Richards (1985) believes that stative verbs are always used in the simple form because a state is complete and cannot be depicted as changing or developing.

Under particular circumstances, stative verbs can take the progressive form. This happens when they are recognised as verbs of activity. Concerning this point, Comrie(1976) says:

> *There are many verbs that are treated sometimes as stative , sometimes as non-stative, depending on the particular meaning they have in the given sentence. One such verb is the English verb be , so that in addition to «Fred is silly», we have «Fred is being silly». The second of these can be paraphrased by «Fred is acting in a sully manner» with the non-stative verb act, whereas this is not possible in the first case.*

2.2.1.3.3 Grammatical Aspect and Lexical Aspect Compatibility

Grammatical aspect makes reference to complete versus ongoing situations, while telicity deals with the lexical level of the aspectual nature of the event. The notion of boundness, related to end points , is part of the description of grammatical aspect . Lexical aspect is sometimes called view point aspect. It is not really categorical and relies much on the speaker's choice. As pointed out by Comrie(1976: 4):

> *It is quite possible for the same speaker to refer to the same situation once with a perfective form, then with an imperfective, without in any way being self-contradictory.*

As an example, Comrie says that *reading* may be used with the progressive or the simple past to refer to the same event:

John read that book yesterday .
while he was reading it, the postman came.

It is possible that verbal morphology overrides lexical aspect in the verb phrase. The use of telic predicates correlates with the use of the perfective as the atelic ones work with the imperfective. However, it remains possible to have, for verbal morphology encoding, perfective aspect with stative verbs and imperfective aspect with achievements (Salaberry & Shirai, 2002).

Linguists claim that the selection and use of perfective/past marking is initially restricted to the marking of telic predicates (achievements and accomplishments) . In the same way, imperfective marking is initially restricted to marking atelic predicates (states and activities) . Progressive marking , on its turn, is restricted to the marking of dynamic and atelic predicates(activities) . This form meaning association has received much attention in the literature (Li& Shirai, 2000; Salaberry, 2000; Weist 2002).

2.2.1.4 Intersection of Tense and Aspect

Drawing a clear cut distinction between tense and aspect is not an easy task. It is very difficult to speak about tense without referring to aspect or the opposite. Aspect represents variations in tense in the same way as tense represents variation in aspect.

Blair (1984) deals with this topic. She refers to aspect variations as *Perspectives* . She identified three perspective :

- *the simple perspective*: With the present tense, the simple perspective is translated by the use of the present simple for the expression of habitual actions, , repeated actions, states regarded as permanent and general truths. In the past, it is translated by the use of the simple past for the expression actions or events completed in past time.

- *the imperfect perspective*. This perspective represents actions or events viewed from some point in time after their beginning and before their completion. In the present as well as in the past, this perspective is used with an activity in progress at a given moment or a series of habitual activities continuing for a limited time.

- *the perfect perspective*. It represents actions or events or series of actions or events that have occurred before a given point in the present or the past. Leech (1987) represents tense and aspect intersection as follows:

	Non-progressive	Progressive Aspect
Non-perfect Aspect	*Simple Present tense* *Example: He sees*	*(ordinary)* *Present progressive Tense* *Example: He is seeing*
	Simple Past Tense *Example: He saw*	*(ordinary)* *Past Progressive Tense* *Example: He was seeing*
Perfect Aspect	*(ordinary)* *Present perfect Tense* *Example: He has seen*	*Present perfect Progressive Tense* *Example: He has been seeing*
	(ordinary) *Past perfect tense* *Example: He had seen*	*Past Perfect progressive Tense* *Example: He had been seeing*

Table 12:Tense and Aspect Intersection (Leech 1987: 04)

He explains:

> *As the table shows, the expression Non-perfect,*
> *non-progressive and ordinary are used*
> *(whenever necessary) to denote forms*
> *unmarked for one aspect or the other . Simple*
> *is used for forms unmarked for both aspects.*

Tense and aspect intersection results in a variety of tense forms with a variety of semantic values making each of them appropriate in its specific context of situation . Jackson (1990: 94) lists the various tense forms with their semantic value in relation to time:

Simple present	*Timeless situations, present States, commentary, Permanent,habit narrative, future*
Simple past	*Definite past*
Present progressive	*Definite past period, future in Past.*
Persent perfective	*Pre-present, state/habit up to Present, Indefinite past (possibility with current Relevance).*

Past perfective   Past in past, state/habit up to

past point.

Present perfective   State/habit up to present

progressive   (+duration).

Used to + main verb habit or state in the past.

Nehls(1992: 263-264) interprets tense and aspect correlation in terms of background and foreground constructions. He says:

> *In foreground situations the verb is in the perfective aspect while the background situations are normally expressed by the imperfective aspect. This theory has been applied to narrative texts in different aspectual opposition*

He believes that tense and aspect are determined by text type and sentence structure and that they are expressed by time adverbials and situation types ,as it is shown in the following diagram.
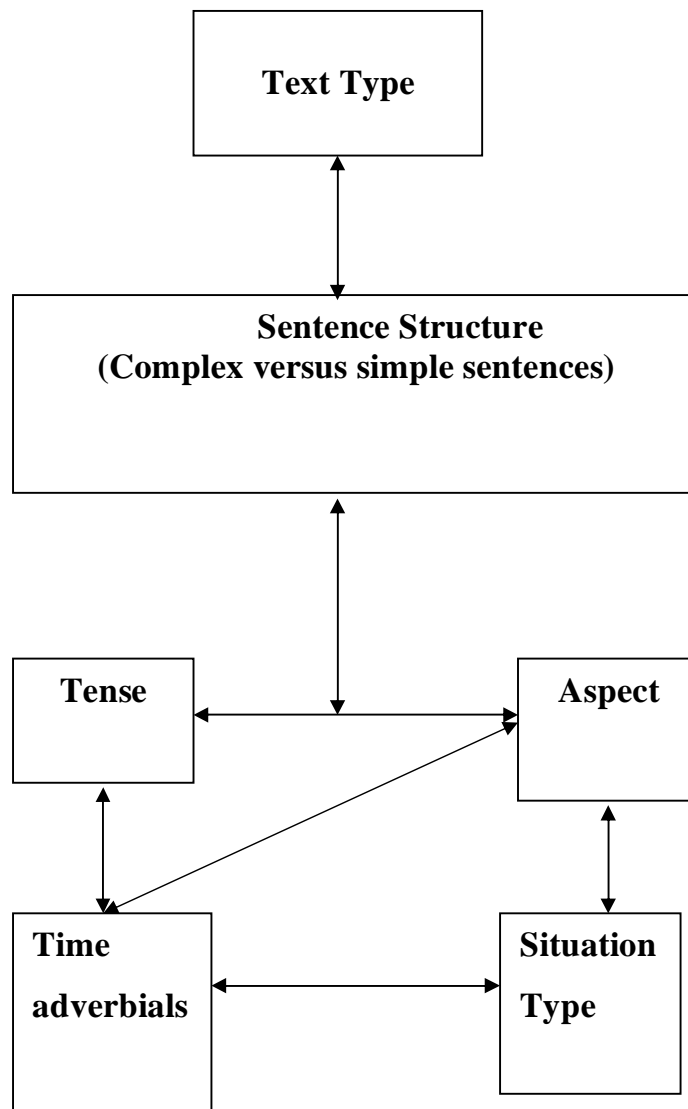
Diagram 4 : Tense and Aspect Correlation (Nehls 1992: 275)

Hoffman represents the correlaton between tense and aspect in the following figure:
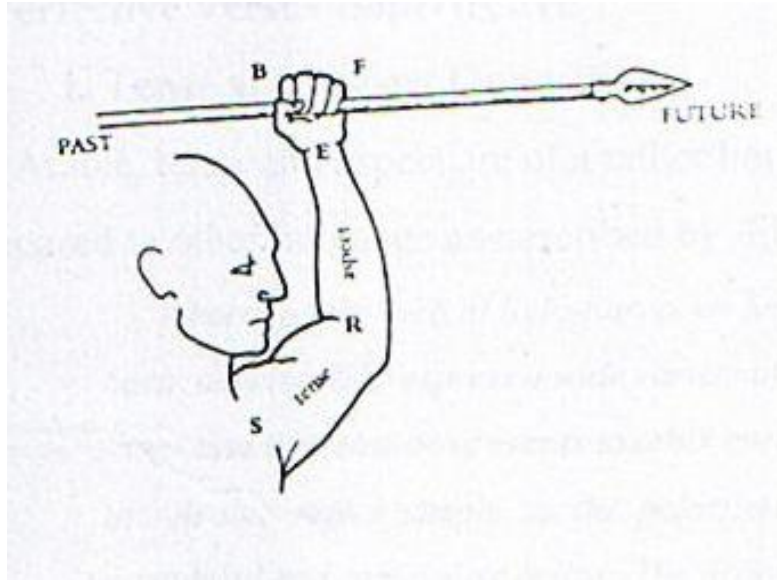
Figure 01 : Tense and Aspect Correlation (Hoffman ,1993: 131)

He explains the figure as follows:

- «S» is the moment of speaking.
- «R» represents the reference time . Like an elbow, it is not useful in itself but it gives flexibility to the system. The «R» is positioned relative to the «S» as the elbow is set relative to the shoulder.
- «E» is the time of the event , It is located relative of «R» by aspect much as the hand is located relative to the elbow.
- «B» is the beginning of the event.
- «F» is the end of the event.

This means that the time of reference and the moment of speaking are related by tense, and the time of the event is related to the time of reference with aspect. Tense and aspect are linked by the time of reference and surrounded by the moment of speaking and the time of the event. This subsystem is then used to support the event from its beginning to its end and from the past to the future.

2.2.2 Tense and Aspect in Arabic

In Arabic, Tense and Aspect are rather of limited semantic expression when compared to other language. Grammarians argue that the verb in Arabic refers to the polarised aspects of completed and incomplete action. It refers only to imperfect (incomplete) and perfect action largely ignoring those references in tense and mood which are so common in Indo-European languages.

Tense and Aspect in Arabic are expressed in terms of perfectiveness and imperfectiveness. The perfect is called الماضي and the imperfect المضارع.

2.2.2.1 Perfective versus Imperfective

2.2.2.1.1 Tense and Aspect Opposition

Is Arabic based on a tense opposition, an aspect opposition or a combined tense/aspect opposition? According to Comrie (1976:78), "the difference between the Arabic perfective and imperfective cannot be purely one of aspect". He believes that Arabic perfective/imperfective is a case of tense/aspect opposition. This is illustrated in the following example.

<div align="center">

يظهر الحق يوم القيامة

Justice <u>will appear</u> on the day of resurrection

</div>

Given the knowledge that the day of resurrection will take place at some time in the future, the time reference of this sentence must be the future but it is not interpreted as having imperfective meaning. However, in the example of the subordinate clause,

<div dir="rtl">

أَجِيءُ إِلَيْكَ إِذَا إِحْمَرَّ البصر
</div>

I <u>shall come</u> to you when the unripe day <u>ripens</u>

He concludes that "the difference between the perfective and the imperfective is one of relative tense"(Op-cit, 79). This conclusion springs from the analysis that, in isolation, أجيء would have a present time reference but due to the subordinate clause, it works here with a future time reference (I shall come). إحمر on the other hand, although it has a perfective form, cannot be interpreted with past time reference but with future time reference (the date has not yet ripened). This is in terms of absolute tense. With relative tense however, we can say that the "ripening" must precede the "coming". He deduces the same conclusion analysing: purpose clauses , for example: أرسل يعلمه بذ لك

He <u>sent</u> (some one) <u>to inform</u> him about this

Since the fulfilment of the purpose must follow the action designed to carry out the given purpose.

In isolation, the imperfective relates normally to the present, and we can interpret it as referring to the future if the context gives this direction. Comrie illustrates its use with past time reference in the following example:

<div dir="rtl">

بسم الله الرحمان الرحيم

« و إتبعوا ما تتلوا الشياطين على ملك سليمان»

صدق الله العظيم
</div>

And they <u>followed</u> what the demons <u>used to recite</u> in Solomon's reign

> *Summarising the uses of the perfective and imperfective, we may say that the perfective indicates both perfective meaning and relative past time reference; while the imperfective indicates everything else (i.e., either imperfective meaning or relative non-past tense. (Comrie, 1976: 80).*

2.2.2.1.2 Tense and Aspect Morphology

Tense perfective is characterised by suffixation and imperfective by prefixation or by a combination of prefix and suffix. We have three variations : person (first, second, third), number (singular, dual, plural) and gender (masculine, feminine).

Number	Person	Gender	Perfective	Imperfective
Singular	3	Masc	Kataba	Yaktubu
		Fem	Katabat	Taktubu
	2	Masc	Katabta	Taktubu
		Fem	Katabti	Taktubi :na
	1		Katabtu	?aktubu
Dual	3	Masc	Kataba	Yaktuba :ni
		Fem	Katabata:	Taktuba :ni
	2		Katabtum:	Taktuba :ni
Plural	3	Masc	Katabu:	Yaktubu :na
		Fem	Katabna	Yaktubna
	2	Masc	Katabtum	Taktubu :na
		Fem	Katabtuna	Taktubna
	1		Katabna :	Naktubu

-1,2,3 represent first, second and third person
-Masc : masculine
-Fem : feminine
-Kataba : to write

**Table 13 : Number, Person and Gender with the Perfective and
Imperfective Aspect in Arabic (Comrie, 1976: 95)**

The imperfective covers a wide range of temporal distinctions (Comrie, 1976). These distinctions must have some linguistic means for their establishment. With the present, the imperfective does not need any time specifier because it is inherent to it. In the future, however, we add سوف or the prefix سـ before the verb as in :

سوف يلعب
سيلعب

He <u>will</u> play

To combine the imperfective with past tense, we need to use the perfective of the verb *to be* كان and the imperfective of the main verb. For example:

كان يلعب

He <u>was playing</u>

The present perfect uses the participle قد and the perfective. For example:

قد لعب

He <u>has played</u>

The past perfect uses the perfective of *to be* كان with قد and the perfective of the main verb such as in:

كان قد لعب

He <u>had played</u>

The future perfect uses the imperfective of *to be* يكون with قد and the perfect of the main verb.

يكون قد لعب

He <u>will have played</u>

2.2.2.1.3 Tense and aspect Form and Meaning

The perfect form f the verb is used to give information about the situation as a complete whole.

The imperfect form is used to express duration as well as incompleteness of the action.

For example:

كان يتفرج على التلفزيون حين رن الهاتف

He <u>was watching</u> T.V. when the phone <u>rang</u>

It is also used to describe habitual or recurring behaviour in the past as well as the present.

For example:

يمشي عمر من المنزل إلى المدرسة

Omar <u>walks</u> from home to school

كان عمر يعود إلى المنزل بالحافلة كل يوم

Omar <u>used to go back</u> home by bus every day

In these two examples, we have recurring pieces of behaviour, one in the present and the other in the past. In *Omar walks from home to school* , for example, we can understand that Omar has gone many times from home to school walking and that he will continue to do so for some time in the future. So

the action here expresses a series of repetitions which are unbounded is characterised semantically as encoding unrestricted habituality.

The imperfect form of the verb is also expressed through generic statements. For example:

الزيت يطفوا فوق الماء

Oil <u>floats</u> on water

Contrasted with the perfect, the imperfect seems to encode situations in a way which is rather amorphous.

2.2.2.2 The Role of the Participle

Mitchell (1978) speaks about tense and participle in Arabic. H divides tense into past and non-past and participle into active and passive. The difference between tense and aspect as opposed to tense and participle is that we cannot build compound structures made up of tense and participle . The relation between them is rather a matter of suffixation or prefixation (in some cases the two). Of the past form of the verb in the third person singular to make up the various forms of the participle. He sums up the various transformations and morphological features of the past and the non-past and the participle in the following table:

	Tense		Participle	
	Past	Non-past	Active	Passive
He	*Katab*	*Yiktib*	*Kaatib (m.s)*	*Maktuub (m. s)*
She	*Katabit*	*Tiktib*	*Katba(f. s)*	*Maktuuba(f. s)*
You (m. s)	*Katabt*	*Tiktib*	*(<Kaatiba)*	
You (f. s)	*Katabti*	*Tiktibi*		
I	*Katabt*	*ʔaktib*		
They	*Katabu*	*Yiktibu*	*Katbiin*	*Maktubiin*
You (pl.)	*Katabtu*	*Tiktibu*	*(<Kaatibiin)*	*(<Maktuubiin)*
We	*Katabna*	*Niktib*		

m. s : masculine singular

f. s : feminine singular

pl.: plural

Table 14 : Morphology of Tense and Participle

in Arabic (Mitchell 1978: 234)

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Mitchell specifies that the forms quoted are from Egyptian (Cairene) Arabic but that the same principle of affixal inflection applies to all forms of Arabic. St. Ar. seems, however, to be more distinctive in terms of number and gender. This is illustrated in the following table.

Participle				
Number	Person	Gender	Active	Passive
Singular	3	Masc.	*Kaatib*	*Maktuubun*
		Fem.	*Kaatibatun*	*Maktuubatun*
	2	Masc.	*Kaatibun*	*Maktuubun*
		Fem.	*Kaatibatun*	*Maktuubatun*
	1	Masc.	*Kaatibun*	*Maktuubun*
		Fem.	*Kaatibatun*	*Maktuubatun*
Dual	3	Masc.	*Kaatibaani*	*Maktuubaani*
		Fem.	*Kaatibataani*	*Maktuubataani*
	2	Masc.	*Kaatibaani*	*Maktuubaani*
		Fem.	*Kaatibataani*	*Maktuubataani*

Plural	3	Masc.	*Kaatibuna*	*Maktubuuna*
		Fem.	*Kaatibaatun*	*Maktuubaatun*
	2	Masc.	*Kaatibuna*	*Maktubuuna*
		Fem.	*Kaatibaatun*	*Maktuubaatun*
	1	Masc.	*Kaatibuna*	*Maktubuuna*
		Fem.	*Kaatibaatun*	*Maktuubaatun*

Masc.: masculine

Fem.: feminine

Table 15: Active and Passive Participle Morphology in Arabic

An essential characteristic of the Arabic Language is that it contains verbless sentences. However, although they do not contain a verb, these sentences have an aspectual value carried by the participle which shares the characteristics of both the noun and the verb. In agreement with this, Fehri (1990) claims that the participle has a dual categorical character, namely, it exhibits verbal and adjectival properties. In fact, the participle is like the verb, given that it shares with the latter the same inflectional , semantic and distributional characteristics. This may have a direct effect on the fact that although we can transform the verb into a participle , the resulting participle plays a verbal function. The presence or absence of كان will show if we are in the past or the non-past. The participle underlies a verb which acquires the morphological characteristics of a participle through the syntactic process of affixation.

This clearly illustrated in the example:

The man *is sleeping*   الرجل نائم

The man *was sleeping*   كان الرجل نائما

If we take the sentence,

نظر داخل الغرفة فوجد الأطفال نائمين و الضوء مشتعلا

He *looked* inside in the room and *found* the children *sleeping* and the light on.

The verbs expressing completed non-durative events are put in the perfect whereas those which are in progress are put in the form of the resent participle

Completed	*In progress*
نظر	نائمين
وجد	مشتعلا

When do we use the imperfective and when do we use the participle? On the whole, if the event described requires an active involvement on the part of the subject, we will use the imperfect.

For example:

إنه يكتب رسالة   corresponds to   *He is writing a letter*

However, if it requires some passive involvement, we will use the participle. For example:

هذه الفتاة جالسة على المقعد   corresponds to   *This girl is sitting on the chair*

2.2.3 Equating the Tense and Aspect Systems of English and Arabic

Contrasting the tense and aspect systems of the English and Arabic languages discussed above, we can draw a diagram to illustrate the equivalence and differences between them. This will help for a better understanding of the Arab speakers' apprenticeship with the English language.
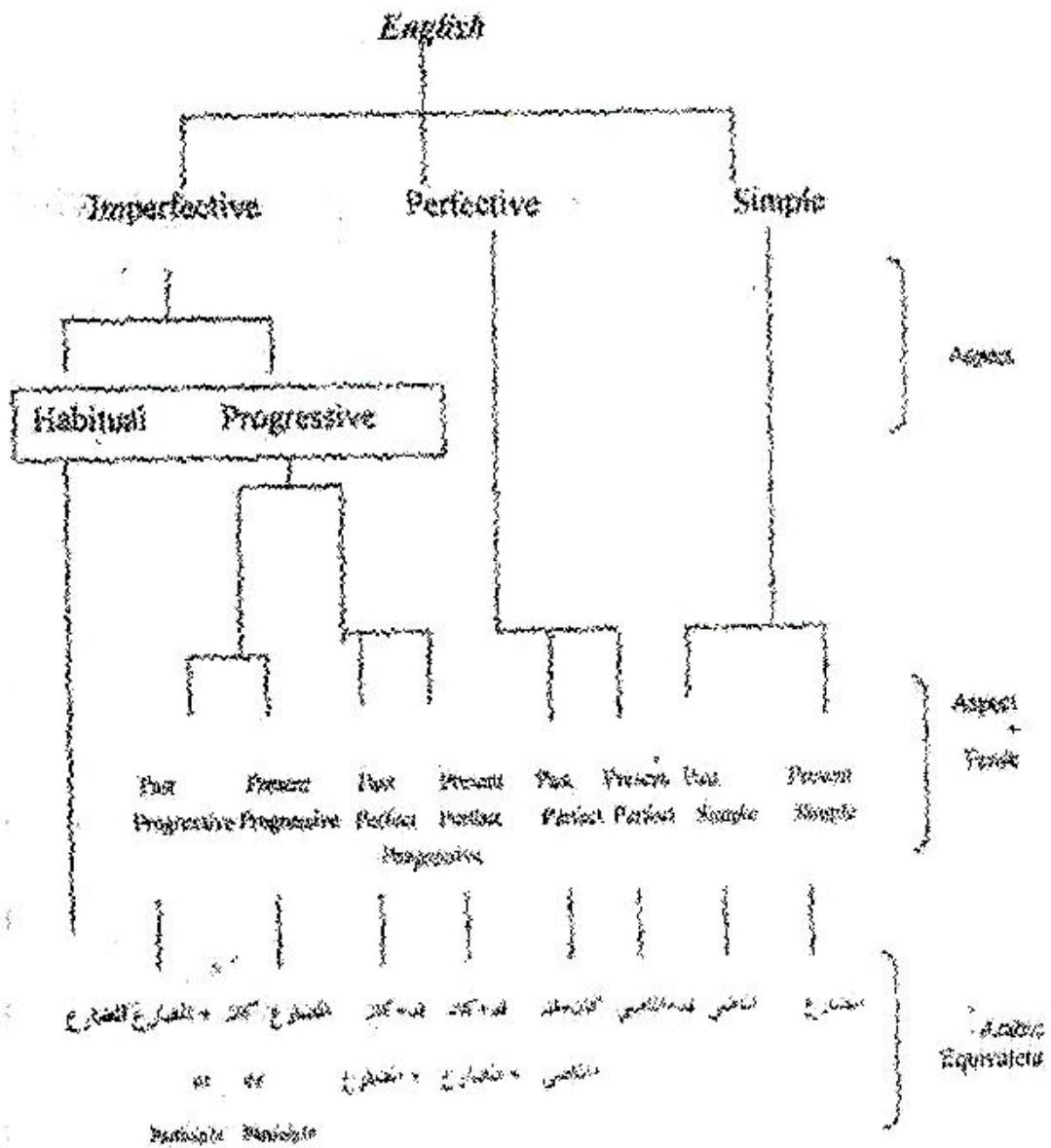
Diagram 05 : Equation of the Arabic and English Tense and Aspect Systems

Conclusion

Research in the domain of grammar and grammar teaching tends to agree on the usefulness of using the Explicit Method with the simple rules and the Implicit Method with complex ones. It can also be observed that rather than excluding the L1 from the grammar classroom, it should be used to improve learning by clarifying the differences and showing the similarities that exist between the L1 and the L2, improving , in this sense , positive transfer and avoiding or at least reducing negative transfer.

Looking at all the variations of tense and aspect expression in the Enlish language, we can say that an exaustive research into the acquisition of temporality must certainly not be limited to the basic and simplist concepts verb foms. It must at least be able to observe the evolution of the two main variations of temporality;i.e, the grammatical and the lexical dimentions.

CHAPTER THREE
ERROR ANALYSIS AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Outline

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Introduction

Second language acquisition is the field of study mainly interested in analysing the processes involved in learning another language after the first language has been acquired.

The research studies in this field have pedagogical perspectives and implications. They have modified the educationalists vision of language learning. They no longer see it as a simple process of rule memorisation. This is very important for language teachers and curriculum designers. It raises their awareness of the expression of communicative needs is the main and final objective the language learner seeks to reach . This new conceptualisation resulted in new methodologies more adapted to the learners goals and perspective respecting the evolutionary process he is passing by.

Error analysis is the field of linguistics that investigates the ill-formed structures of a given language. It aims at finding the origin , explaining the causes and putting effective solutions to the situations resulting from these phenomena.

The concept of transfer is often dissociated from interference. The clear understanding of the concepts of error and mistake are essential to our study since we are specifically interested in errors and among these in what has been caused by transfer.

In this chapter, we will deal with second language acquisition in the sense that we will try to investigate about the way in which a second language is learned. We will try to have a look at the essential elements that affect this process. At an other level, we will speak about the main fields of study that have a link with second language acquisition as we will attempt to analyse the

nature of these relations.   We will also deal with Interlanguage processes and context and we will investigate the nonlanguage elements that could affect second language acquisition at any level. As part of second language acquisition, error analysis will be highlighted and the main concepts of it will be dissociated.

3.1 Second Language Acquisition

3.1.1 The Nature of the Study of Second Language Acquisition

Second language acquisition (SLA) is a study that tries to answer questions such as :

- How are second languages learned?
- How do learners create a new language system with only limited exposure to a second language?
- Why is there a difference in the learners' degree of proficiency achievement between the L1 and the L2?
- What is special with those few learners who can achieve a native-like proficiency in an L2?
- Are there patterns common to all language learners whatever their NL is?
- Do the learners create language rules that vary depending on the context of use?

If we examine these questions raised by SLA (Jordan,2004), we come up with the conclusion that this field of study is always in interaction with other research areas such as   Linguistics, Psychology, Psycholinguistics, Sociology, Sociolinguistics, Discourse analysis, Conversational analysis, Semantics, Pragmatics, Education, Pedagogy, language policy , language planning, curriculum design, and many others.

SLA is a field of study whose main objective is to explain the process underlying L2 learning. Gass and Selinker (1994: 4) define it as follows:

It refers to the learning of another language after the native language has been learned. Sometimes the term refers to the learning of a third or fourth language . The important aspect is that the term refers to the learning of a language after the learning of the native language. The second language is commonly referred to as L2. as with the phrase "second language", L2 can refer to any language learned after learning the L1, regardless of whether it is the second , third, fourth, or fifth language. By this term, we mean both the acquisition of a second language in a classroom situation, as well as in more "natural" situations.

SLA is a very complex field. Its complexity is due to the fact that it analyses the process through which the learner passes to an L2 information that is similar to his NL knowledge. Given the complexity of the nature of this knowledge, analysing its acquisitional process is not an easy task.

FL learning is often dissociated from SLA by the fact that the former occurs in the context of the learner's NL (for example: French learners of Spanish in France). This generally takes place in classroom contexts. SLA on the other hand is described as the learning process taking place in the context of the language being learned (for example: German learners of Italian in Italy). In fact , we consider that the learning process is an SLA process if the learning environment gives considerable access to data from the language being learned, which is not the case of FL learning. This is not always evident. In fact, we might find ourselves in a FL speaking context that is not native-like or a

standard reference (for example: Arabic in Egypt , French in Quebec, English in India)

The main assumption upon which SLA is based is that the learner creates his own language system. This system is commonly known as Interlanguage (IL). Describing this system Gass and Selinker(1994: 11) say:

> *This system is composed of numerous elements not the least of which are elements from the NL and the TL. There are some elements in the IL that do not have their origin in either the NL or the TL. What is important is that the learners themselves impose structure on the available linguistic data and formulate an internalised system (IL).*

Since the early 1970's, a considerable variety of terms have been introduced to linguistics to describe basically the same concept. Nemser (1971) used the term *approximate system*, Corder used the term *transitional competence* in 1967 and the term *idiosyncratic dialect* in 1971, Faerch, Haastrup, & Phillipson (1984) refer to *learner language* . Evidently, there must be a distinctive element between the various terms but they are all most generally used to represent the concept of IL.

Fossilisation is a central concept in Interlanguage analysis. It generally refers to learning inhibition. An interesting definition is found in *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* (1987: 755) :

> *to become permanently established in the Interlanguage of a second language learners in a form that is deviant from the target-language norm and that*

continues to appear in performance regardless of further exposure to the target language.

Some linguists speak about stabilisation on the linguistic forms (Abderrahim,2002) rather than cessation of learning because it is difficult to determine the exact moment when learning has ceased. It is frequently the case that IL production is far from the TL norm, and it seems that these production processes are stabilised or fossilised with any possibility for breaking this state by exposure to TL data. Determining the temporary or permanent status of fossilisation is still open to discussion among researchers.

3.1.2 The acquisition of Tense and Aspect Morphology

3.1.2.1 General Principles

From the various studies analysing language acquisition that dealt with the topic of tense and aspect, four general principles were extracted (Klein, 1993; Dietrich, 1995).

The first principle is that the process of development of temporal expression in the learner's IL is slow and gradual. The learner acquires the formal components and the form-meaning associations progressively. This is well illustrated in the longitudinal and in the cross-sectional studies of tense and aspect acquisition. This thesis includes an example of each of the two types of experimental study.

Second, in addition to the fact that the tense-aspect system is acquired slowly and gradually, form usually comes first, then it is followed by function. In other words, verbal morphology might emerge without a clear meaning, without being appropriate to the context of use or carrying its distinctive pragmatic and semantic value. We have included in this thesis an EA of a written production of advanced learners. The results clearly showed that the rate of errors in the use of tense and aspect were much more significant than the rates

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of form errors. Many other research works go confirming our conclusions (Bouras, 1999; Bardovi-Harlig & Bofman, 1989).

The third general principle is that irregular morphology emerges before regular morphology. This was a conclusion draw by many researchers. Among them, we can speak about Rohde (1996) who proved that a 6-year-old German child learning English used more often irregular past forms than regular ones. Lee (1997) also showed that two Korean-speaking children began using irregular past in English before they moved to regular forms .

The fourth principle is that language learners acquiring the temporal system of a language tend to favour the inflection forms at the expense of the function words such as auxiliaries or modals . In the case of learners of English, this is easily observable in the first attempts at using the progressive where we will see the *V+ing* form appear without the auxiliary. As described by Bardovi-Harlig (2000, 113):

> *In all languages that have been studied, learners*
> *appear to begin the acquisition sequence by using*
> *the verb and a verb suffix in the cases where the*
> *target form is comprised of an auxiliary and the*
> *verb with a verbal suffix.*

3.1.2.2 Main Strands of Research

In the field of SLA, two main strands of research can be distinguished. They are the meaning –oriented approach and the form-oriented approach. The meaning-oriented approach investigates semantic concepts through linguistic devices and the form-oriented research investigates the distribution of verbal morphology based on an underlying semantic system of developing IL.

Bardovi-Harlig (2000, 12) put the following diagram to distinguish these two strands of research and their underlying branches:

Incidental Studies of Tense –Aspect

Morpheme order studies

Phonetic Constraint Studies

Research on Second Language Temporal Systems

Interlanguage Analysis) Meaning-Oriented Studies	Form-Oriented Studies
How do learners express temporal relations?	What is the distribution of the emergent verbal morphology?
Pragmatic means: Scaffolding Chronological Order Implicit Ordering	
Lexical Means: Adverbials	Morphological Means: Acquisitional Aspect Discourse sequences hypothesis hypothesis
Morphological Means: Emergence of Morphology to mark temporal relations	

**Figure 02: Overview of Studies of Temporal Expression
in Second Language acquisition**

3.1.3 Second Language Acquisition Models

Just like linguistics, psychology has influenced SLA. Gass and Selinker (1994, 139) differentiate between the two as follows:

> *It is important to note that …there is an important difference in emphasis between linguistics and psychology in their relationship to SLA. In linguistics, the emphasis is on the constraints on grammar formation, whereas in psychology the emphasis is on the actual mechanisms involved in SLA. This is not to say that there is an overlap, only that each approach has its own particular emphasis.*

We can distinguish two approaches to SLA based on psycholinguistic rather than pure linguistic processing : the Monitor Model and the Competition Model.

3.1.3.1   The Monitor Model

The Monitor Model (Krashen,1985) is considered to be very influential in SLA. This model includes five basic hypotheses: The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis, The Natural Order Hypothesis, The Monitor Hypothesis, The Input Hypothesis, and The Affective Filter Hypothesis.

3.1.3.1.1 The Acquisition Learning Hypothesis

Krashen considers that learners have two different ways of developing language knowledge: learning and acquisition. He says (1982: 10):

acquisition is a process similar , if not identical to the way children develop ability in their first language. Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication. The result of language acquisition, acquired competence, is also subconscious. We are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the languages we have acquired. Instead, we have a feel for correctness. Grammatical sentences" sound" right, or "feel" right, and errors feel wrong, even if we do not consciously know what rule was violated.

Acquisition is an informal and natural process. Krashen (1982: 10) explains that:

The second way to develop competence in a second language is by language learning. We will use the term "learning" henceforth to refer to conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. In non-technical terms, learning is "knowing about" a language, known to most people as "grammar", or "rules". Some synonyms include formal knowledge of a language or explicit learning.

Krashen considers that language knowledge is internalised in two different ways and uses it for two different purposes. He considers that the acquired system is used to produce language because focus is on meaning rather

than form. The learned system comes as an inspector of the acquired system . It checks the correctness of the items and structures produced by the acquired system. In this sense, the two means of language knowledge development look complementary to each other.

3.1.3.1.2 Natural Order Hypothesis

This hypothesis is based on the assumption that there is a predictable order for language rules acquisition. This order is natural regardless of instruction . This hypothesis considers that the acquired system is the leading one and that the learned system has little or no weight.

3.1.3.1.3 Monitor Hypothesis

This hypothesis assumes that the acquired system is responsible for initiating language production. The specific function of the learned system is to serve as a monitor . Krashen (1982) represents this structure in the following diagram:

Learned
Competence (the monitor)

Acquired Competence ⟶ ◁ Output
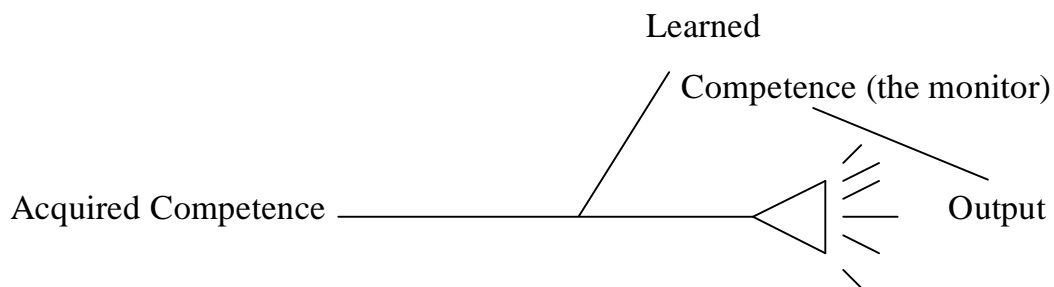
Figure 03: Acquisition and Learning in Second Language Production (Krashen, 1982, 3)

The Monitor can only be used if three conditions are present:

Time: The learners need a certain period of time to develop a consciousness about the rules available to them in their learned system. However , one must mention that the condition of time was dropped by Krashen (1982, 2) after the research carried out by Hulstijn and Hulstijn (1984). The research that when there was no focus on form, the time factor lost all effect .

Focus on Form: The learner must not only consider the message he is conveying, he also has to focus on the proper form in which this meaning is put to be conveyed properly and understood clearly.

Knowing the rule: The learner cannot apply the rule he does not know it. The learner must possess an appropriate learned system to be able to use it adequately.

They are necessary but not always sufficient.Even if the three are present, the monitor might not be activated .

3.1.3.1.4 Input Hypothesis

The Input hypothesis draws the link between Krashen's acquisition process and the Natural Order Hypothesis. It tries to answer the question: how does the learner move from one point to another in the natural order of acquisition? Krashen (1985,2) says that second languages are acquired " …by understanding messages , or by receiving 'comprehensive input' ".

Comprehensive Input is defined by Krashen(1985) as that part of language that is read or heard and that is slightly ahead of the learner's current state of grammatical knowledge. The structures the learner knows serve no acquisition purpose , neither do those way ahead from the learner's knowledge. Comprehensive input includes a specific area that is slightly a head but not far beyond the learner's knowledge. Krashen considers that comprehensive input can activate the learner's innate capacity of handling both L1 and L2 acquisition.

For Krashen, the input hypothesis plays a central role in acquisition and has direct implications in the language classroom. He says (1985: 2):

> *Speaking is a result of acquisition and not its cause. Speech cannot be taught directly but "emerges" on its own as a result of building competence via comprehensible input*
>
> a. *If input is understood and there is enough of it, the necessary grammar is automatically provided. The language teacher need not attempt deliberately to teach the next structure along the natural order – it will be provided in just the right quantities and automatically reviewed if the student receives a sufficient amount of comprehensible input.*

3.1.3.1.5 Affective Filter Hypothesis

It is commonly agreed that not everyone is successful in learning languages. Some linguists, like Krashen, consider that those who do not succeed are those who have not been exposed to sufficient input. Another explanation is that inappropriate affect is under cause. By affect we mean motivation, attitude, self-confidence or anxiety. Krashen called this " the affective filter". Acquisition can only happen if the filter is down or low enough for the comprehensive input to reach the acquisition device. Krashen (1982: 31) puts this process in the following figure:

```
          Filter
Input ─────→ ┊ ------→ ┌──────────────────────────┐ ──→ Acquired competence
             ┊         │ Language acquisition device │
                       └──────────────────────────┘
```
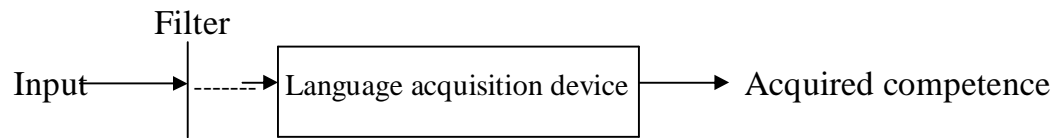
Figure 04: Operation of the Affective Filter

Those learners with a strong affective filter could understand the message conveyed in the FL form, but the input will be prevented from reaching the part of their brain that activates the acquisition process.

The affective filter hypothesis considers that failure in L2 acquisition can be accounted for in one of the following ways: Insufficient input or High affective filter.

Krashen (1982: 33) expresses the same point as follows:

> *in order to acquire, two conditions are necessary. The firs is comprehensible(or even better comprehended) input...and second , a low or weak affective filter to allow the input "in". This is equivalent to saying that comprehensible input and the strength of the filter are the true causes of second language acquisition.*

3.1.3.2 The Competition Model

The first researchers who initiated the Competition Model are Bates and MacWhinney (1982). Their model was developed to account for the ways monolingual speakers interpret sentences. This model is based on the

assumption that form and function cannot be separated. MacWhinney, Bates and Kliegl (1984: 128) argue that:

> *The forms of natural languages are created, governed, constrained, acquired and used in the service of communicative functions.*

The competition Model deals with the opposition between competence and performance. The predominant concept of this model is the way language users use strategies to determine relationships between sentence elements. Language processing involves competition among different cues. Each cue plays a part in sentence interpretation. The range of cues is universal, but there is language-specific instantiation of cues and language-specific strength assigned to them. It is evident that studying language acquisition involves knowing how the learner adjusts his internal speech-processing mechanisms from those appropriate for the NL to those appropriate for the TL?

The Competition Model research suggests that learners are indeed faced with conflicts between NL and TL cues and cues strengths. The resolution of these conflicts is such that learners start by using their L1 cues. Throughout the acquisition process, as they identify the points of incongruity between the two languages, they move to a universal selection of meaning-based cues. Progressively, learners arrive at a level of adjustment of the appropriate cues and their relative strength. The learners end up with an identification of which cues lead to correct interpretation and which ones do not. However, time determination to reach the ultimate maturity is difficult to determine. Bates and MacWhinney (1981) noted that an L2 learner, after 25 years of living in the TL country, still did not respond to sentence interpretation tasks in the way as native speakers of the TL.

3.1.4 Nonlanguage Influence

In this section , we will examine the nonlanguage factors that might affect language learning. They include social distance, age, aptitude, motivation, anxiety, and personality.

3.1.4.1 Social Distance

There are many cases when a language learner does not have any affinity with the target language community. This results in social and psychological inhibition on the part of the learner. This point is dealt with by Schumann (1978a, 1978b) in his reference to the acculturation model. According to this model, social and affective variables affect the language learning process. As described by Gass & Selinker (1994: 237):

> *...if learners acculturate, they will learn and if they do not acculturate, they will not learn. Thus, acculturation initiates a chain reaction including contact in the middle and acquisition as its outcome.*

Among the social variables, we can speak about the dominance of one group over another (eg: the TL group representing colonisation).Another example is the integration rate in the immigrant communities. In some cases of total assimilation , the degree of learning is very high.

There are also affective factors such as language shock (eg: being in a situation where the language learner needs to be comical to the TL users), cultural shock (anxiety resulting from the exposure to a new culture).

3.1.4.2 Age differences

It is commonly believed that young learners acquire language more easily than adult learners. Snow and Hoehfnagle-Hohle (1978) investigating the acquisition of Dutch with three groups of learners (children, adolescents and adults), found that adolescents and adults outperformed children during the three

first months. However, after ten months of study, had caught up on most measures. The general results indicate that adults can obtain better scores, at least in the early stages of acquisition. On the long term, children tend to outperform when compared to more aged learners.

Globally, research in the field shows that young children are more likely to reach native like performance in comparison to teenagers and adults. However, adults learn certain parts of language more quickly (early morphological and syntactic development).

In a detailed review of the literature, Long (1990:251) concluded:

> 1. *Both the initial rate of acquisition and the ultimate level of attainment depend in part on the age at which learning begins.*
>
> 2. *There are sensitive periods governing language development, first or second, during which the acquisition of different linguistic abilities is successful and after which it irregular and incomplete.*
>
> 3. *The age-related loss in ability is cumulative (not a catastrophic one-time event), affecting first one linguistic domain and then another, and is not limited to phonology.*
>
> 4. *The deterioration in some individuals begins as early as age 6- not at puberty as is often claimed.*

3.1.4.3 Aptitude

The relationship between aptitude and second language learning success has always been the subject of common belief within the teaching community.

If an aptitude measure is accurate and students are placed in an instructional program for which they have little or no aptitude. Their

performance will be very low. If this same group of learners are placed in another instructional program more adapted to their aptitude profile, their performance will grow . This means that aptitude can have real life consequences.

Carroll (1989:26) states the four basic components of language aptitude:

> *1. Phonemic coding ability. This is an ability to discriminate among foreign sounds and to encode them in a manner such that they can be recalled later. This would certainly seem to be a skill involved in successful second language learning.*
>
> *2. Grammatical sensitivity. This is the ability to recognise the function that words fulfil in sentences. It does not measure an ability to name or describe the functions, but rather the ability to discern whether or not words in different sentences perform the same function. It appears logical that skill in being able to do this helps in learning another language.*
>
> *3. Inductive language learning ability. This is the ability to infer, induce , or abduct rules or generalisations about language from samples of the language. A learner proficient in this ability is less reliant on well- presented rules or generalisations from a teacher or from materials.*
>
> *4. Memory and learning. Originally this was phrased in terms of associations between words and phrases In a native and a second language. It is not so clear whether this type of association*

plays a major role in language learning, but memory for language material is clearly important.

Skehan (1989) discussed this four element division. He questioned the appropriateness of separating grammatical sensitivity and inductive language-learning ability. He suggested that these two should be combined into one single ability language analytic ability.

An objection raised by researchers to aptitude measures is whether second language aptitude should be associated exclusively with formal learning. Evidently the answer to this question is no. In fact, aptitude should be more important and more significant when the learner is deprived from the support of instructors and didactic materials.

A second consideration is whether the existing measures of language aptitude predict success in formal classroom contexts. Reves (1983) investigated this aspect in details. He studied Arabic native speakers learning English in Israel and the same group learning Hebrew naturalistically . He found that the aptitude measure was a better predictor of success in the informal, naturalistic setting.

We can conclude that research has brought evidence that aptitude is an important indicator of success in SLA for formal and informal contexts.

3.1.4.4 Motivation

Motivation is a social psychological factor often referred to as a factor involved in learning an L2.Research has brought evidence that motivation is an indicator of language learning success. However, the exact nature of motivation remains onbiguous and open to discussion. Gardner(1985:50) says: "Motivation involves four aspects, a goal, effortful behaviour, a desire to attain the goal and favourable attitudes toward the activity in question".

Psychology defines motivation differently, it makes the distinction between potential motivation and motivational arousal. Brehm & Self, 1989: 111) discuss this aspect as follows:

> *In summary, potential motivation is created by needs and/or potential outcomes and the expectation that performance of a behaviour will affect those needs and outcomes. Motivational arousal occurs, however, only to the extent that the recquired instrumental behaviour is difficult, within one's capacity, and is justified by the magnitude of potential motivation.*

There are several differences between the views of Gardner and Brehm and Self in defining motivation. Gass and Selinker (1994:252) sum up the divergences in the three following points:

> 1. *Behm and Self considered effort to be a result of motivation, whereas Gardner included effort as component of motivation.*
>
> 2. *Behm and Self, but not Gardner, adopted an explicit expectancy-value conception of motivation. It is possible that expectancy value has indirectly influenced the components of Gardner's motivation concept, but there is no way in Gardner's approach to use different expectations of difficulty in determining how motivated learners are to do a given task.*
>
> 3. *Gardner's approach is much more global. Thus, Gardner could only deal with motivation to learn another language as a total construct.*

4. Brehm and Self could consider the motivation to accomplish great goals, such as becoming fluent in French, or motivation to accomplish small goals, such as learning 15 vocabulary items for tomorrow's quiz.

There is a major discussion about whether motivation predicts success or success predicts motivation. Psychologists tend to say that the more successful one is, the more likely s/he will be motivated to learn. This raises the following questions:

- Can motivation change over time?

- What is the effect of success on performance?

- Does success lead to better performance?

The literature presents different results to these questions. A plausible argument can be given for every direction of the two. Success can breed confidence leading to greater success. However, success can also develop overconfidence, consequently leading to failure. Concerning This element, Mizruchi (1991:181) argues:

> *The extent to which confidence and motivation affect task performance is a controversial issue among social psychologists. Although most participants believe that prior success breeds present success, many researchers have found no effect of prior performance on current performance. Contrary to the conventional view, I argue that in team competition, prior success breeds failure in current task performance because it decreases the necessity of success. Conversely, I suggest that prior failure breeds*

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> *current success because it increases the urgency of success. I test this argument with playoff games between professional basketball teams from 1947 through 1982. Controlling for the advantage accruing to the home team as well as for the relative strength of the teams, I find that in back-to-back games at the same time, teams that won the previous game are more likely to lose the current game*

3.1.4.5. Anxiety

Anxiety is viewed by researchers as an intermediate stage between motivation and personality. If a learner is not motivated, he is unlikely to make any effort. In the same way, a highly motivated learner with little subjective willing for achievement increases anxiety.

Depending on its source, anxiety is divided into several types. Social anxiety is the result of one's willing to maintain people favourable opinion and impression. Other sources of a less socially evident origin may occur in contexts such as the fear of bad performance in exams.

In general, anxiety (Mizruchi,1991) has a curvilinear effect on performance: low levels help, whereas high levels hurt. This makes sense. As noted earlier, if one doesn't care at all , there is little reason to try to do well . Too much concern about failure can get in the way.

3.1.4.6 Personality Factors

There are several theories claiming that personality factors can affect language learning. The mainly personality factors discussed in the literature are: introversion and extroversion. , risk taking and field independence. The relevance of personality types depends on theoretical views about language

learning. For instance, Guiora, Brannon & Dull (1972) considered *empathy* as a positive factor in second language learning. Guiora (1965)defines empathy as a process of comprehending in which a temporary fusion of self-object boundaries permitting an immediate emotional apprehension of the affective experience of another". Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991) argue that it is necessary to look more closely at how personality affects an individual in specific situations, rather than looking for a global influence.

By definition , an introvert is someone who is much happier with a book than with people. The extrovert, on the other hand, is happier with people than with a book. These definitions have direct effect on success in language learning; though he implications might at some time look contradictory. A logical conclusion would be that introvert are more subject to academic success but they have difficulty in social interaction . The opposite is true for extroverts who interact socially with ease but have difficulty when it comes to the use of academic documents. Thus, we can say that both introversion and extroversion lead to success . Even if it is manifested in different ways.

It is commonly believed that risk taking is a factor of language learning success. Beebe (1983:39) defines risk taking as "a situation where an individual has to make a decision involving choice between alternatives of different desirability; the outcome of the choice is uncertain; there is a possibility of failure".

A risk taking individual is more willing to take risk than the average person. This means that risk taking should be based on a background of general behaviour. Kahnemen, Slovic, and Tversky (1982) found that individuals are risk-averse when contemplating a gain, but risk seeking when contemplating a loss. Thus the learner behaviour will depend on whether he sees the situation of language learning as a gain or as loss; considering the fact that different learners may frame the situation differently.

Field independence refers to the highly analytical behaviour of the learner, ignoring the potentially confusing information in the context. The field-independent person is self-reliant. The field-dependent person, on the other hand, is more attentive to context. These personality traits have predictable effects on language learning. We can expect the field-independent learner to have good performance with the analytical tasks, while the field-dependent learner will have greater facility in social interactions.

In general, there is no evidence that any personality trait can predict overall success in language learning. We can only say that certain personality traits can help perform or complete certain tasks that play a part in language learning. Thus, the importance of the personality traits will highly depend on the teaching method, the educational process and process and teaching material surrounding the learner in his acquisitional process.

3.1.4.7 Learning Strategies

It is commonly known in the field of language acquisition that some learners are more successful than others. It is also usually said that good learners do different things than poor learners. These things learners do and make a difference with are generally known as *learning strategies*.

3.1.4.7.1 Definition

One definition of learning strategy can be found in Oxford & Cohen (1992:1): " steps or actions taken by learners to improve the development of their language skills". Another definition is given by Weinstein & Mayer (1986) as they say that learning strategies are methods or techniques that individuals use to improve their comprehension, learning, and retention of information. Chamot & El-Dinary (1999) , Gass & Selinker (1994) , and Sullivan (2006)

agree on the fact that learning strategies are mental procedures assisting learning as well as overt physical actions.

Cohen (1998:5) speaks about the way learning strategies affect the identification and use of the learning material. He says:

> *Language learning strategies include strategies for identifying the material that needs to be learned, distinguishing it from other material if need be. Grouping it for easier learning (e.g. grouping vocabulary by category into nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and so forth), having repeated contact with the material (e.g. through classroom tasks or the completion of home work assignments), and formally committing the material to memory when it does not seem to be acquired naturally (whether through rote memory techniques such as repetition , the use of mnemonics, or some other memory technique). Note that repeated contact with material could be seen as a form of rehearsal, although rehearsal usually implies that the material is at least partially learned already can and can therefore be rehearsed.*

Cohen (opcit.: 5) considers that adult learners have their own way of using the language material. He says:

> *Adult learners may have a keen sense of just*
> *what it is they may need to commit to memory*
> *(e.g. certain complex vocabulary or grammatical*
> *forms) and what they can leave to more*
> *automatized language learning , often referred to*
> *as acquisition.*

3.1.4.7.2 Types of Learning Strategies

Cohen (1998) divides the strategies for using the material into four main subsets:

- Retrieval Strategies
- Rehearsal Strategies
- Cover Strategies
- Communication Strategies.

Retrieval Strategies are those strategies used to recall material from storage through the various searching strategies the learner masters. For instance, a retrieval learning strategy could be a keyword mnemonic in order to retrieve the meaning of vocabulary items.

Rehearsal Strategies are strategies for rehearsing target language structures. Bialystok (1990: 27) gives the example of memorising how to request for a loaf of bread and two rolls at the bakery. In this case, memorising serves as a learning strategy that is followed by using the material a communication exchange.

Cover Strategies are those strategies that learners use to create the impression they have control over material when they do not. They are a special type of coping strategy which involves creating an appearance of language ability to

avoid giving bad opinion about oneself (Cohen, 1998:6). An example of this type of strategy would be the use of memorised or partially understood phrases in utterances in classroom drills to keep the action going. Other strategies of this type could be complicating certain structures on purpose(saying something by means of a complex and complicated structure with the purpose of avoiding the use of lacking or unmastered structure or element).

Communication Strategies focus on sending a message that is both meaningful and informative for the listener or reader. This type of strategy has been devoted much interest by research (Tarone et al. 1976; Tarone, 1977, 1981; Faerch an Kasper, 1983a, Paribakht, 1985; Poulisse, 1990; Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei, 1995; Dörnyei yei and Scott, 1997). They include intralingual strategies such as overgeneralizing a grammar rule or a meaning from one context to another where it does not apply, topic avoidance or abandonment, message reduction, code switching , and paraphrasing (Cohen, 1998:7).

Chamot (1987) and Oxford (1990) differentiate language learning strategies as follows:
- Cognitive Strategies
- Metacognitive Strategies
- Affective Strategies
- Social Strategies

Cognitive Strategies include identification, grouping, retention and storage of language material. They include under this category retrieval, rehearsal, comprehension and production.

Metacognitive Strategies   are used in pre-assessment, pre-planning, on-line planning and evaluation, and post evaluation of language activities . These strategies play a coordination role. They coordinate the planning, organising and evaluating of the learning process.   It has been widely demonstrated in the literature that higher proficiency learners are more frequent users of the metacognitive strategies. They have also proved to be better and more effective users of these strategies (Vandergrift, 1992; Anderson and Vandergrift, 1996).

Affective Strategies regulate emotion, motivation, anxiety and self-encouragement . They help balance the psychological state of the learner for more optimal acquisition results.

Social Strategies include the learners choice of actions to interact with other learners, language users or native speakers of the language being learned. This might include such actions as asking questions to clarify social roles and relationships for the completion of certain more or less complex tasks that require the cooperation between the people taking part in the process.

Cohen (1998) organises the learning strategies from the more general to the more specific as follows (case study: strategies to develop the reading comprehension and text analysis skills):

- **General Strategy:** Forming concepts and hypotheses about how the target language works.
- **Specific Strategy:** Improving reading comprehension in the new language.
- **More Specific:** The use of strategies for determining whether a text is coherent.

- **Still more Specific:** Strategies for summarising a text to determine its coherence.
- **More Specific than that:** The use of ongoing summaries written in the margin in telegraphic form.

Input selection and organisation could help improve language learning. It is claimed in the literature that selection and organisation of input and its integration in the learner system can bring potential advancement in language learning. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) suggest an exhaustive list of learning strategies; these include: clarification, verification, monitoring, analysing, memorising, guessing, inductive reasoning, deductive reasoning, emphasising one thing over another, practice and production tricks.

Among the most popular themes of research in the field of learning strategies , we can speak about the identification of the strategies used by good learners and how these could be generalised to all learners. Among the most popular studies related to this theme, we can site Cohen (1998), Rubin & Thomson (1994), Oxford &Leaver (1996), Rubin (1975,   1996). Another popular theme of research is the description and classification of language learning strategies among students of various languages and coming from various language backgrounds (for example, Bedell & Oxford, 1996; Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary & Robbins, 1996; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, Quinn & Enos, 1988; Thompson & Rubin, 1996). Another very popular theme of investigation about learning strategies in the new millennium is computer and internet-based learning (Dabbagh,2005; Driscoll,2005; White & Baker, 2003).

However, researchers agree on the fact , although this field of study is very interesting and could bring precious knowledge about language learning, it

is not without its problems. Oxford & Cohen (1992) went on to list and discuss serious conceptual and classificatory problems in this area. They (ibid:3) say :

> *From the profusion of studies recently devoted to learning strategies...one might believe that this research area is fully coherent. However, this coherence is something of an illusion .*

In agreement with this, Larry & Selinker (1994: 267) argue:

> *...research into learning strategies, though interesting and important, is perhaps best viewed as preliminary. When more of the problems involved with studying learning strategies are solved, then there will by a firmer basis for stating that use of certain learning strategies are truly helpful in learning a second language. This is clearly an important area and one hopes that a solid body of theoretically sound research becomes available soon.*

3.2 Error Analysis

3.2.1 From Contrastive to Error Analysis

EA -the study investigating the origins of errors- has a close relationship with Contrastive analysis (CA), the analysis is based on the comparison of different languages to establish the points of resemblance and those of difference between those languages . The two fields share the same central theme which is language acquisition.

Abbas (1995, 95) gives an account of the place of CA and how EA comes to be used instead.

> *Despite the fact that contrastive analysis has been the subject of rancorous debate from some thirty years , it has made significant stride to contribute to our understanding of language teaching. It has mainly been criticised for its overemphasis of one type of error "interference" and hence fails to predict all the errors the second language learner is likely to commit. As a reaction to its techniques, error analysis has been introduced and deemed as surrogate.*

He (1995,195) states that "The use of CA and/or EA on a study is largely determined by the type of the topic being investigated".

To what extent CA and EA have contributed to language teaching has always been the object of discussion. Oller (1972: 95) questioned the pedagogical value of CA. He argues that :

> *Contrastive analysis is recognised as a useful technique for research into the nature of human information processing but is rejected as a foundation for second language instructional programs . Contrastive analysis is neither a necessary nor a sufficient basis for program design.*

Baghoul (1984: 9) sums up the weaknesses of CA.
He says:

> "*Besides questioning the validity of interference as a source of errors, there were two other weaknesses of contrastive analysis as a discipline in applied linguistics: first, the failure of most studies in predicting all areas of difficulty and second, the theoretical problems of making adequate comparisons between languages.*

According to Ellis (1985: 27):

> *The major problems, however, have to do with the relationship between the psychological and the linguistic aspects of contrastive analysis . This is a little point in comparing languages if learners make only limited use of their first language in SLA. The accuracy of prediction will always be open to doubt if contrastive analysis fails to specify the conditions that determine if and when interference takes place.*

Chomsky's theory on the universality of grammar has oriented the psycholinguistic research on the way the learner acquires his MT and how similar this process is to his learning of a foreign language FL. Much interest has been devoted to the learner's innate mental and cognitive abilities to generate the grammar of any language he is acquiring and to find universal features to human languages rather than differences between them. The logical consequence of this is that CA "…was relegated to a dark corner" (Hammerly, 1991: 62).

Corder (1967) points out that errors provide research with evidence of how language is learned or acquired and what strategies or procedures the learner employs in his/her discovery of the language. EA and interlingual research studies – interlanguage is a linguistic system which, although deviant from the norm, is used by the learners in their attempt to function in TL - raised questions about the possibility of clear identification of the stages through which the learner goes in acquiring FL grammar, phonology…whether learners from different origins and with different native languages would go through the same acquisition stages and if these stages were similar to the ones by which children acquiring their NL pass.

Dulay and Burt (1974) analysed a set of morphemes and observed the order in which they were acquired . They got the following results:

English as a first language	**English as a second language**
1. Plural (S)	1. Plural (S)
2. Progressive (-ing)	2. Progressive (-ing)
3. Past irregular	3. Contractible copula
4. Articles (a. the)	4. Contractible auxiliary
5. Contractible copula	5. Articles (a. the)
6. Possessive (s)	6. Past irregular
7.Third person singular(-s)	7. Third person singular(-s)
Contractible auxiliary	Possessive (s)

The conclusion drawn by Dulay and Burt from these results was that there was a high degree of agreement between the order in which the foreign language learners acquire grammatical morphemes and that observed with the natives of the language. As the foreign learners were from various origins , comparing their results, the two linguists came out with the conclusion that the first language plays a considerable part in determining how long it tales learners to pass through the various stages.

Richards (1985) reconsidered this experiment and concluded that NL interference is an important factor in error making . Although developmental errors seem to constitute the major percentage among errors, if we consider the unexplained and the transfer errors together, we would see that they overcome the percentage of developmental errors (those errors caused by the inherent complexity of the TL or due to methodological problems).

EA is not only the study of obstacles to learning , it is also the analysis of the stages of the Language acquisition process. The learning of a FL was now to be seen as the acquisition of some kind of knowledge including the making of developmental as well as transfer errors through the process of cognitive learning rather than a simple reaction to external stimuli. This is clearly illustrated in Corder's words (1978, 203):

> *A language user possesses a set of cognitive structures acquired by some process of data processing and hypothesis formation in which the making of errors was evidence of the learning process itself and probably not only inevitable but necessary.*

3.2.2 The Role of the Native Language

One basic assumption in language learning is that learners rely essentially on their NL during the TL learning process . This makes the role of the native language an important part of SLA research.

3.2.2.1   Historical Overview

This area of SLA has usually been known as language transfer. Consequently, it has been experiencing the effect of the alternation between the acceptance and/or rejection of language transfer throughout the last decades depending on the specific theory with which it was being associated. As Lado stated it clearly (1957,2):

> *Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings , and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language – both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture , and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and the culture as practised by natives.*

To understand why this concept has been fluctuating between acceptance and rejection, we need to examine the evolution of the psychological and linguistic thought starting from Lado's epoch and contrastive analysis, to pass by error analysis and end-up with a revised and re-examined vision of the role of the native language.

3.2.2.1.1 Psychological Background

Among the most important concepts related to psychology of learning we meet in language learning literature we can find : *transfer*, *habit formation* and *cumulative learning* to site the essential ones.

The term transfer is used to refer to the psychological process carrying prior learning over into a new learning situation. In fact, transfer is based on the assumption that the learning of a task affects the acquisition of a subsequent one. applied to language learning this would raise such questions as: how fast and how well we acquire a new language after having learned a first one? (Gass & Selinker, 1994) (for further detail about transfer ,see chapter about Error analysis in this volume).

The concept of learning and acquisition is based on the essential assumption that all knowledge we acquire is interrelated chronologically, in the sense that past knowledge always affects new learning. It represents a starting point. This is particularly true about adult learners who are always relying their past experiences to build up new concepts. It can logically be concluded from this theory that, learning is a cumulative process. Describing habit formation and cumulative learning, Postman (1971,1019) says:

> *Learning is a cumulative process. The more knowledge and skills an individual acquires, the more likely it becomes that his new learning will be shaped by his past experiences and activities. An adult, rarely, if ever, learns anything completely new; however unfamiliar the task that confronts him , the information and habits he has built up in the past will be his point of departure. Thus transfer of learning from old to new situations is part and parcel of most , if not all, learning. In this sense, the study of transfer is coextensive with the investigation of learning.*

3.2.2.1.2 Linguistic background

The main orientation of the linguistic research of the 1950's and 1960's was the habitual nature of language. SLA was seen as the development of a new set of habits. The role of the L1 was then an essential element of investigation because its habits interfered with the establishment of L2 ones.

From this need, CA came to emerge. Its' objective was to compare the rules of the two languages (the one with the habits already established and the one with the habits trying to be established).It must be pointed out that CA followed to distinct traditions. The north America tradition (with pedagogical perspectives) emphasised language teaching methods and learning strategies. The ultimate objective of this tradition in CA was to improve the existing teaching material and to build-up new ones based on scientific research and empirical data. The European school on the other hand was interested in investigating the nature of language as an entity for the only objective of gaining a deeper understanding of it. Thus, the north American movement was classified as belonging to applied linguistics (Fisiak, 1991) whereas the European movement was more related to pure linguistics.

3.2.2.2   Contrastive Analysis

As defined by Gass & Selinker (1994, 59):

> *Contrastive analysis is a way of comparing languages in order to determine potential errors for the ultimate purpose of isolating what needs to be learned and what does not need to be in a second language learning situation.*

There were two theories that developed with regard to CA. These were variously called *strong* versus *weak* or *predictive* versus *explanatory*

view. The weak version analyses the learners' recurring errors. This version belongs to error analysis and it gained credit mainly due to the failure of the predictive version which most frequently predicted errors that did not occur or failed to predict redundant ones. (further detail is available in the chapter devoted to Error Analysis in this same volume).

3.2.2.3   Error Analysis

As CA was being criticised, focus was put on EA. As its names suggests, this study focuses on the analysis of the learners errors. However , unlike CA, EA interpreted the errors, not only in terms of NL influence. It compared the learners' TL production with the TL itself.

EA had specific steps to follow. We can sum them up as follows:
- Collect data
- Identify errors
- Classify errors (interlingual or intralingual)
- Quantify errors
- Analysis of source
- Remediation

EA was more popular than CA because it gave a wider range of interpretation of the learners' errors (interlingual   i.e. resulting from NL influence and intralingual i.e. due to the inherent complexity of the target language)and thus provided the teachers with more possibilities to explain and remedy to their learners' difficulties.

EA had its own detractors. Among the most offensive works against EA we can site Schachter (1974), Duskova (1983), Dulay and Burt (1974). As stated by Gass & Selinker (1994,68):

*Error analysis was not without its detractors. One of
the major criticisms was the total reliance on errors in
the absence of other information. That is one needs to
consider errors as well as nonerrors to get the entire
picture of a learner's linguistic behaviour.*

In sum, though it played an important role in unlighting the   reality than language learners are more than just NL reflective mirrors , EA proved to be incomplete in that it only gives a partial picture of the learners' TL production. This weakness lead to the emergence interlanguage and performance analysis which analysed the learners' correct as well as incorrect production for a more authentic analysis of the acquisition process.

3.2.2.4   Morpheme Order Studies

After the criticism CA and EA have been subject to, some new approaches related to the treatment of the NL were introduced. This kind of study was related to as morpheme order studies. For more detail see Brown (1973), Dulay and Burt(1974), Baily, Madden and Krashen (1974), Porter (1977) and many others…

The major theoretical grounding of these studies was to prove that NL was of insignificant influence in SLA. They were claiming that a cognitive interpretation of the acquisition process was more valuable than a behaviourist interpretation.

In sum, the morpheme order studies have been and still are very influenced in the field of SLA research, particularly in the attempt to understand the developmental sequences. . However, we cannot say that this movement has experienced pure success. In fact , it has been severely criticised for the incompleteness of its interpretations. Critics of the movement argue that it is not sufficient to put an order of development without explaining it or bringing an

incomplete interpretation. Many questions were raised. Are morpheme orders due to NL influence? Are they due to semantic factors in that certain concepts may be semantically more complex than others? Are they due to syntactic complexity? Are they due to input frequency? All these questions deserve a *yes* or *no* answer. However , the best answer to give is one combining the contributions of all these elements and may be some others. What remains to be evaluated is the relative weighting of each element and how do all of them combine to give the specific resulting order.

The latest innovations related to the role of the NL extend the interpretation of the phenomenon of transfer beyond the limits of intrusion and facilitation. Such new notions as avoidance, over-production, predictability and selectivity. (for further detail, see chapter about EA in this same volume).

3.2.3 Major Concepts in Error analysis

There are major concepts in EA that need to be clarified and distinguished from each other. We will distinguish between mistakes and errors, transfer and interference, diachronic and synchronic transfer ,and primary and secondary transfer.

The terms "**mistake**" and "**error**" are used to refer to deviation from the norm . They are at times used interchangeably. However, a mistake is a result of a slip of the tongue or pen caused by pure psychological conditions such as intense excitement and or physiological factors, such as tiredness, which tend to vary from moment to moment and from situation to situation. Mistakes are due to failure in performance, which means that the learner knows the rules of the TL and is capable of recognising and correcting them (Corder, 1971). In fact, they:

> *…they are not the result of a deficiency in*
> *"competence" but the result of a neuropsy-*

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chological breakdown or imperfection in the
process of encoding and articulating speech.
(Corder 1978, 204)

On the other hand, errors are ill-formed structures due to the learner's imperfect knowledge of the foreign linguistic system. An error is usually repeated in the learner's production proving that it is not the result of any tiredness or lack of concentration, but the consequence of an imperfect or incomplete competence as far as the system being acquired is concerned. In fact, the difference between mistakes and errors is that an error is due to a deficiency in competence leading to incorrect performance, whereas a mistake is produced by the learner whose competence is perfect but who has performance problems resulting from given psychological or physiological conditions. Mistakes are unsystematic; they occur only under certain circumstances. Errors are systematic; they reflect the wrong or incomplete understanding of a rule , and in this sense, they are the sign of what Corder (1967:166) calls "Transitional Competence".

Transfer refers to the way in which past knowledge and experience about language are used in a new situation. It is a process described as automatic, uncontrolled and subconscious. It unconsciously uses past behaviour to produce new responses. (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982). According to Hammerly (1991), the learners try to use the FL as a means of communication. Since they have always been communicating in their MT, This will have a direct effect on their FL production. He says:

Faced with something to learn(the SL)[1]that is
similar , something they know and use for the
same communicative purposes the NL, beginners

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[1] SL: Second Language

tend to rely initially on their mother tongue. Thus there are frequent NL intrusions in their SL output. (Hammerly,1991,5).

Interference refers to the psychological and sociological effect of the MT on the FL.

The psychological use of the term interference refers to the influence of the old habits when new ones are being learned, whereas the sociolinguistic use of interference refers to language 'interaction' such as linguistic borrowing and language switching. (Dulay, Burt and krashen,1982: 98).

Interference refers to the process whereas transfer refers to the product. There is an opposition between the processes hypothesised to underlying verbal production and the characteristics of performance. "Transfer" plays the role of "description" whereas "interference" plays the one of "explanation".

Linguists draw a distinction between **diachronic** and **synchronic** transfer. Cook (1992: 580) defines diachronic transfer as "…transfer over time…" and synchronic transfer as"… transfer at a specific point in time…". For James(1994: 182-183), synchronic transfer:

…has more to do with language processing, performance and communication. It is used in encoding/decoding messages rather than breaking the code . One is reminded of the ambiguous status of the L1 transfer as either learning or communicative strategy.

Diachronic transfer, on the other hand , is used by the learner to break the L2 code, i.e. to learn (ibid.: 182). Thus, diachronic transfer serves learning purposes and synchronic transfer communication purposes. The latter is direct and item-bound. This most certainly does not mean that the two cannot co-occur. As stated be James(ibid.: 183):" Dual status is a possibility: a given item of L2 knowledge could have been transferred years ago from L1, but can still reinforce L2 responses every time they are activated".

Primary transfer is spontaneous. It is an untaught strategy which every individual learner possesses. This kind of transfer is the actual , original interference. It is not regulated by any previous usage. In opposition, **secondary transfer** has no spontaneity. It does not result from the individual's own creation. It could be qualified as the institutionalised kind. It emerges from the legacy left by the whole community in a language contact situation.

3.2.4 Types of Transfer: Positive, Negative, Avoidance and Over-use

There are four main types of transfer; positive, negative, avoidance and over-use.

Positive transfer leads to correct performance from the learner. The new habits which constitute the FL are similar to the old ones which constitute the MT. Thus, the new behaviour is the same as the old one . Ellis (1985: 22) says:

> *it is quite possible that the means of expressing a shared meaning are the same in the first and second language. In such cases, it is possible to transfer the means used to realise a given meaning in the L1 into the L2 . When this is possible , the only learning that has to take place is the discovery that the realisation devices are the same in the two languages.*

As stated by Hammerly (1991:63):

> *Previous knowledge can facilitate learning(positive transfer or facilitation) to the extent that the established knowledge and the "new"(which is not knew since its already known).*

This means that the similarities between the two languages can facilitate rapid and easy learning. This will most certainly be observed, as Odlin (1989) pointed it out when we have learners from various origins, with various native languages. Its not only through the absence of certain errors that facilitation can be observed but also through rapid and smooth learning. In agreement with this, Ellis(1994: 303) argues:

> *Facilitation is evident not so much in the total absence of certain errors - as would be expected on the basis of behaviourist notions of positive transfer - but rather in a reduced number of errors and , also in the rate of learning.*

It is agreed on among the language teachers that the knowledge of a close language facilitates the learning of the new language. United States and British government languages teaching Institutes have determined that it is much more time consuming for an English speaker to reach the same level of proficiency in say, Korean, than in French. Dulay and Burt's data (1974) showed that Spanish speaking learners performed better in English than Chinese speaking learners. This is explained by Hammerly (1991: 69) as follows:

The main effect of NL-SL closeness is to aid comprehension through the presence of many cognate words and similar structures. Even when a target language is taught inductively, this closeness facilitates learning and therefore production...the result is that a typologically close language can come to be understood much faster than a typologically distant language.

Negative transfer is the way in which old knowledge interferes with FL language learning to produce inappropriate behaviour. Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982: 101) define negative transfer as those instances of transfer which result in error because old habitual behaviour is different from the new behaviour that is being learned . For James(1994: 184), "Intrusion causes the learner to use wrong forms". In this sense, negative transfer is an intrusion. Negative transfer occurs when the L1and the language to be learned share the same meaning with different means of expressing it.. Here, an error in the L2 production is likely to happen . The learner will be using his L1 realisation device to express the meaning shared with the TL.

As the FL learners evolve through the acquisition process, they will meet more and more new structures that have no equivalent in their NL. Because they have been able to express themselves acceptably without using these structures, the learners will prefer to continue on the same path (i.e. avoiding the use of the structures they don't feel the need to learn). Thus, **avoidance** is unlike "intrusion" which results in the presence   of NL structures in the FL. Distinguishing intrusion from avoidance, Ellis(1994: 304) says:

Learners also avoid using linguistic structures which they find difficult because of differences between their native language and their target language. In such cases, the effects of the L1 are evident not in what learners do (errors) but in what they do not do (omissions).

Schatchter (1974) found that Chinese and Japanese learners of English produced and made less errors in the relative clauses than Persian and Arab learners. This was explained by the fact that this structure was similar to the one in Arabic but different from the one in Chinese.   As stated by Ellis (1994: 308) : "It only makes sense to talk of avoidance if the learners know what they are avoiding". We can only say that "avoidance" has taken place if the learners know the structure they are avoiding and if the native speakers of that language would have used it in that particular situation. Kellerman (1992) distinguishes three types of avoidance. The first type occurs when there is a minimum condition for avoidance to take place, i.e. when the learner anticipates that there will be a problem with a given form and has some general idea of what the target form is like. The second type is evident when the learner knows the target form but has difficulty in applying it to specific circumstances where it should be used. The third type rises when the learner knows the target form and knows when it should be applied but does not want to use it because s/he finds it different from his/her own norm of behaviour.

Over-use generally comes as a direct consequence of avoidance. The learners , trying to do without the complex L2 structures, will tend to show a certain preference for other words and structures which they will generalise to a large number of contexts even if the used structures might sound correct in the

wide range of situations they are applied to; they are not always appropriate nor do they represent the best or most accurate choice.

3.2.5 Aspects of Transfer

Why do the differences between L1 and L2 result sometimes in transfer and sometimes not? The elements which make up the transferability of a language item are divided into three main categories: linguistic factors, sociolinguistic factors and developmental factors.

3.2.5.1 Linguistic Factors

Linguistic elements cover language elements, markedness, prototypicality and language distance.

Language Elements

The sound system seems to be more affected by the phenomenon of transfer than the syntactic system. Purcell and Suter (1980) analysed the pronunciation of English learners with various NLs: Thai, Japanese, Persian and Arabic. They noticed that Persian and Arab learners performed better than Thai and Japanese learners. The conclusion drawn was that an increase in the difference between the L1 and the L2 leads to a decrease in performance on the part of these learners., as stated by Major (1986), learners do not transfer all the features of their NL. Phonological transfer is controlled by universal developmental tendencies that are not language specific but rather due to the general human conception of sounds.

Transfer is also very influential at the level of Lexis. " There are enormous quantities of evidence for the influence of L1 on interlanguage when it comes to Lexis" (Kellerman 1987: 42). Ringbom (1987) noticed that most of the lexical errors committed by Swedish and Finnish learners of English resulted

from translation activities. Sjoholm (1976) observed that Swedish learners performed better than Finnish learners and concluded that this was due to the fact that Swedish is closer to English than Finnish.   This means that the acquisition of Lexis is faster when the L1 and the L2 are related to each other.

Another language level at which transfer plays an important role is discourse. Schachter and Rutherford (1979) have noticed that there was some confusion between syntactic and discourse errors. Syntactic errors occur at the level of form (obeying grammatical rules). However, a discourse error takes place when the syntactic form used to express the specific discourse function is inappropriate. So, the question to answer is: how to make the syntactic forms meet their discourse functions?

It is generally agreed among linguists that transfer is more conspicuous at the level of Phonology, Lexis and Discourse than at the level of Grammar. Ellis(1994: 334) explains that this must be due to the fact that "learners have a more developed metalingual awareness of grammar" .This enables the learners to control their choice of the linguistic form at the level of grammar more than the other language levels. As a consequence , transfer could be inhibited (ibid.,317). The grammar rules of the NL are held in abeyance when the L2 is acquired. Referring to the way L1 grammar interferes in L2, Krashen (1982, 110-111) says:

> *When learners use first language structures in second language performance, they in effect plug lexical items(vocabulary0of the second language into the surface structure of the first language. In other words, they "think" in the first language and use words from the second language…In situation where the surface structure of both languages is similar, this is not a problem.*

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> *Languages do, however, differ considerably to surface syntax. When learners try to use first language structures that are not identical to second language structures, they make interlingual errors.*

Markedness

Markedness includes two basic concepts: the unmarked rules and the marked ones. Unmarked rules are derived from the general concept of human language (for example: singular/ plural). Marked rules, on the other hand , are those which are not governed by universal principles; they have their own historical origins such as the English structure *"the more…the more"* .

Many linguists such as Zobl (1984), Hyltenstam (1984)and Eckman (1984)agreed on two main principles as regards the relation between L1 transferability and the distinction between markedness and unmarkedness of the language rules:

- Language learners tend to transfer the L1 unmarked rule of their L1 when the L2 rule is marked.
- Language learners will not transfer the L1 marked rules, especially when the corresponding rule in the L2 in unmarked.

Basing himself on these principles, Eckman(1984) provides what he calls the "markedness differential Hypothesis". He believes that a comparison of the nature of the rules of the NL with those of the TL will help to distinguish between the various areas of difficulty in language learning. He says (1977, 321):

those areas of difficulty that a second language learner will have can be predicted on the basis of a comparison of the native language(NL) and the target language(TL)such that:

(a) Those areas of the TL that are different from the NL and are relatively more marked than the NL will be difficult

(b) The degree of difficulty associated with those aspects of the TL that are different and more marked than in the NL corresponds to the relative degree of markedness associated with those aspects.

(c) Those areas of the TL That are different from the NL but are not relatively more marked than the NL will not be difficult.

Prototypicality

Prototypicality treats those aspects that may influence the learners to take the risk to transfer some of the structures of his NL. Kellerman (1977, 1978, 1979, 1986, 1989) has attempted to provide evidence throughout his papers that the learners possess their perception of the structure of their NL according to which they consider certain structures as transferable and others not. Kellerman (1983: 129) suggests that learners praise "reasonableness in language" and "attempt to keep their L2s transparent". However, judgement on what L1 elements are transferable is not influenced by their experience with the L2.

Language Distance(Psychotypology)

Language distance is, from a linguistic point of view, seen as the amount of linguistic difference between two languages and from a psychological point of view what the learners believe the amount of difference between the TL and their NL is. It has a role to play in transfer whether the positive or the negative one. As stated by Corder (1981:101):

> *Where the mother tongue is formally similar to the target language, the learner will pass more rapidly along the developmental continuum (or some parts of it), than where it differs.*

Kellerman (1979) refers to language distance as Psychotypology, a set of perceptions about language distance. The learners make their own views about what they consider as transferable at points where the TL and the NL are similar. It is on the basis of these views that the learners decide whether or not they will effectuate conscious transfer.

Psychotypology is not fixed (Kellerman, 1979). The more the learners get information about the TL, the more their Psychotypology is adjusted. "… at any given moment NL features will be available for transfer to the given TL, and others will not be" (Op-cit., 40).

Psychotypology and Prototypicality are interactive factors. The difference between the two is that Prototypicality gives us the areas where the learners are likely to risk transferring, whereas psycholypology gives us what is actually transferred. As they evolve in their TL acquisition, their conception of language distance will get refined and their Psychotypology will change regarding the elements which they consider as prototypical or not(thus transferable or not) .

3.2.5.2 Sociolinguistic Factors

Transfer is influenced by sociolinguistic factors, mainly apparent at the social context (where the language is spoken) and the relationship between the two interlocutors(who are native speakers of the FL). Concerning the social context, Ellis(1994: 318) states that:

> *When learners are in a language class-room setting, they will adhere to target language norms and thus try to avoid transfer. However, where the same learners are outside the classroom , they might show much less regard for target language forms and transfer quite freely*

The effect of social context on transfer should be analysed in relation to the type of norm that the learners have in mind. It could be internal or external. As clarified by Ellis (Op-cit.: 319):

> *If the context requires attention to external norms(as manifested in textbooks, reference books, and the teacher), negative transfer is inhibited. If, however, the context encourages attention to internal norms (as in free conversation involving speakers with shared language), learners may resort more freely to the L1 if this helps comprehensibility and promotes positive affective responses.*

In a classroom, learners may try to avoid transfer as they recognise the value of the external factors. However, when the L1 norm is socially appropriate, the learners will most certainly resort to transfer. Tarone (1982) has

shown that learners are more likely to make transfer errors when they use a careful style i.e. they pay attention to what they say than when they use their vernacular style. He argues that the more the learners pay attention to what they say, the more they make use of all their existing resources including their knowledge of their L1.

3.2.5.3   Developmental Factors

Transfer sometimes occurs early and some other times occurs late, having either an accelerating or a refraining effect on language learning. Some linguists such as Taylor (1975) claim that L1 influence is most evident with beginners. He observed the performance of Spanish-speaking English learners and noticed that beginners made more translation errors than learners of advanced classes. Others, however, maintain that language learners cannot transfer some of their L1 structures unless they reach a certain level of development. " The possibilities of transfer increase as the knowledge of the second language increases" (Klein 1986: 27). The simple structures and elements , which are introduced at early stages, can be subject to transfer at these stages, whereas the more complex ones which are introduced at a more advanced stage can only be transferred at this stage of development.

Wenk (1986) dealt with language rhythm as French learners of English acquire it. He noticed that beginners simply use the French rhythm (trailer timed). Then, as they evolve, they produce a sort of in-between rhythm, and by the end of the training , they are able to produce a correct English rhythm (leader timed). Kellerman (1983) dealt with the pronominal occurrences in relative clauses. He found that such errors can only occur when the learners have reached a sufficiently advanced level to produce relative clauses. Bohn and Fledge (1992) noticed that German learners of English could not internalise certain TL vowels that were close but not identical to their equivalents in the

NL. According to them, this was due to the fact that " category formation is blocked by equivalence classification" (Op-cit.: 156).

Conclusion

Although language acquisition researchers have tried to build theories and general principles about interlanguage metamorphosis and to put general sequences representing the processes followed by the language learners , it remains truly agreed on among language researchers that there is no standard evolution in language learning. In other words, different individuals have different learning and acquisition rates. This means that individual differences among language learners play a decisive part in the learning degree of success of learning. Many personal factors can affect the acquisition process. Among them, we can cite: motivation, anxiety, age, aptitude, social distance, memory, learner strategies and many others.

The second field dealt with in this chapter is error analysis and particular focus is devoted to the phenomenon of transfer. Some transfer errors occur at the beginning and tend to disappear as the acquisition process evolves . Other can only arise when the learners have reached a certain degree of development. A third type of transfer errors occurs at the beginning and last throughout the stages of development.

The analysis of transfer errors can help specify the difficulties that the L2 teachers expect their students to meet with a clear understanding of their cause, source, significance and gravity and deal with these problems in as an effective way as possible.

CHAPTER FOUR

A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF THE EMERGENCE OF GRAMMATICAL ASPECT

Outline

Introduction

4.1 The Sample

4.2 Research Methodology for the Longitudinal Study

4.2.1 Data Collection

4.2.2 Coding the Past Tense Forms

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4.3.1 Tense - Aspect Morphology

4.3.2 Emergence of the Tenses

4.3.2.1 Order of Emergence of the Tenses

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4.3.2.3 Influence of the Source Language

Conclusion

Introduction

The present study investigates the acquisition of tense and aspect morphology related to the past in English. Form-meaning associations are implicitly considered in the analysis of the acquisitional sequence. We look at the meaning associated with the emerging morphology. The scope of the study is related to the expression of the past. To define the past, we can refer to Reichenbach (1947). If we take "E" to represent event time, "S" to represent speech time, and "R" to represent reference time, then tense-aspect forms that encode the expression of past share the feature of E before S, or event time before speech time. The tense forms that satisfy this condition are the simple past, the past progressive, the present perfect and the past perfect. The acquisition of the TL tense-aspect system involves the morphology:

-Past Simple: *-ed*

-Past Continuous: *was/were* + V-*ing*

- Present Perfect Simple: *have* + past participle

- Past Perfect Simple: *had* + past participle

- Present Perfect Continuous: *have* + been + present participle

- Past Perfect Continuous: *had* + been + present participle

In addition to the semantic and pragmatic features. The learners must come to distinguish between the various semantically close forms.

General Description of the Three Parts of the Practical Research Works

In the three next chapters, we will look at the acquisition of temporal expression by Algerian adult learners of English from three perspectives; longitudinal study of the acquisitional sequence by the analysis of the learners'

written production over a period of two years of teaching input and data collection, an error analysis of the learners written production, and an investigation of the aspect hypothesis based on proficiency variation through the analysis of learners' written narratives.

The three co-existing approaches we will expose help us to build-up answers and conclusions about the acquisition of temporal expression. Each approach brings its own participation and gives its particular answer. However, if we look at the various frame-works, we can see that they are all interrelated. The testing of the aspect hypothesis looks into the form-meaning association and its development. The error analysis study draws a picture of the learners' mastery of the temporal system at the end of the acquisitional process.The longitudinal study observes the stages of emergence of tense and aspect morphology . The essential links that build-up the unity and coherence of our research work are the great concern for the association of form and meaning and the evolution and metamorphosis of the learner's interlingual temporal semantic system.

The longitudinal study investigates the steps of acquisition of verbal morphology. Examining the learners' evolving interlanguage, we will identify observe systems of form-meaning associations and their readjustment as new forms are acquired and assigned specific meanings. This will confirm the point made by the error analysis included in our research about the phenomena of avoidance and over-use. The evolving temporal system may cause poor use of certain forms at specific stages as the learners will be using the emerging forms in the contexts of other tense-aspect ones. This is why the learners must build-up a semantic distinction between the various close but different forms.

The error analysis on its part will draw a picture of the learners manipulation of the temporal system of English after two years of intensive language input and grammar instruction.

The cross sectional study of the analysis research will show how lexical aspect influences the distribution of verbal morphology in initial and later stages of morphological development through proficiency progression.

4.1 The sample

During the course of a two years data collection, 60 learners of English participated in the study. They are all students from the Department of English of the Faculty of Education. These future English teachers are following a four to five years program in which they are during the first and second years subject to intense exposure to the English language to develop both receptive and productive skills.

The sample of the study is homogeneous and representative of the Algerian adult learner of English. The sampling was purposive in the sense that all the characteristics of the population are displayed: variation in performance and origin (the Faculty of Education receives students from various regions of the East and the South East of the country).

4.2 Research Methodology for the Longitudinal Study
4.2.1 Data Collection

During the course of the study (the first two years of the curricullum), the learners wrote essays, compositions, narratives and creative pieces in their writing course. (only uncorrected first drafts were collected for the study). They also had end of term examinations including 90 minutes compositions The study involved four terms , two for the first year and two for the second year).

This procedure resulted in the collection of a sample of 1620 written texts. 780 texts were compositions, 600 narratives (two for each term) and 240 end of term exams(one at the end of each term).

The year was divided into 8 month periods (the first half of January and the last half of April coincide respectively with the winter and spring holidays).

The grid that resulted helped map the emergence of verbal morphology. Thus, the period of the first month was identified as M1, the second month as M2 and so on until the eight month that was named M8. The same sequencing was applied for the second year with 8 months starting from M9 to M16.

4.2.2 Coding the Past Tense Forms

All the tense forms involved in the study (past simple, past progressive, present perfect simple, past perfect simple, present perfect progressive, past perfect progressive) were coded. The language sample collected for each learner was analysed. As a first step of the analysis, all uses of the target verbal forms were identified. After identifying the verbs of each sampling period, we sorted them into types. We distinguished between tokens of verbs (all the verbs in the learners' texts) and verb types(considering only one instance of each verb form occuring in the text). To avoid an inflation of the rates that could be caused by the frequent use of common verbs , we considered types rather than tokens, i.e. each verb form was counted only once per month sampling period.However, when multiple forms of the same verbs were found , each of them was considered as a single type, regardless of the frequency of occurrence(*eg: go, went , have gone*). Negatives and passives were also considered as single types.

The Past

The Past Simple (PS)

A form was considered as past simple if it ended with the suffix *ed* (for regular as well as irregular verbs) or if it were in the appropriate past tense form for irregular verbs, so that a form like *He spoken* was not considered because it was situated in an ambiguous area between the past simple , the present perfect and the past perfect. The past participle could be attributed to a mis-use of an irregular past tense form as it could be explained by the ommission of the auxiliary *have* or *has*.

The Past Continuous (PC)

A form was coded as past progressive if a progressive morpheme was apparent, so that a form like *He was speak to her* was not considered because it lacked the morphological feature required.Those cases where the auxiliary (was/were) was not precise (even under possible circumstances of deletion - eg: *she was sitting there and thinking about her future*) because it could not be confirmed if these were cases of deletion under identity or simply bare progressive forms. In this manner, 2941 tokens of past progressive were identified.

The use of the past progressive is generally governed by the writer's opinion.Thus, it is very difficult to qualify its use as appropriate or not.

The Present Perfect

The analysis resulted in 2875 uses of present perfect " All uses were appropriate or cases of over-generalization (i.e. cases where another tense-aspect form is prefered). The latter were identified thanks to their co-occurence with inapropriate adverbials or with information provided by the context.

The Present Perfect Simple (Pr. Perf. S.)

Attempts at using the present perfect simple are those cases where we found *have/has ('ve / 's)* with a main verb so that the various forms *have went, have go, have gone* were all considered as present perfect forms.

The Present Perfect Progressive (Pr. Perf. C.)

Cases coded as present perfect progressive are those where we found *have/has* followed by main verb + *ing* (eg: *have waiting*) or combination of *be* and the main verb after *have/has* (eg: *have been write).*Evidently, the analysis

of the context provides the necessary information to distinguish between attempts at the present perfect progressive from attempts at the perfect passive (eg1: *I have been write /* eg2 : *the letters have been write*) . Respectively, the first example is a case of attempt at the present perfect progressive and the second example is a case of perfect passive.

The Past Perfect

The Past Perfect Simple (P.Perf. S.)

The past perfect simple was identified by the presence of *had* acompanied by the main verb.Attempts at the past perfect were such cases as *had speak , had spoke, had spoken*. The data collection resulted in 456 attempts at the past perfect, with all cases being apropriate or over–generalizations.

The Past Perfect Progressive (P.Perf. C.)

All along the observation period, only three attempts were made at the past perfect progressive: had + been + Present Participle.

4.3 Results of The Longitudinal Study

4.3.1 Tense-Aspect Morphology

The Past

The Past Simple

The PS was the first form to appear among the target forms under study. The learners produced a total of 4181 tokens of this tense form. The following table illustrates the emergence and progression of the production of the latter

Period of Observation	Global Production	Average Production
M1	372	6.20
M2	351	5.85
M3	341	5.68
M4	127	2.11
M5	248	4.13
M6	159	2.65
M7	154	2.56
M8	145	2.41
M9	178	2.96
M10	182	3.03
M11	176	2.93
M12	156	2.60
M13	134	2.23
M14	51	0.85
M15	122	2.03
M16	220	3.66
Total	3116	50.1

Table 16: The Emergence of the Past Simple
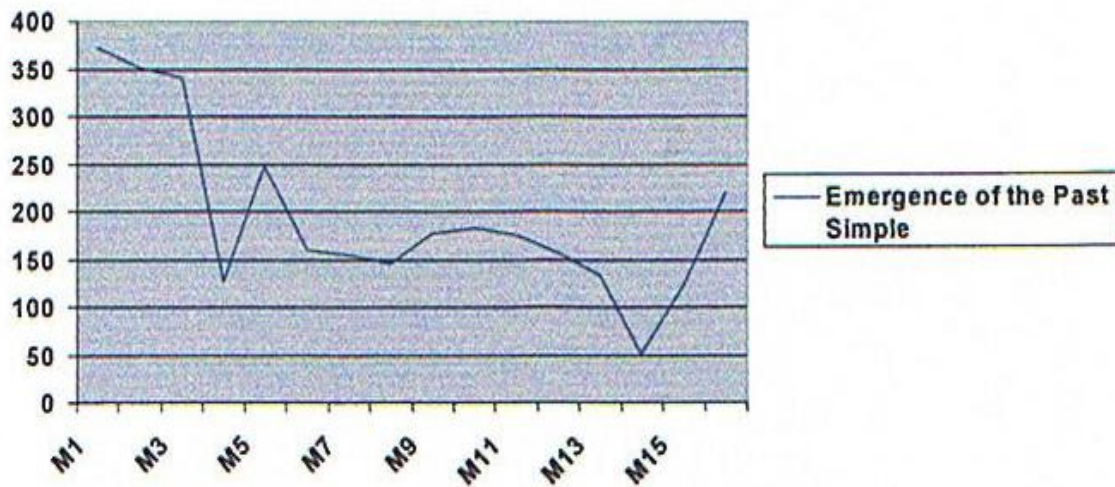
Figure 05 The Emergence of the Past Simple

The results obtained (when compared to the rest of tables and figures) show that the highest number of tokens and of verb types are attributed to the past simple. This must be due to the direct equivalence between this tense form and the Arabic tense form *al-madi*. Table 16 and Figure 05 show a regression in the production of the past simple . During the first months , the production is at its highest (M1, M2, M3). However, as the learners are introduced to the various tense forms, they make attemps at using them, and thus, overgenerali-zation of the simple past gets lower and the learners start trying to express the various semantic distinctions existing in the English past. By the end of the observastion period , the past simple gains back some popularity. In fact during the period of experimentation, the other tenses under apprentis-ship have overlaped over the past simple (the present perfect simple and the past perfect simple more specifically). But with much practice and error correction, the

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learners readjust their understanding of the various past tense distinctions. Consequently, the production of the past simple raises and gains much correctness, appropriatness and accuracy. Periods of abrupt decrease in the production (M4, M6, M12 and M14) correspond to the winter and spring vacations.

Examining the use of the past simple in over-generalizations provides a clue to how learners try to overcome their weakness in understanding and using the other past tense forms. The late emergence of the other past tense forms gives enough space for the past tense to be overgeneralized in areas where the other tenses would have been used. These overgeneralizations also show how the learners associate the present perfect with both the past time, and non-sequentiality.

There were 785 overgeneralizations of the PS identified in the study. When the learners overgeneralized the use of the past simple, this was reflected in the late emergence of the low rate of the production of the other tense-aspect forms that would have been appropriate in the specific environment.

The following table represents the distribution of the overgeneralizations of the past simple according to the environment in which they occur . Most of the over-generalizations identified in the corpus are uses of the past simple in the environment of the present perfect.

Environment	N	%
Present perfect	591	75.29
Past perfect	72	9.17
Past progressive	118	15.03
Ambiguous	4	0.51
Total	785	100

Table 17: Distribution of the past simple over-generalization
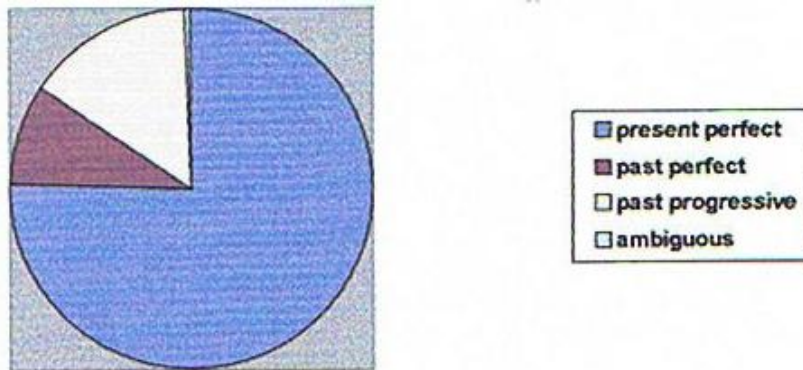
Figure 06: Distribution of the Past Simple Over-generalizations

The Past Progressive

The past progressive is the first past compound tense to emerge in the learners' written production. However, its emergence comes as a last step within the variety of forms of the progressive. Bare progressive comes first (i.e. V+ *ing* without any auxiliary). It is followed by the present progressive and finally the past progressive (all the forms are observed in past tense contexts). The appearance of the past progressive does not eliminate bare progressive or present progressive. We can observe their presence until very late stages of the observation period.

The learners produced a total of 2941 tokens of past progressive. The following table shows the emergence of the past progressive and its evolution over the whole period of observation. The data collected represented the whole production . The latter is divided by the number of learners to give the average production.

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Period of Observation	Global Production	Average Production
M1	15	0.25
M2	42	0.70
M3	96	1.60
M4	76	1.26
M5	81	1.35
M6	32	0.53
M7	145	2.42
M8	182	3.03
M9	269	4.48
M10	282	4.70
M11	120	2.00
M12	80	1.33
M13	132	2.20
M14	71	1.18
M15	251	4.18
M16	180	3.00
Total	2054	34.23

Table 18: The Emergence of the Past Progressive
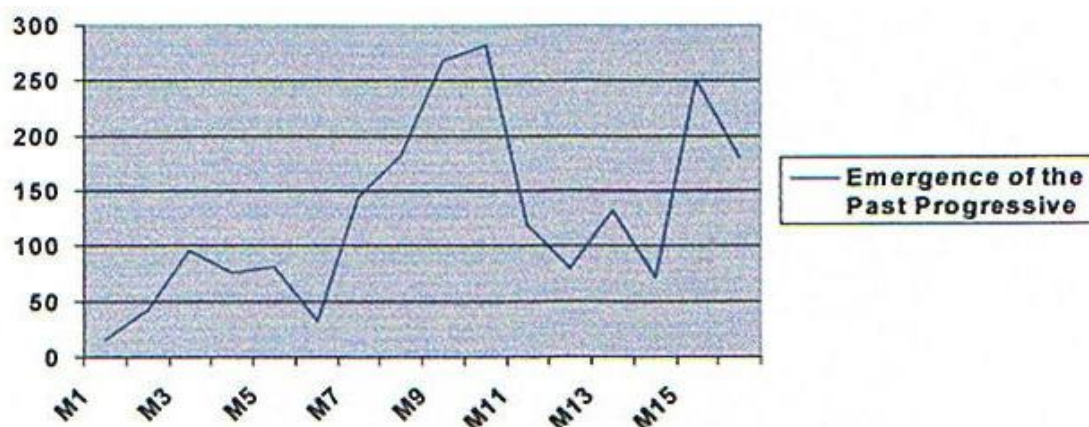
Figure 07: Emergence of the Past Progressive

Table 18 and figure 07 show that the past progressive is already emerging in the first month of observation. However, the production rate is very low during this month (15 verb types for 60 learners). In fact , this can be explained by the fact that this form corresponds to the Arabic present participle which is very popular in oral as well as written productions to describe states and events or to narrate in both Algerian and Standard Arabic (eg. واقف ≅ *standing*)This rate goes on progressing from month to month except during the vacations periods . The past progressive reaches its maximum production by the end of the first year (M8) and the begining of the second year (M9, M10), Then it looses popularity until theM15, where, the production raises back at a more interesting rate.

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The Present Perfect

     A total of 2875 tokens of present perfect were produced by the learners. Among them, there were 2603 were perfect simple and 272 were perfect progressive.
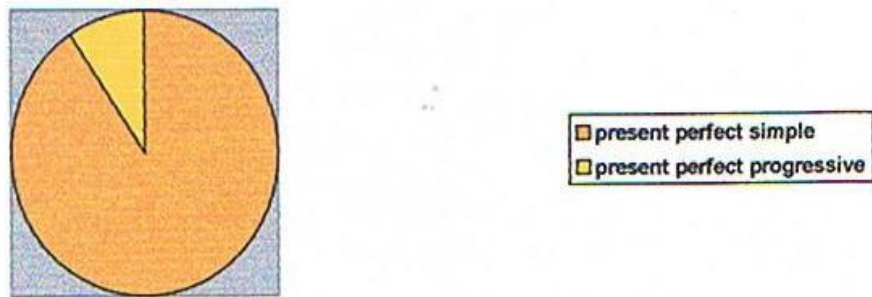
Figure 08: Variation within the Present Perfect

The Present Perfect Simple

     The emergence of the present perfect simple in the written production of the learners   throughout the observation period is presented in the following table :

Period of Observation	Global Production	Average Production
M1	4	0.06
M2	24	0.40
M3	66	1.10
M4	68	1.13
M5	195	3.25
M6	62	1.03
M7	213	3.55
M8	187	3.11
M9	235	3.92
M10	241	4.02
M11	188	3.13
M12	109	1.82
M13	67	1.12
M14	89	1.48
M15	134	2.23
M16	196	3.26
Total	2078	34.63

Table 19: The Emergence of the Present Perfect Simple
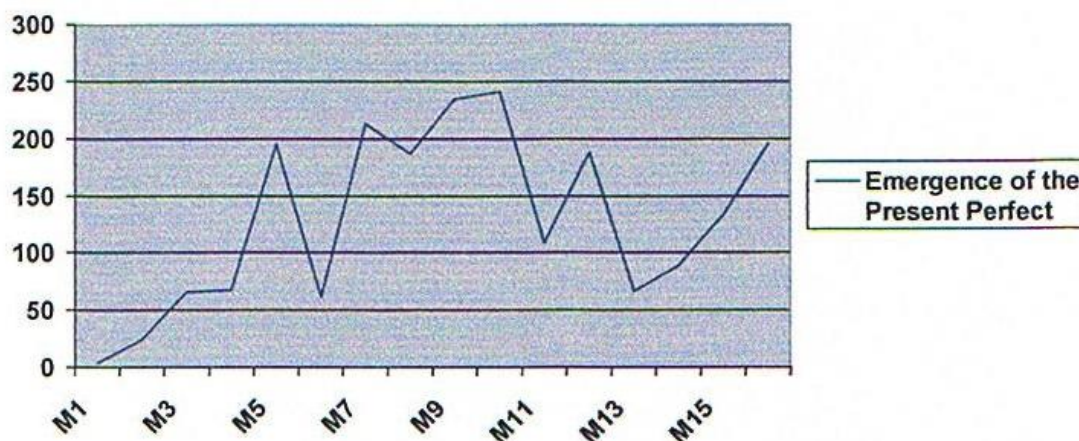
Figure 09: Emergence of the Present Perfect Simple

Table 19 and diagram 09 show that the present perfect emerges in the first month but with a very low rate (much lower than the rate of production of the past simple and the past progressive during the same period of observation). This rate grows progressively until it reaches its highest production level by the end of the first year and the begining of the second year. The points of low production in the diagram represent the winter and spring vacation periods.

When the production is viewed in terms of context of occurrence, tense use might be appropriate or over-generalized (overlaping on the area of another tense-aspect form).Examining the contexts in which the present perfect is used reveals the form meaning associations which represent an essentiel element in the temporal semantics of interlanguage (this is discussed in detail later in the chapter).

74.40 % of the uses of the present perfect (2139 tokens) were appropriate (the correct number of uses was counted out of the number of tokens). The learners had very little difficulty with the form of the present perfect. Only

8.59% were ill-formed structures (247 tokens). Because the auxiliary *have/has* was required to identify a structure as a present perfect tense form , ill-formed occurrences included cases of *have+stem* , as in *have buy* , or *have+ missformed participle*, as in *have spoke*.

Examining the use of the present perfect simple in over-generalizations provides a clue to how learners carve out a form-meaning-use association for the present perfect from their previous established associations of form, meaning and use for the past and the non-past. The cases of overgeneralization of the present perfect where another tense-aspect form is preferred show the semantic features that the learners try to convey. These overgeneralizations also show how the learners associate the present perfect with both the past and present time, and non–sequentiality.

There were 442 overgeneralizations identified in the present perfect simple. When the learners overgeneralized use of the present perfect (whether simple or progressive), this was reflected in a decrease in the rate of production of the other tense-aspect forms that would have been appropriate in the specific environment.

The following table represents the distribution of the overgeneralizations of the present perfect simple according to the environment in which they occur . Most of the overgeneralizations identified in the corpus are uses of the present perfect simple in the environment of the simple past.

Environment	N	%
Simple past	263	59.50
Past perfect	120	27.15
Present	52	11.77
Ambiguous	07	1.58
Total	442	100

Table 20: Distribution of the Present Perfect Simple

Over-generalisation
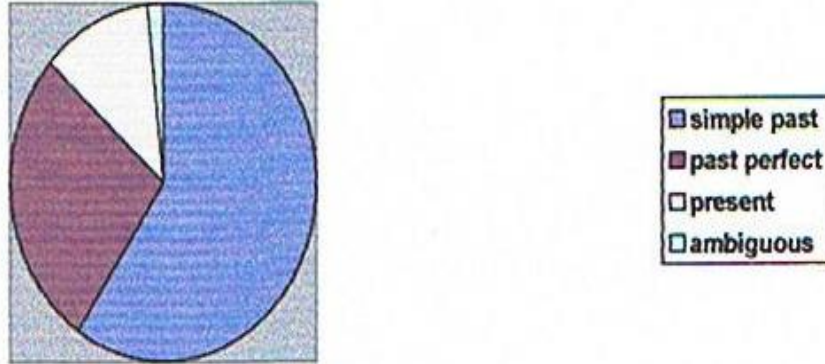
Figure 10: Distribution of the Present Perfect Simple Over-generalizations

The Present Perfect Progressive

Out of the global present perfect production, 272 tokens (9.46%) were present perfect progressives. The followimg table represents the emergence of the present perfect progressive.

Period of Observation	Global Production	Average Production
M1	/	/
M2	/	/
M3	/	/
M4	/	/
M5	/	/
M6	/	/
M7	68	1.13
M8	42	0.70
M9	34	0.57
M10	15	0.25
M11	27	0.45
M12	41	0.68
M13	7	0.11
M14	13	0.22
M15	14	0.23
M16	11	0.18
Total	272	4.52

Table 21: The Emergence of the Present Perfect Progressive
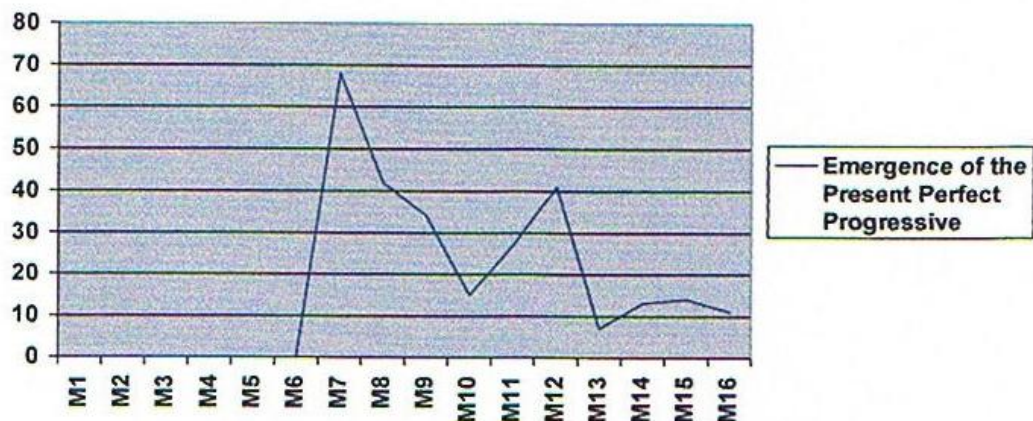
Figure 11: The Emergence of the Present Perfect Progressive

Table 21 and Figure 11 show that the present progressive was first used and at it highest rate in M7 (this coinsides with the period when this tense form was introduced in the grammar classroom).Then the rate goes decreasing and it ends up reaching a balanced and low rate from M13 till the end of the experimental period.

The 272 tokens of present perfect simple included 225 appropriate uses and 47 cases were overgeneralizations.This reflects the fact that the appropriate use of the present perfect simple is established by the time the present perfect progressive emerges.

The high rate of appropriate use of the present perfect progressive (82.72%) confirms the theory that those rules we acquire later in the process of interlanguage building are established on firmer grounds tham those we acquire early. It also illstrates the theory claiming that applying complex rules , the learners are more attentive and precocious . Consequently, acompnying the phenomenon of avoidance-when possible-the acquired element is most of the time used appropriatly . This contrasts with those simple rules-sometimes

analogous L1 structures- that are overgeneralised and thus more subject to miss-use and error making.

 The following table represents the distribution of over-generalisation of the present perfect progressive. Most of the over-generalizations identified in the corpus are uses of the present perfect progressive in the environment of the simple past.

Environment	N	%
Simple past	34	72.34
Past perfect	12	25.53
Present	1	2.13
Total	47	100

Table 22: Distribution of the Present Perfect Progressive Over-generalization
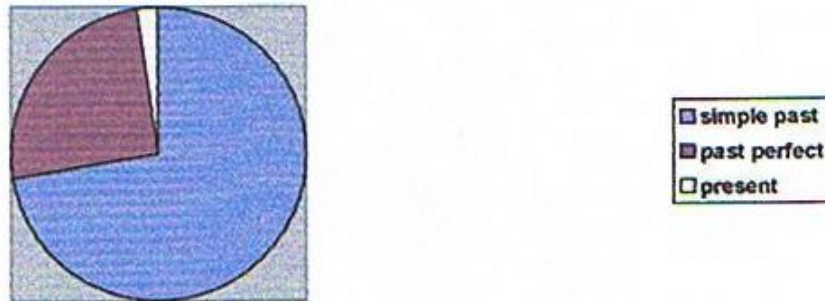
Figure 12: Distribution of the Present Perfect Progressive

Over-generalization

The Past Perfect

The Past Perfect Simple

The learners produced 456 cases of past perfect simple. The learners seemed to have a very poor mastery of this form in comparison with the previous ones. The following table represents the results of the data collection over the period of observation.

Period of Observation	Global Production	Average Production
M1	/	/
M2	/	/
M3	/	/
M4	05	0.08
M5	04	0.07
M6	/	/
M7	13	0.22
M8	/	/
M9	34	0.56
M10	65	1.08
M11	17	0.28
M12	12	0.20
M13	/	/
M14	46	0.76
M15	34	0.57
M16	19	0.32
Total	249	4.15

Table 23: Emergence of the Past Perfect Simple
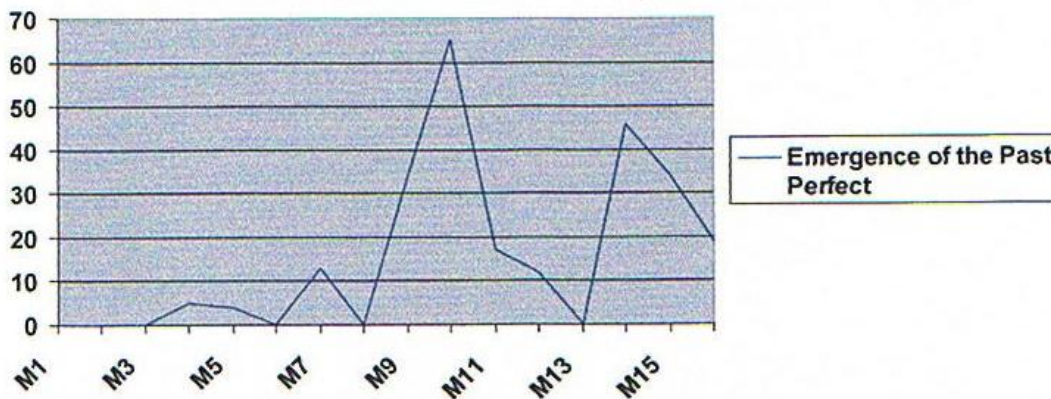
Figure 13: Emergence of the Past Perfect Simple

As shown in Table 23 and Figure 13, the emergence of the past perfect simple seems to start later than any other past tense morphology studied here. The first attempts are observerbale in the fourth month at a very low rate. This rate decreases considerably after each vacation. M11 and M14 seem to represent the periods of highest production that is still very law. In addition to this very low production, learners produced many more ill-formed and inappropriate forms with this tense form than with any of the other forms involved in this study.

With the emergence of the past perfect comes overgeneralisation as the learners start to assaociate the form with meaning. Early use of the past perfect is often not target like.There were 191 identifiable overgeneralizations of the past perfect in our corpus. The group score shows that 41.89% of the production of the present perfect occured in the environment of another tense aspect form. These were mainly environments of the past simple and the present perfect. Of

the 191 overgeneralisations, 102 (53.40%) appeared in environments of the past simple and 89 (46.60%)were used in the environment of the present perfect. In the following example , a learner has used the past perfect at the place of the past simple: *Yesturday, <u>I had told</u> my friend the true story*. The next sentence illustrate a case of past perfect used in a present perfect environment: *When I was a child , I like to watch T.V all the day, but now, I am old, <u>I had changed</u>, I like more staying withmy friends*. The following diagram illustrates the distribution of overgeneralizationn in the use of the past perfect.

Environment	N	%
Simple past	102	53.40
Present perfect	89	46.60
Total	191	100

Table 24: Distibution of Overgeneralization in the Past Perfect Simple

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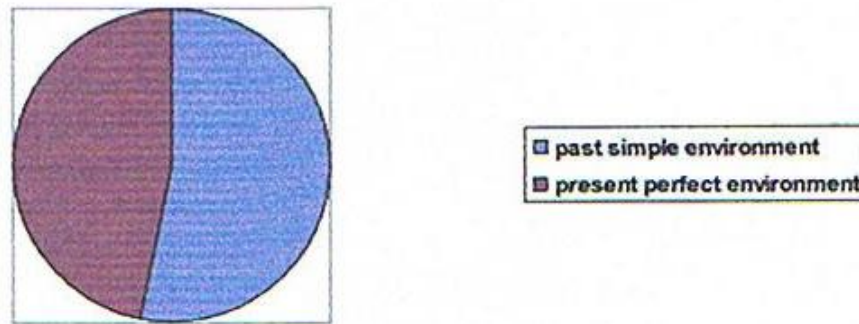
Figure 14 : Distibution of the Overgeneralization of the Past Perfect Simple

The rather late emergence of the past perfect simple emphasizes its non-essential nature for the learners. It is a linguistic device that serves to signal a deviation from chronological order. However, the learner seems to consider that the concept of anteriority can be expressed by the use of the simple past and some adverbials rather than the use of the past perfect simple . An example of this is: *I did my home work then I went to bed.* The learner could have chosen to use the past perfect simple*: I had finished my home work when I went to bed.*

The past Perfect Progressive

All along the observation period, only three attempts were made at the past perfect progressive. They are:

1. *I had been waiting for her for so long when she finally arrived.*
2. *I had been practicing this sport for years when the coach decided to select me.*
3. *She had been my friends for over a year when she betrayed my confidence.*

4.3.2 Emergence of the Tenses

4.3.2.1 Order of Emergence of the Tenses

The order of emergence among English verbal morphology which encodes as part of its meaning "event time precedes speech time" is the simple past, then the past progressive, followed by the present perfect simple and finally the past perfect simple. This order of emergence is easily observable in the learners written production as it is clearly indicated in tables :

The following table represents the sequence of emergence of the various tense-aspect forms throughout the period of observation.

Period of Observation	Past Simple	Past Progressive	Present Perfect Simple	Present Perfect Progressive	Past Perfect Simple	Past Perfect Progressive
M1	372	15	4	/	/	/
M2	351	42	24	/	/	/
M3	341	96	66	/	/	/
M4	127	76	68	/	05	/
M5	248	81	195	/	04	/
M6	159	32	62	/	/	1
M7	154	145	213	68	13	/
M8	145	182	187	42	/	/
M9	178	269	235	34	34	/
M10	182	282	241	15	65	2
M11	176	120	188	27	17	/
M12	156	80	109	41	12	/
M13	134	132	67	7	/	/
M14	51	71	89	13	46	/
M15	122	251	134	14	34	/
M16	220	180	196	11	19	/
Total	3116	2054	2078	272	249	3

Table 25: Emergence Sequence in Past-Related Morphology
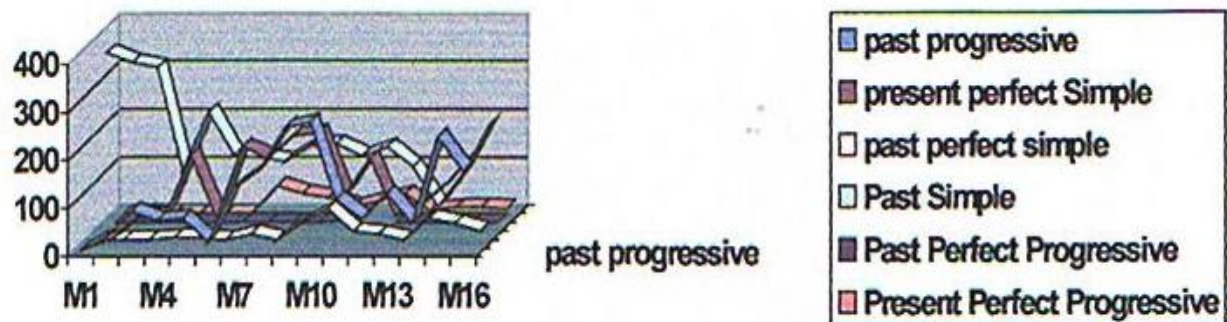
Figure 15: Emergence sequence in Past Related Environment

The results of our study correspond quite well to those obtained by other research works in this field. The order of emergence past simple $\longrightarrow$ past progressive $\longrightarrow$ present perfect simple $\longrightarrow$ present perfect progressive $\longrightarrow$ past perfect simple $\longrightarrow$ past perfect progressive has already been described by Klein (1993, 1995) and Bardovi-Harlig(2000). The late emergence of the past perfect was also observed in research works dealing with languages other than English (Dietrich 1995, Schlyter 1990). The emergence of the past simple as a first form is reinforced by the findings of Bailey's research (1987,1989).

It is essentiel to keep in mind that the emergence order does not suggest in any way that the acquisition process is complete for any of the forms involved in the process.This observation has already been made by Klein(1993, 1994a) and

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Dietrich et al.(1995) whose observations of European learners led to the conclusion that these learners keep on using base verb forms even at very advanced stages of their interlanguage. The form-meaning associations of the various tense forms cannot be said to be truly acquired until the entire system is complete. This is why it is quite frequent to observe cases of inappropriate overgeneralisations of certain tenses at the expense of others in a great majority of interlanguage samples. It is a real challenge for the learners to master the semantic variations between the different forms.

The aquisitional sequence observed in this study is:

Past Simple ⟶ Past Progressive ⟶ Present Perfect Simple ⟶ Present Perfect Progressive ⟶ Past Perfect Simple ⟶ Past Perfect Progressive

Von Stutterheim and Klein (1987,194) say :

> *a second language learner-in contrast to a child*
> *learning his first language-does not have to*
> *acquire the underlying concepts. What he has to*
> *acquire is a specific way and a specific means of*
> *expressing them.*

Considering this interpretation of second language acquisition processes, the order of emergence of the tense forms cannot be attributed to cognitive development factors as it would be the case if we were in a context of first child first language acquisition.

An alternative factor for the order of acquisition of the various tense forms is morphosyntactic complexity (Gathercole,1986; Johnson,1985; C.Smith,1980).Morphosyntactic complexity is a satisfying explanation for the order of emergence of the simple past and the present perfect. However, as far as the past perfect is concerned , this justification is not sufficient. In fact, if we

compare the past perfect and the present perfect, we can say that they are of equivalent complexity with the formal difference of the tense marker auxiliary. Inspite of this, the past perfect emerges later than the present perfect. This means that there must be other factors contributing to this late emergence. Such factors can be semantic complexity,   syntactic complexity, frequency of inputand functional load .

4.3.2.2 Semantics of the Emerging System

The linguistic profile of the present perfect gives features of the present and features of the past. Thus, we notice overgeneralisations of features of the present perfect simple into the past simple and the present tenses.

In the cases of overgeneralizations, the present and past interpretations of the present perfect are always in contexts in which only one form is possible according to the rules governing the use of the various tense forms. When the present perfect simple is used instead of the past simple, only the past meaning of the present perfect is appropriate to the situation or event under description, while the present relevance does not function. An example of this would be

" I have stayed at home all last summer holidays"(a narration about holidays to be written two months after the summer holidays were over). In such cases the learners seem to confuse the present perfect simplewith the simple past. In fact the past time dimention is working, but the problem is with the present moment point of reference. Some other cases where the learner uses the present perfect simple in present tense context are ones like *: "Every morning , I have waked her up at 7 o'clock"* (describing every day routine behaviour). Learners also tend to use the past perfect simple instead of the present perfect simple. At 27% of the overgeneralizations, the association of the present perfect with the past

perfect is much inferior to its association with the simple past but twice as frequent as its association with the simple present.

The analysis of the data led us to the observation that the past perfect simple is overgeneralised to two tense forms: the past simple and the present perfect simple at nearly the same rates. The semantic association between the past perfect simple and the past simple is evident. As pointed out by Comrie (1985) and Leech(1971), all events encoded in the past perfect simple can also be put in a simple past form, however the reverse is not true, i.e. not all past tense events can be changed into past perfect form. Learners might have difficulty to dissociate the two equivalences and to distinguish the correct from the incorrect one.To illustrate this, we can use the example given by Comrie (1985) : If *"Johna arrived; Mary had left"* is true, then we can also say *"John arrived"* and *"Mary left"*. However the *"John arrived; Mary had left"* brings information about the ordering of events that the sentenes *"John arrived"* and *"Mary left"* do not bring individually. One cannot put these into utterances like *"John arrived, Mary had left"* or *" Mary left, Johny had arrived"* without having specific information about the sequence of events.

The confusion the learners might make between the Pr. perf. and the P. Perf. must be due to the firmal similarity of the perfects. However, it has been noticed that the proportion of P. Perf. overgeneralizations to areas of the Pr. Perf. represents the double of the rate of Pr. Perf. overgeneralization to a P. Perf. environment.These two examples illustrate the learners' confusion between the two forms:

- When I arrived, the party *has already begun.*

- Now that she *had obtained* what she wants, she is no longer interested in them.

The Pr. Perf. S. and the P. Perf. S. might also be confused in the learner's mind because of their relation to the P.S. It is recognised that the Pr. Perf. S. and the P.S. are truth functional equivalents . This results in mutual over-use between the two forms . For the P. Perf.S., the situation is rather different , it is considered as a past , however, the opposite is not true. So, the past perfect and the present perfect have different relationships with the past. It might take some time for our learners to grow conscious of this distinction. A clear representation of tense , aspect and time associations and form-meaning relations is the diagram represented by Reichenbach,1947:290) :

Present perfect →

         E   S,R

Simple Present →

         S, R, E,

Simple Past →

         E,R   S

Pluperfect →

  E   R   S
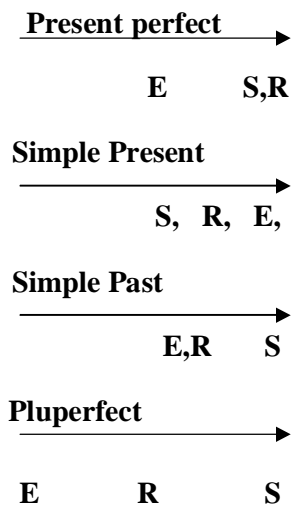
"R" represents reference time, "S" represents speech time and "E" represents event time.

Of all the associations made by the learners, the association of the present perfect simple with the simple past seems to be the strongest, accounting for 67% of the overgeneralizations. The learners seem to be following the shared feature represented inthe diagram "E" ,i.e. anterior event . however , this explanation is not sufficient because the present perfect simple shares other features with the other tense forms. In fact , this frequent association made by

the learners between the two tenses must be the truth value (Smith, 1981). A present perfect simple sentence is always true if a past simple form of this sentence is true. If it is true that *he saw the ghost*, it is also true that *he has seen the ghost* and vice-versa. The degree of semantic overlap betwwen the two tenses is very high. This must justify the learners' frequent use of the present perfect in simple past contexts.

These association do not prevent the learners from acquiring the target tense-aspect system. They represent legitimate stages in the learners' progression and in the evolution of their interlanguage to reach the target language.We can see from the rate of appropriate use of the present perfect simple in the corpus as a whole (84%)) that learners are able to come to distinguish between the present perfect simple and the past simple and well as the other tense forms of the system.

We have also noticed that the rate of correct use of the past perfect simple is lower (61%); however , it must be noted that this form emerges rather late and thus has less tokens evaluated in numerus terms . This can result in an inflation of the rates calculated.

4.3.2.3 Influence of the Source language (Standard Arabic)

No evidence has been found about source language effect on the acquisition of temporality. However, we have made some remarks about the data collected and to which first language effect could be part of the interpretation.The early and frequent use of the simple past can have among various interpretations , the fact that it is equated with the Arabic form *al-madi* which is one of the two main variations in the Arabic tense /aspect system . This form carries the values of past and perfect .

Another observation concerns the use of the bare progressive . This can be traced back to the present participial in Arabic. This form conveys a description about states or events expressing values of presentness and progressivness It is used without any main verb or auxiliary and can be equated with the English present progressive.

It is generally agreed on among language acquisition researchers that source language effect on foreign language acquisition is much lighter than expected. With respect to this, Klein, Dietrich et al (1995:278) say :

> *What is much more striking is the lack of SL[source language] influence where one would expect it...There is no significant SL influence in the acquisition of temporality.*

In agreement with this, some linguists say that the target language is much more influencial on the acquisitional process than the source language. Bardovi–Harlig(2000: 419) believes that :

> *The target language exerts a much greater influence in the acquisition of morphology than a learner's first language. There is no clear indication of a strong first language effect in longitudinal studies of learners of different first language backgrounds.*

Conclusion

The longitudinal study has shown that there is little first language influence and that early simple and basic systems of form-meaning associations are readjusted as learners acquire new forms and assign them specific meanings.

Now , we set to find-out that The Algerian adult learners of English go through precise evolutionary steps in acquiring the morphology of tense and aspect related to the past.

CHAPTER FIVE

ERROR ANALYSIS OF THE LEARNERS' USE OF TENSE AND ASPECT RELATED TO THE PAST

Outline

Introduction

5.1 Description of the Test

5.2 Analysis of the Results

5.2.1 Global use of Tense and aspect

5.2.2 Correct versus Wrong use of Tense and Aspect

5.2.3 Form versus Use Errors

Conclusion

Introduction

This part of the research is an error analysis of the learners' written production. The analysis is made in terms of form as well as use . It completes the two others practical parts (the cross-sectional study and the longitudinal study) in covering another side of the form oriented research interested in the learners learning, acquisition and mastery of tense and aspect

The test aims at putting a diagnosis about the learners' use of tense and aspect after two years of intensive exposition to the TL during which the learners covered all the aspects of English grammar in detail. The study evaluates the learners global use of tense and aspect before it starts investigating the rate of error production and the error types with their possible causes and interpretations.

5.1 Description of the test

The subject given as a test in our EA study was a free production.

Skinner is the father of the behaviourist school of psychology. Do you think his theory could be adapted to education? How would you apply it to teaching? Argue with concrete examples from a language teaching classroom context.

We have chosen this question as it requires from the learners creative production where their cognitive, analytical and critical abilities of the learners are observable.

Being a free composition , this test does not direct the learner to use a specific tense or aspect. It also allows the observation of the various manifestations of avoidance and over-use which contributes an essential part to the construction of the profile of the subject of our study.

However, as the nature of the question calls for argumentation, exemplification, comparison , contrast and logical division , it logically means the use of all tenses. (Alexander 1988, Bander 1971, Freeman 1983,Locke 1996).

The learners did not know that their production was going to be used in a research. This was done on purpose, so that the spontaneity of their use was not altered.

5.2 Analysis of the Results

The results of the test are analysed in four essential steps. We are making a performance analysis, so our first step is be to collect all tense uses in their correct and incorrect forms. We consider the learners' performance as a whole since it globally represents the learner's approximate system at a given stage of his IL evolution.(Corder 1978). Second, we distinguish the errors out of the global production in each tense. Third, we dissociate form errors from use errors. Fourth, we deal specifically with errors due to transfer from St. Ar.

5.2.1 Global Use of Tense and Aspect

The aim of this step is to observe the gradation in the frequency of the use of tenses by the learners.

Tense	N	%
Pr.S	1312	56.16
Pr.C	40	1.71
P.S	824	35.27
P.C	45	1.93
Pr.Perf.S	52	2.23
Pr.Perf.C	/	/
P.Perf.S	63	2.70
P.Perf.C	/	/
Total	2336	100

N : Number

% : Percentage

Table 26: Tense Uses
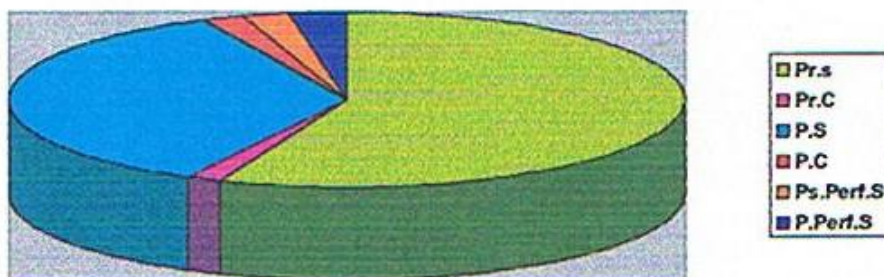
Figure 16: Tense Uses

The nature of the question allows for the use of a variety of tenses. However, the learners have used only six tenses out of eight. The present simple and the past simple are cases of over-use with 56.16% of the global use for the present simple and 35.27% for the past simple. This could be interpreted in terms of the confidence felt by the learners because they have these tenses have their direct equivalents in their first language.

For the Pr.S , the equivalent tense in St.Ar. is *al-moudarie* or the imperfective. In Arabic , this tense carries a wide variety of meanings. It equals the English Pr.S and Pr.C. Another explanation for the frequent use of the Pr.S. could be of an intra-lingual nature. This tense form does not include any auxiliary, function word or modal. It has only one case of inflection with the third person singular .So, it appears rather simple to be used by the FL learner who feels uncomfortable with the target language and its new rules.

The P.S. , on the other hand , is equated in the Arabic temporal system with *al-madi* or the perfective. It carries the semantic value of the English P.S, P.Perf.S, Pr.Perf.S, P.Perf.C and Pr. Pref. C. . It is due to this wide range of equivalents that the P.S is used so frequently by the learners although it does not necessarily carry the rhetorical value they want. One essential observation to be made is that the learners could have chosen another equivalent form apart from the P.S. , so why did they chose it ? the simple form of this tense (no function

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words, no auxiliary) and the clear and general rule of adding *ed* to the verb stem (except with irregular verbs) must be the main motivation for this choice. The fact that Arabic is essentially based on the principle of inflections makes the Algerian learners of a FL always attempt to stick to this type of form whenever this option is given.

The other tenses are rarely used (Pr.Perf.S   2.23 %, P.C 1.93%, Pr.C 1.71 %, P.Perf.S 2.70 %). These rates show a certain attitude on the part of the learners - avoidance. Nayef (1989) speaks about the discomfort of the Arab learners with Pr.Perf.S. This is due to the fact that this tense form is made up of a verb phrase (a form uncommon for tense in Arabic).The learners assimilate this tense with the P.S. ,equated with *al-madi* , which also carries the value of the Pre.Perf.S. and the P.Perf.S. This is why the latter is also avoided (2.70% of total tense use in our study) These two tense forms are generally replaced by the P.S when the time sequence is clarified by other elements from the context. The P.C and Pr.C are avoided by the learners because they have no direct and distinct equivalents in Arabic. This is why the Pr.C is replaced by the Pr.S and the P.C is replaced by the P.S. The latter have the simplest and closest structures to the Arabic forms.

The Pr.Perf.C and the P.Perf.C are cases of total avoidance. This shows how uncomfortable the learners are with aspectual combinations In addition to this, the semantic values of these tenses as distinct notions are absent in Arabic.

The conclusion we can draw from this first step is that Algerian learners tend to favour the simple aspect at the expense of the perfect and continuous ones. This must be due to the fact that the essential temporal distinction in Arabic is one which separates past from non-past and perfective from imperfective within one single structural distinction assimilating the non-past with the imperfective in the form of *al-moudarie* and the past with the perfective in the form of *al-madi* .

5.2.2 Correct versus Wrong Use of Tense and Aspect

In terms of error rate with the eight tenses in comparison with correct production, we have found that there was more correct use than wrong use in the tenses investigated:

Correct Use		Wrong Use		Total
N	%	N	%	2336
1571	67.25	765	32.75	

Table 27: Correct versus Wrong Use of the Eight Tenses
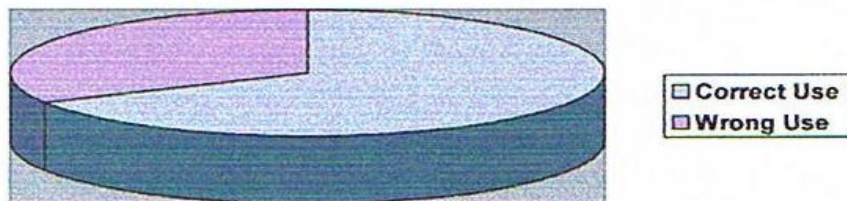
Figure 17: Correct versus Wrong use of the Eight Tenses

Table 27 and figure 17 show that the eight tenses are used correctly in 67.25% of the cases while only 32.75% represent incorrect use.

Past Tenses:

     P. S:

Correct Use		Wrong Use		Total
N	%	N	%	
527	63.96	297	36.04	824

Table 28: Correct versus Wrong Use of the Past Simple
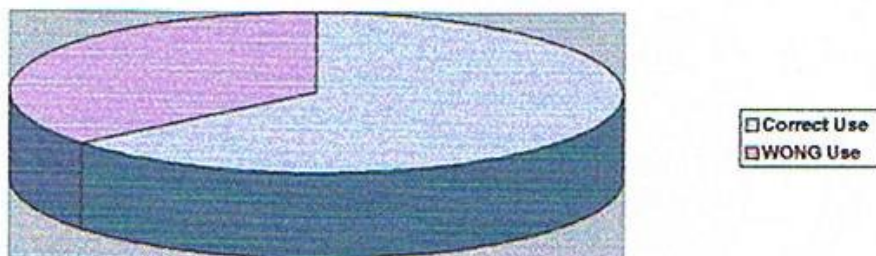
Figure 18: Correct versus Wrong Use in the Past Simple

Table 28 and figure 18 show that the P.S. is used correctly in 63.96% of the cases while only 36,04% represent incorrect use.

P.C :

Correct Use		Wrong Use		Total
N	%	N	%	
36	80	9	20	45

Table 29: Correct versus Wrong Use of the Past Continuous

Figure 19: Correct versus Wrong Use of the Past Continuous

Table 29 and figure 19 show that the P.C. is used correctly in 80% of the cases while only 20% represent incorrect use.

Pr.Perf.S :

Correct Use		Wrong Use		Total
N	%	N	%	
40	76.92	12	23.08	52

Table 30: Correct versus Wrong Use of the Present Perfect Simple
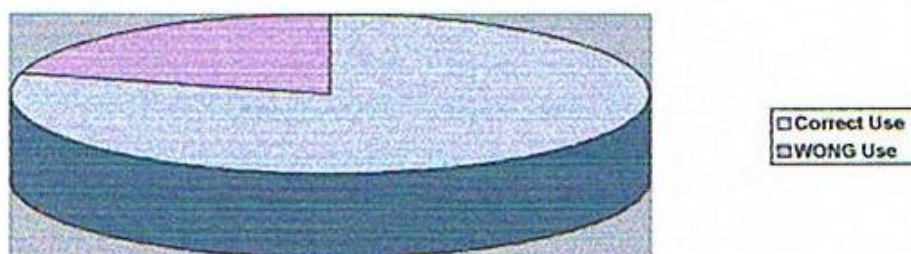
Figure 20: Correct versus Wrong Use in the Past Simple

Table 30 and figure 20 show that the Pr.Perf.S. is used correctly in 76.92% of the cases while only 23.08% represent incorrect use.

P. Perf. S.

Correct Use		Wrong Use		Total
N	%	N	%	
40	63.49	23	36.51	63

Table 31: Correct versus Wrong Use of the Past Perfect Simple
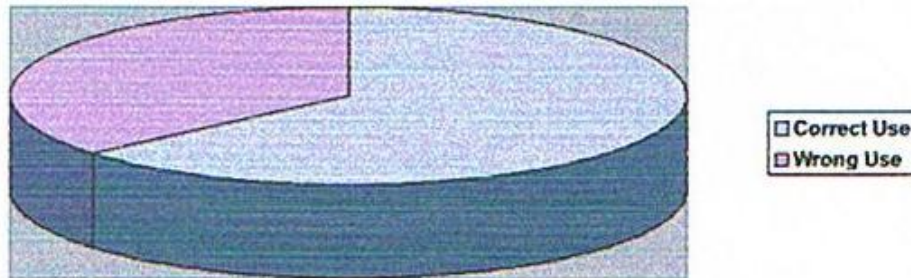
Figure 21: Correct versus Wrong Use of the Past Perfect Simple

Table 31 and figure 21 show that the P.Perf.S. is used correctly in 63.49% of the cases while only 36.51% represent incorrect use.

Present Tenses:

Pr.S :

Correct Use		Wrong Use		Total
N	%	N	%	
897	68.37	415	31.63	1312

Table 32: Correct versus Wrong Use in the Present Simple
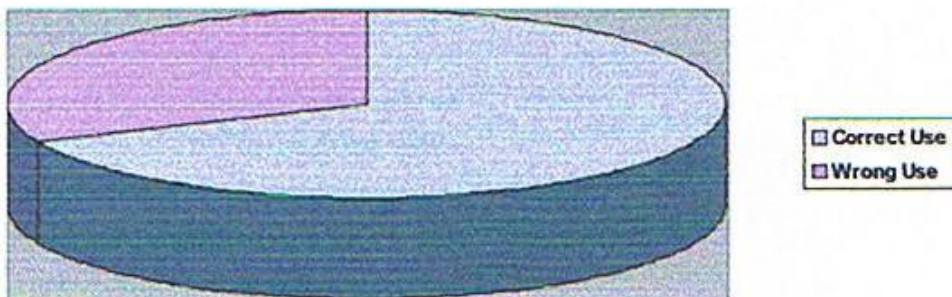
Figure 22 : Correct versus Wrong Use in the Present Simple

Table 32 and figure 22 show that the Pr.S. is used correctly in 68.37% of the cases while only 31.63% represent incorrect use.

Pr.C :

Correct Use		Wrong Use		Total
N	%	N	%	
31	77.5	09	22.5	40

Table 33: Correct versus Wrong Use of the Present Continuous
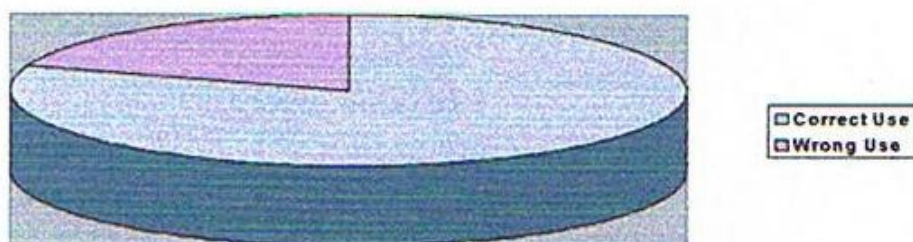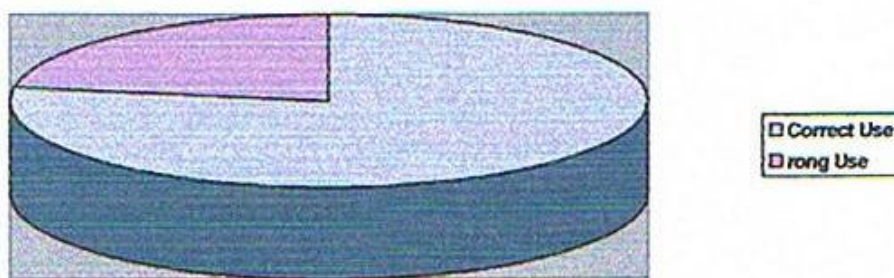

Figure 23: Correct versus Wrong Use in the Present Continuous

Table 33 and figure 23 show that the Pr.C. is used correctly in 77.5% of the cases while only 22.5% represent incorrect use.

The results of tables 27 to 33 are very close to each other **.** The error rate varies between 36.51% for the Pr.Perf.S and 20% for the Pr.Perf .S.

The most popular tenses (Pr.S and P.S) have a significant rate of error (31.63% for the Pr.S and 36.04% for the P.S). The learners feel confident with these tenses because they have a simple form (simple aspect). This facility and over confidence often induces into error.

The continuous aspect both with the present and the past tense have a lower error rate (22.5% for the Pr.C and 20% for the P.C) . However, one should keep in mind that they are avoided by the learners and their form is unfamiliar to them so he uses them with great caution and particular attention.

The perfect aspect ,on its turn, has risen a variable error rate. With the present tense , its was rather low, only 20.08%, whereas with the past tense , it has recorded the highest error rate with 36.51%.

5.2.3   Form versus Use Errors

Errors are divided into two main categories: errors of form and errors of use. The error of form is the case where the structure and spelling are not respected. The error of use is the one where a tense is used instead of another. The results found show that the majority of errors are errors of use except for the Pr. Perf. S. and the P. Perf. S.

Form Errors		Use Errors		Total
N	%	N	%	
298	38.95	467	61.05	765

Table 34: Form versus Use Errors in the Eight Tenses
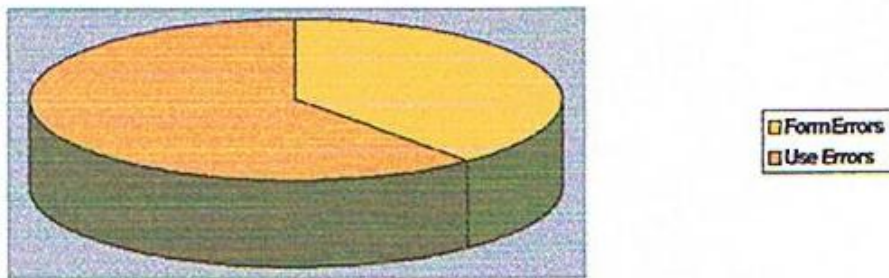
Figure 24: Form versus Use Errors in the Eight Tenses

Table 34 and figure 24 show that in the eight tenses together 38.95% of the errors are form errors while 61.05% represent use errors.

P.S

Form Errors		Use Errors		Total
N	%	N	%	
61	20.54	236	76.46	297

Table 35: Form versus Use Errors in the Past Simple
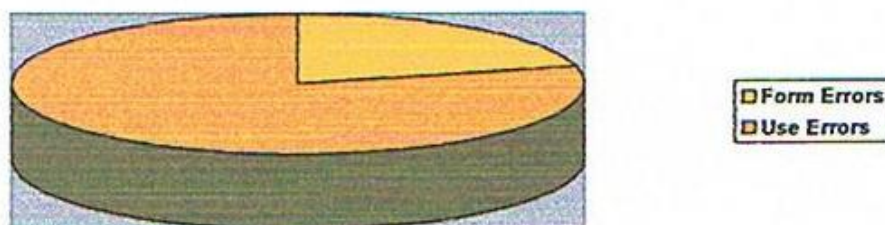
Figure 25: Form versus Use Errors in the Past Simple

Table 35 and figure 25 show that in the P.S., 20.54% of the errors are form errors while 76.46% represent use errors.

P.C

	Form Errors		Use Errors		Total
	N	%	N	%	
	2	22.22	7	77.78	9

Table 36: Form versus Use Errors in the Past Continuous
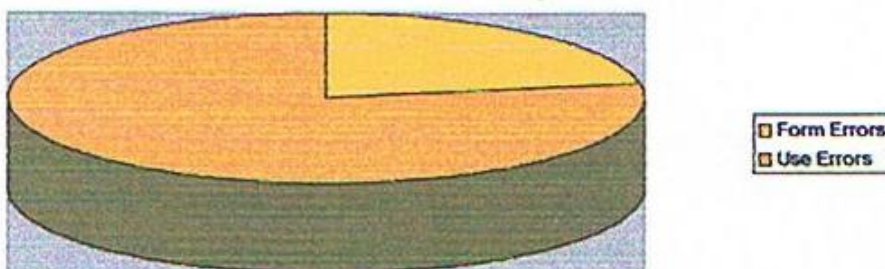
Figure 26: Form versus Use Errors in the Past Continuous

Table 36 and figure 26 show that in the P.C., 22.22% of the errors are form errors while 77.78% represent use errors.

Pr. Perf. S

Form Errors		Use Errors		Total
N	%	N	%	
7	58.33	5	41.67	12

Table 37: Form versus use Errors in the Present Perfect Simple
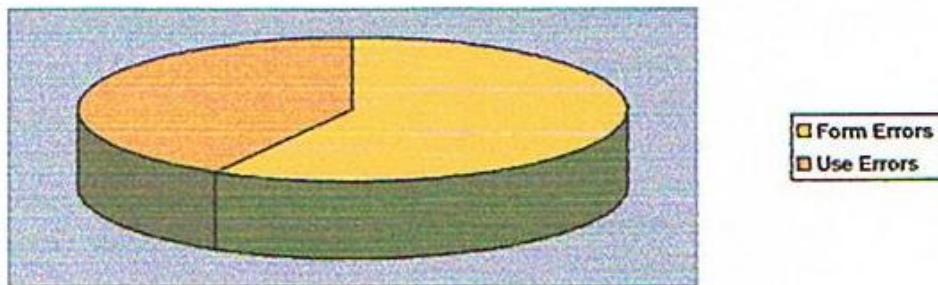
Figure 27: Form versus Use Errors in the Present Perfect Simple

Table 37 and figure 27 show that in the Pr.Perf.S., 58.33%   of the errors are form errors while 41.67% represent use errors.

P. Perf. C:

	Form Errors		Use Errors		Total
	N	%	N	%	
	2	8.70	21	91.30	23

Table 38: Form versus Use Errors in the Past Perfect Continuous
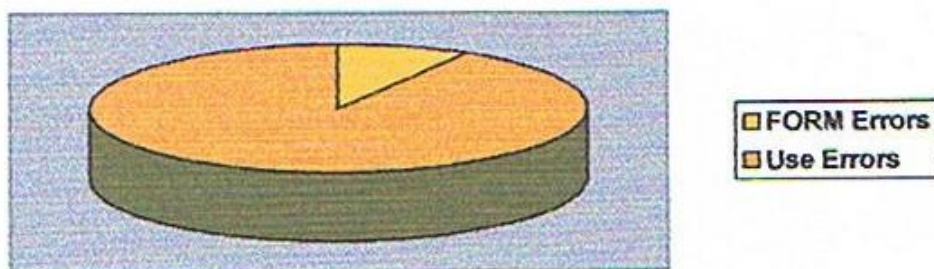
Figure 28: Form versus Use Errors in the Past Perfect Continuous

Table 38 and figure 28 show that in the P.Perf.C., 8.70% of the errors are form errors while 91.30% represent use errors.

Present Tenses

Pr.S

Form Errors		Use Errors		Total
N	%	N	%	
223	53.74	192	46.26	415

Table 39: Form versus Use Errors in the Present Simple
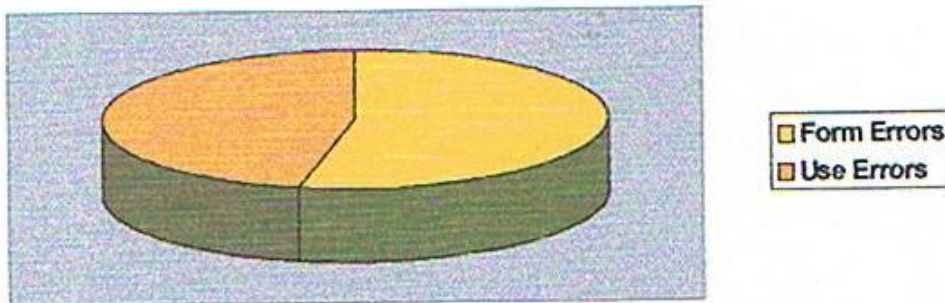
Figure 29: Form versus Use Errors in the Present Simple

Table 39 and figure 29 show that in the Pr.S., 53.74% of the errors are form errors while 46.26% represent use errors.

Pr.C

Form Errors		Use Errors		Total
N	%	N	%	
03	33.33	06	66.67	09

Table 40: Form versus Use Errors in the Present Continuous
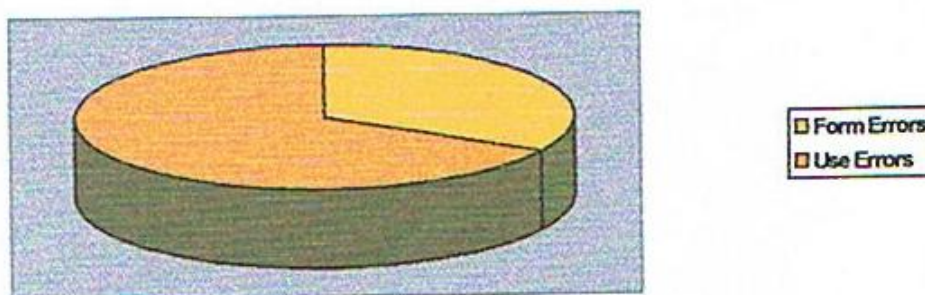
Figure 30: Form versus Use Errors in the Present Continuous

Table 40 and figure 230 show that in the Pr.c., 33.33% of the errors are form errors while 66.67% represent use errors.

For the majority of tenses , the learners seem to have more difficulty to find the appropriate context than they have to find the correct form : Pr.C (33.33% versus 66.67%), P.S (20.54% versus 76.46%), P.C (22.22% versus 77.78%), P.Perf.S (8.70% versus 91.30%)(the learners have particular problems to contextualise this tense because it is difficultly equated with an equivalent structure in the source language).

The only two cases where the rates of form errors and use errors are nearly equivalent are : the Pr.S with 53.74 % for form and 46.26% for use and the Pr.Perf.S with 58.33% for form and 41.67% for use.

The following table gathers the overall results of the three steps included in the research:

Aspect	Tense	Step 1		Step 2				Step 3			
				Correct		wrong		Correct		wrong	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Simple	Pr.S	1312	56.16	897	68.37	415	31.63	223	53.74	192	46.26
	P.S	824	35.27	527	63.96	297	36.04	61	20.54	236	76.46
Continuous	Pr.C	40	1.71	31	77.5	9	22.5	03	33.33	06	66.67
	P.C	45	1.93	36	80	09	20	02	22.22	07	77.78
Perfective Simple	Pr.Perf.S	52	2.23	40	76.92	12	20.08	07	58.33	05	41.67
	P.Perf.S	63	2.70	40	63.49	23	36.5	02	08.70	21	91.30
Perfective Continuous	Pr.Perf.C	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
	P.Perf.C	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

Table 41: Overall Results of the Three Steps of the Test

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The firs step indicates that Algerian learners tend to favour the simple aspect at the expense of the perfect and continuous ones.

The P.Perf.S, the P.S. and the Pr.S come first, followed by the Pr.C, Pr.Perf.S and the P.C. (step 2). Distinguishing between use errors and form errors, we have found that with the exception of the Pr.S and the Pr.Perf.S where the rates are nearly equivalent, the majority of errors are use errors for the various tenses and aspects (step 3). A final observation is related to the absence of the P. Perf. C. and the Pr. Perf. C. . This is known in E.A as avoidance and leads to the over-use of simple forms because the learner hardly equates the complex ones with the structures of their F.L in addition to the fact that these forms have an inherent complexity that makes the learner uncertain about their appropriateness in the contexts he could apply them to. Thus, these tenses are not avoided because the learner does not know the forms. Many researchers have proved that complex grammar rules are devoted more concentration from the language learner and are, thus, acquired on more firm grounding than the simple rules. They are avoided because the learner has a vague or unclear understanding of their semantic and pragmatic value.

Conclusion

This test has provided us with a detailed profile of the learners mastery of the tense and aspect system of the English language. We can say that our third year English students handle quite adequately the various tenses and aspects (67.25 % of correct use). When the errors occur , they are more frequently related to use than to form .

Analysing the results generally, we could say that the aspect most frequently used is the simple aspect followed by the perfect then the continuous aspects (this goes consolidating some claims of the aspect hypothesis about the emergence and spread of the perfective aspect earlier and with a larger scope than the progressive aspect . This point is viewed in much more detail in the next chapter: the cross-sectional study.

CHAPTER SIX

A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY OF THE USE OF TENSE AND ASPECT RELATED TO THE PAST

Outline

Introduction

6.1 Method of Investigation

6.2 Description of the Study

6.3 Analysis of the Results

6.4 Interpretation of the Results

6.4.1 Verbal Morphology Groups

6.4.2 A Cross Sectional Analysis per Tense

6.4.3 Recapitulation of the Results

6.4.3.1 Use of the Progressive Aspect of the Past

6.4.3.2 Use of the Perfective Aspect of the Past

Conclusion

Introduction

This study is intended to look at the acquisition of tense and aspect from another corner different from the one considered in the preceding form oriented study –the emergence of verbal morphology related to the past.

In this chapter, we analyse the aspect hypothesis concerning written narrative production. We deal with the three main claims of the aspect hypothesis in English: the spread of the past perfective, the distribution of the progressive, and the absence of the progressive in the use of states.

6.1 Method of Investigation

A cross-sectional sample of written narratives was collected after a film retell task given in the written expression session.

We have chosen to use a retell task because it has many advantages . In fact, it helps with the objectivity and the scientific quality of the analysis in that the researcher knows the sequence of events independently of the narrative production of the learners. This kind of task provides content to the learners, and thus delimits their scope which would at the same time limit over productive writers and give enough material and data to more introvert or less productive elements.

For our elicitation procedure, we have followed the example of many other studies (Bergström, 1995, 1997; Bardovi-Harlig, 1998, Sallaberry, 1999b). We have used the excerpt "Alone and Hungry" (8 minutes duration) from the silent film *Modern Times* by Charlie Chaplin.

6.2 Description of the Study

In the film, Charlie Chaplin tries to return to jail where he has previously found food and shelter. At the same time, he befriends a woman who has stolen some bread. The segment includes four separate foreground episodes: (*on the street*) where we can see the stealing of the bread by the girl and the series of events leading to her arrest:

- *(in the cafeteria)* where we can see Chaplin eating food without paying and the events leading to his arrest.
- *(in the police wagon)* representing the meeting of Chaplin with the woman.
- *(on the street)* showing the ensuing escape scene.

The film ends with an imagined scene with Chaplin and the woman in a blissful domestic house ; the conclusion comes with Chaplin, at the end of the day dream, resolving to obtain the house of their dreams. The extract includes 10 tittles: the first one, "Alone and Hungry", sets the scene. The nine others report the speech of the characters. They are as follows in their order of appearance: " *She stole a loaf of bread", " No she didn't, I did", "It was the girl – not the man", " " Remember me – and the bread", "Now is your chance to escape", " Where do you live?", " No place – no anywhere", " Can you imagine us in a little home like that?",* and the last and concluding scene *"I'll do it! We'll get a home, even if I have to work for it"*.

It has been chosen because it includes a series of discrete action sequences in addition to some simultaneous action (to examine tense-aspect morphology) and changes of scene (to examine the backgrounding).

Learners watch the film in class with their teacher. First, the teacher gives a small introduction about the series , including the a summary of the historical context, i.e., the American Depression and the brilliant career and the genuine creativity of Charlie Chaplin. After the warm-up, the learners watched the

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sketch twice, with the opportunity to ask comprehension check questions after each viewing. After the projection, the learners were asked to produce written narratives. They were allowed a period of 60 minutes to produce their written narratives.

6.3 Analysis of the Results

The written productions were coded for the use of past-tense forms in past tense contexts. The learners were classified into groups on the basis of the quality of their use of tense –aspect morphology. This procedure of IL evaluation was adopted by many researchers (Anderson, 1978; Robinson, 1990, 1995; Schumann, 1997, Bardovi-Harlig and Bergström, 1996). The learners were grouped according to their percentage of appropriate use of tenses in divisions of 20%. Thus, we had five groups: (0-20%, 20-40%, 40-60%, 60-80%, 80-100%).

Following the aspectual categories established by Vendler (1957/1967), Dowty (1979), Mittwoch(1991), Robinson(1990) and Shirai (1995), we determined aspectual class following the tests used by Dowty and those used by Shirai (1991).

When placing the learners into groups, their written productions were analysed in terms of rates of past use according to verb types rather than tokens. Each verb was counted only once per sample. When different forms of the same verb were met , each form was considered a type regardless of occurrence frequency. This process was intended to avoid inflation in the rates and to provide a conservative view of the acquisition of tense and aspect morphology.

This type of study would certainly not answer such questions as: *How does a learner of a specific level use tense and aspect morphology?*(this question would find an answer in the longitudinal study included in this same volume) . However, it could answer such other questions as: *If a learner uses past*

morphology in 75% of the all past-time contexts, how would it be distributed and how far would it confirm the principles of the aspect hypothesis?

We have used the law of Sturge to see how proficiency in tense manipulation is distributed in our sample. It is the law of mode relying on the techniques of percentages of classes we get by applying the law of mode which we obtain in the summary of the data in the following rule:

C = Outspread / 1+ 3.32 log N.

Outspread = number of numbers   C = Coefficient of correlation

The arithmetic average which expresses the central tendency is:

X = S fixi / Sfi (xi = a+b /2 for a class [a,b[ ).

The scoring of the learners resulted in the following table:

Number of students	Score / 100
1	96
4	80
5	76
5	60
7	55
11	53
9	49
8	46
5	45
2	39
2	38
1	33
Total 60	

Table 42: Learners' Scores in the Classification Test

According to the law of Sturge:

C = Outspread / 1+ 3.32 log N

N = 60   Outspread = 96 – 33 = 63

Log (63) = 1.7993

C = 60/ 1+3.32 (1.7993) = 8.60 ≈ 9

This means that our classes are:

[33,42[, [42,51[, [51,60[, [60,69[, [69,78[, [78,87[, [87,96[.

Classes	Fi	xi	fixi
[33,42[	5	37.5	187.5
[42,51[	22	46.5	1023
[51,60[	18	55.5	999
[60,69[	5	64.5	322.5
[69,78[	5	73.5	367.5
[78,87[	4	82.5	330
[87,96[	0	91.5	91.5
[96,100[	1	98	98
Total	**Sfi** = 60	/	**Sfixi** = 3419

Table 43: Learners' Scoring for the Classification Test (Class Grouping)
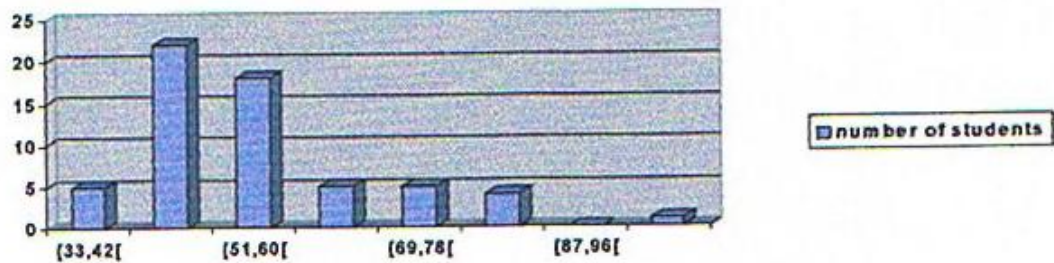
Figure 31: Learners' Scoring for the Classification Test

Table 42 shows that 33 students scored beyond the average and 27 below the average. Among the 33 students scoring over 50%, 10 had very good scores (i.e., 76% and over) and 23 had rather good scores (i.e., between 53 and 60%).

The mode class is [42,51[. This means that, in our sample, the majority of learners have scored between 42 and 51 in our classification test. The scoring central tendency is towards 46.5/100.

6.4 Interpretation of the Results

6.4.1 Verbal Morphology Groups

Following the steps outlined above, we ended-up with 1805 predicates. At this point of the analysis, we will go to the distribution of verbal morphology with the four aspectual categories; state (STA), action (ACT), accomplishment (ACC), achievement(ACH).

- Distribution of verbal morphology for group 1: 0%-20% of appropriate use of past morphology. This group was empty, so no tense forms could be scored.
- **Distribution of verbal morphology for group 2:** 20% - 40% of appropriate use of past morphology.

Form	Aspectual categories							
	STA		ACT		ACC		ACH	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
PAST SIMPLE	/	/	14	45.16	26	86.67	61	84.73
PRESENT SIMPLE	8	66.66	2	6.45	/	/	/	/
PAST PROGRESSIVE	/	/	2	6.45	/	/	/	/
PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	2	6.45	/	/	/	/
PAST PERFECT	2	16.67	4	12.90	1	3.33	5	6.94
PRESENT PERFECT	2	16.67	7	22.59	3	10	6	8.33
PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
TOTAL	12	100	31	100	30	100	72	100

Table 44: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for Group 2

Figure 32: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for

States for   Group 2

Legend:
- past simple
- present simple
- past progressive
- present progressive
- pest perfect
- present perfect

Figure 33: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for

Actions for Group 2

**Figure 34: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for
Accomplishments for Group 2**

**Figure 35: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for
Achievements for Group 2**

For group2, the P.S. was not used with states, but it recorded very high percentage for the three other categories; actions (45.16%) , accomplishments (86.67%) and achievements (84.73%). The present simple is mainly used with states (66.66%) and barely used with actions (6.45%).The past and present

progressive are only used with actions (6.45%) and the past and present perfect are variably distributed among the four categories.

- **Distribution of verbal morphology for group 3:** 40% - 60% of appropriate use of past morphology.

Form	Aspectual categories							
	STA		ACT		ACC		ACH	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
PAST SIMPLE	2	14.29	21	38.89	56	86.15	137	91.95
PRESENT SIMPLE	7	50.00	3	5.56	2	3.08	/	/
PAST PROGRESSIVE	/	/	12	22.22	2	3.08	2	1.34
PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	6	11.11	2	3.07	1	0.67
PAST PERFECT	2	14.28	5	9.26	1	1.54	4	2.68
PRESENT PERFECT	3	21.43	7	12.96	2	3.08	5	3.36
PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
TOTAL	14	100	54	100	65	100	149	100

Table 45: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for Group 3
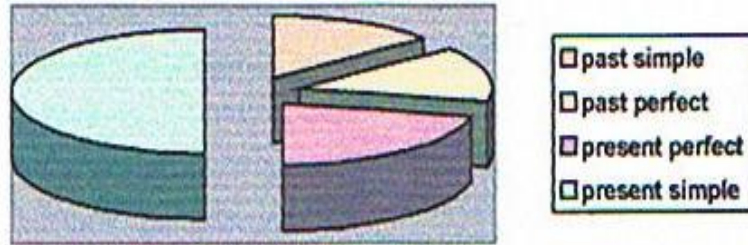
Figure 36: Distribution of Vrebal Morphology

For States for Group 3

Figure 37: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for Actions for Group 3

Figure 38: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for Accomplishments for Group 3

Figure 39: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for Achievements for Group 3

For group 3, the P.S. is variably used with the four categories with the lowest percentage (14.29) for states and the highest percentage for achievements (91.95%). The Pr. S. is mainly used with states (50%) and barely met with actions (5.56%) and accomplishments (3.08%). The past and present progressive and mainly used with actions and rarely met with accomplishments and achievements. The past and present perfect are variably used with the four categories but they are mainly met with states

- Distribution of verbal morphology for group 4: 60% - 80% of appropriate use of past morphology.

Form	Aspectual categories							
	STA		ACT		ACC		ACH	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
PAST SIMPLE	10	50	61	51.26	87	95.60	372	85.12
PRESENT SIMPLE	6	30	/	/	/	/	/	/
PAST PROGRESSIVE	3	15	35	29.41	2	2.20	/	/
PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	1	5	15	12.60	/	/	/	/
PAST PERFECT	/	/	4	3.36	2	2.20	29	6.64
PRESENT PERFECT	/	/	4	3.37	/	/	36	8.24
PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
TOTAL	20	100	119	100	91	100	437	100

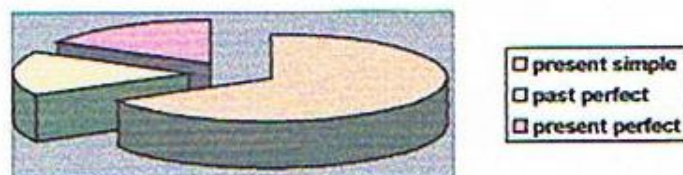**Table 46: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for Group 4**

Figure 40: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for
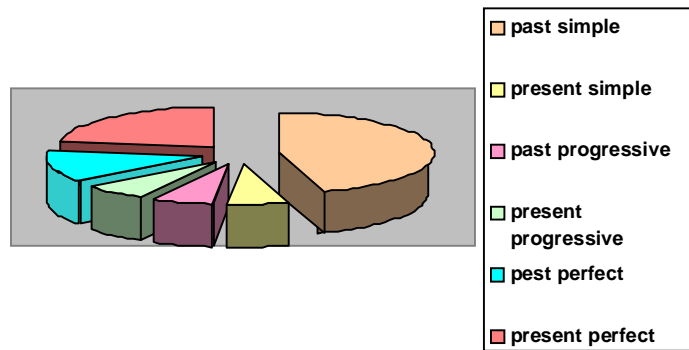
States for Group 4
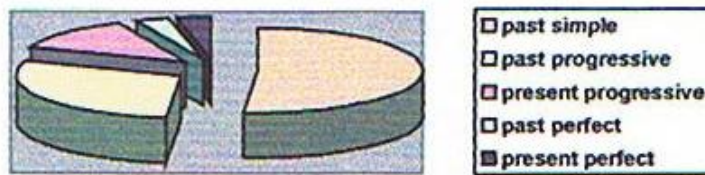
Figure 41: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for
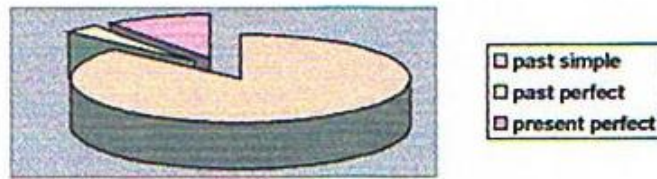
Actions for Group 4
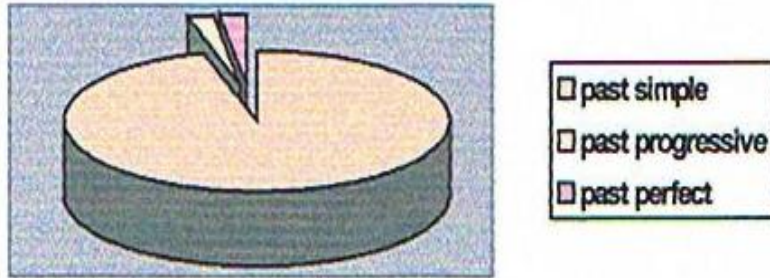
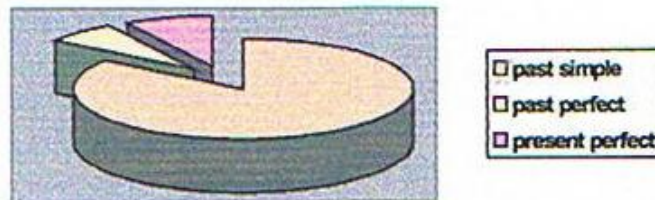**Figure 42: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for**

Accomplishments for   Group 4
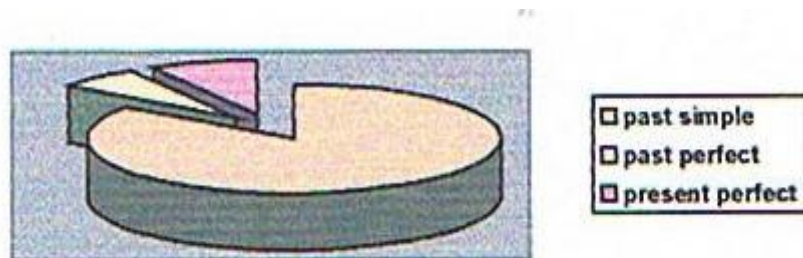
Figure 43: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for

Achievements for   Group 4

For group 4, the P.S. is used at very high rate with all the categories but the highest percentage is found with accomplishments (95%). The Pr. S. is used only with states (30%). The past and present progressive and the past and present perfect are used at variable and low rates with the four categories.

- Distribution of verbal morphology for group 5: 80% - 100% of appropriate use of past morphology.

Form	Aspectual categories							
	STA		ACT		ACC		ACH	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
PAST SIMPLE	47	87.04	92	69.14	107	84.25	366	92.66
PRESENT SIMPLE	5	9.26	/	/	15	11.81	/	/
PAST PROGRESSIVE	2	3.70	30	22.22	5	3.94	6	1.52
PRESENT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	12	8.89	/	/	5	1.27
PAST PERFECT	/	/	1	0.74	/	/	10	2.53
PRESENT PERFECT	/	/	/	/	/	/	8	2.02
PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
TOTAL	54	100	135	100	127	100	395	100

Table 47: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for Group 5
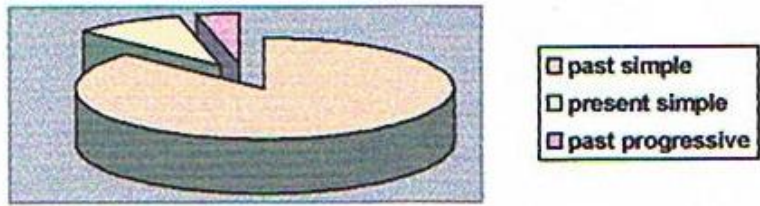
Figure 44: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for
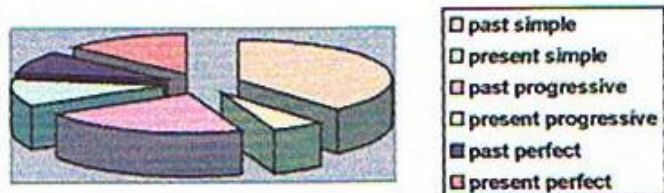
Statements for   Group 5
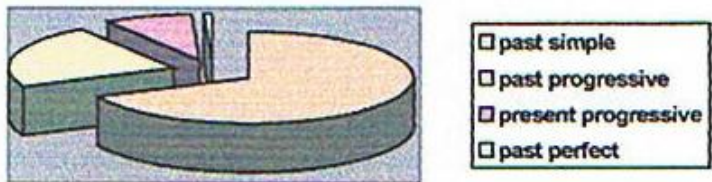
Figure 45: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for

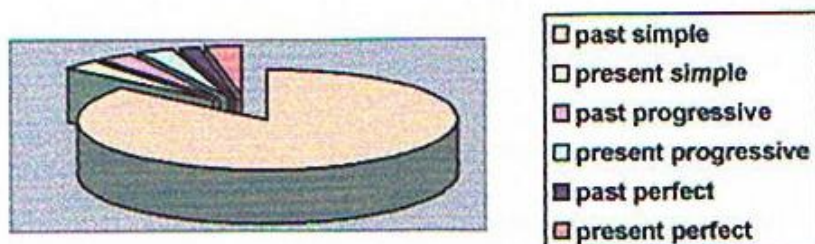**Actions for   Group 5**

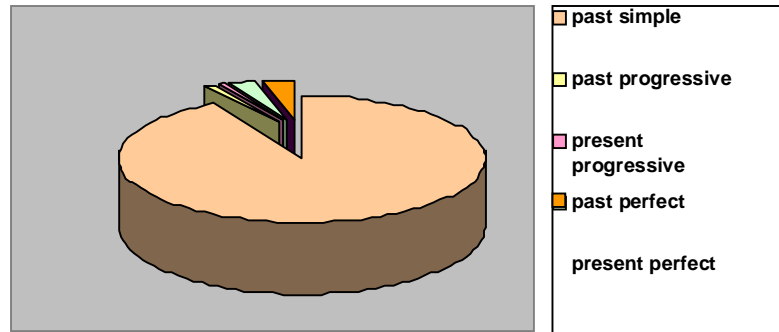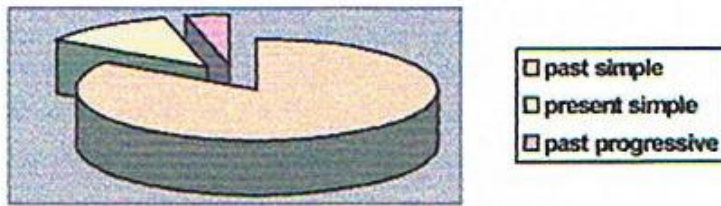**Figure 46: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for**

Accomplishments for Group 5
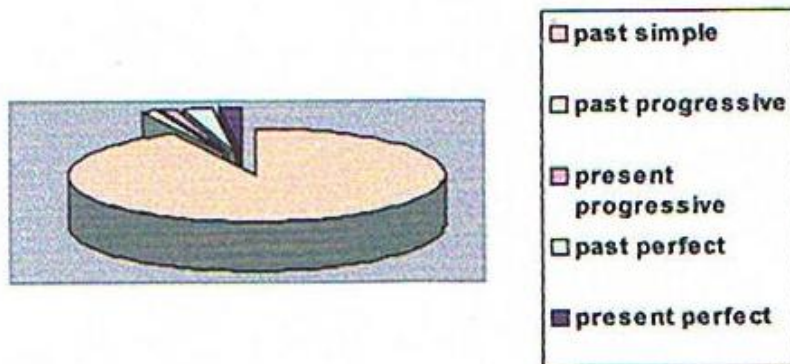
Figure 47: Distribution of Verbal Morphology for

Achievements for Group 5

For group5, the P.S. was used at a very high rate with the four categories with the highest percentage recorded with achievements (92.66). The Pr.S. was only used with states (9.26%) and accomplishments (11.81%). The P.C. and Pr.C. were mainly used with actions. The P.Perf.S. was used only with actions (0.74%) and achievements (2.53%). The Pr.Perf.S. was only met with achievements (2.02%).

If we look at the narratives produced by the four groups all together, we will come-up with the following conclusions about our investigation concerning the aspect hypothesis. The four preceding tables show the distribution of verbal morphology within the lexical aspectual categories. Event predicates (achievements and accomplishments) pattern together and tend to score very close rates. They are not distinguished by more than 12% difference in this corpus. They show the highest rate of past tense inflection from group2 to group5.

Activities show the highest rates of occurrence of the progressive when compared to the other aspectual classes. However, the past simple scores the highest rates for activities all through the corpus with an increasing tendency as we move from group 2 to group5.

The results also show us that the learners rarely use statives though we can note an increase in the last groups . When they are used, they usually come in the form or the past or the present simple.

6.4.2 A Cross Sectional Analysis per Tense

- Past Simple Use
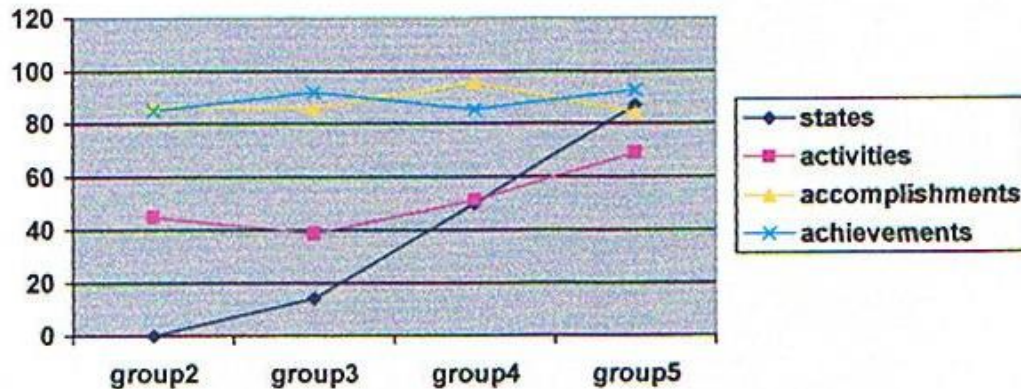
Figure 48: Use of the Simple Past within Lexical Aspectual Classes by Groups

This figure illustrates the use of the P.S. in the four lexical aspectual classes with the four groups classified according to their level of proficiency with tenses. We can see that the past simple is used at a very high rate (over 80%) with the achievements and accomplishments with all the groups. For states, it is totally absent with group 2 but there is a raising tenancy as we evolve in the level of proficiency. With group5, we reach a very high rate of use (87.04%).

Activities tend to use this tense form at an average rate (around 50%), though we can observe a raising tendency with the evolution of the level of proficiency of the learners. We move from 45.16% for group2 to 69.14% for group5.

- A Cross Sectional Analysis of Past Progressive Use
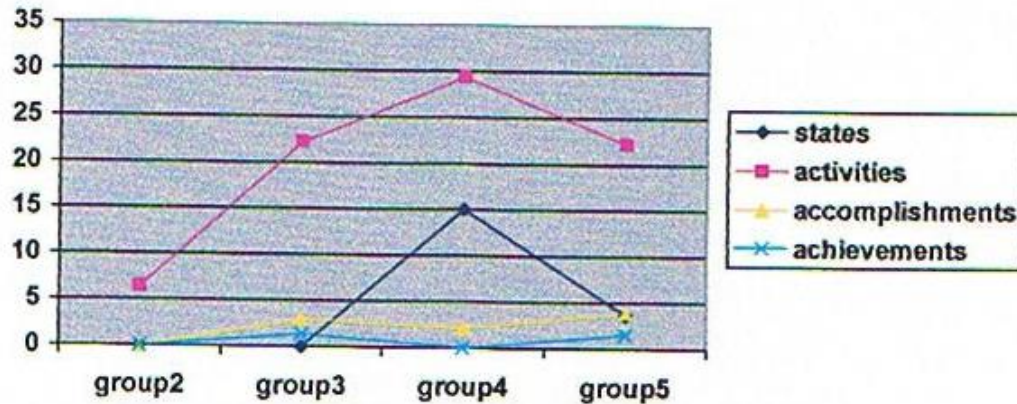
Figure 49 : Use of the Past Progressive within Lexical Aspectual Classes by Groups

This figure illustrates the use of the P.C. in the four lexical aspectual classes with the four groups classified according to their level of proficiency with tenses. This tense form is mainly used with activities with an increase from group2 (6.45%) to group4 (29.41%) and then a slight decrease with group5 (22.22%). For accomplishments and achievements, the rates a very low (a maximum of 3.94% for accomplishments at the highest level of proficiency). For states, the past progressive is first met with group4 (15%) then it decreases to (3.70%) with group5.

Figure 50: The Use of the Present Perfect Simple within Lexical Aspectual Classes by Groups

This figure illustrates the use of the Pr. Perf. S. in the four lexical aspectual classes with the four groups classified according to their level of proficiency with tenses. For this tense form, we note a decreasing tendency with all the categories as the level of proficiency evolves. The highest rates are mainly recorded with group2: activities (22.59), accomplishments (10), and achievements (8.33) . At the highest level of proficiency, states , activities and accomplishments score 0% and achievements score 2.02%.

Figure 51: Use of the Past Perfect Simple within Lexical Aspectual Classes by Groups

This figure illustrates the use of the P.Perf.S. in the four lexical aspectual classes with the four groups classified according to their level of proficiency with tenses. For this tense form, we note a decreasing tendency with all the categories as the level of proficiency evolves. The highest rates are all recorded with group2: states (16.67), activities (12.90), accomplishments (3.33), and achievements(6.94) .

6.4.3 Recapitulation of the Results

Drawing the link between grammatical aspect and lexical aspect , we can distinguish four claims (Shirai, 1991, Andersen & Shirai. 1996):

- Learners start using the past perfective with achievements and
    accomplishments and extend it to activities and states.
- Progressive form emerges with activities, then extends to
    accomplishments and achievements.
- Progressive form is very rarely used with to stative meaning.

To verify the results of our study in relation to the aspect hypothesis, we will take the claims one at a time.

6.4.3.1 Use of the Progressive Aspect of the Past

Figure 49 representing the use of the P.C shows an absolute predominance of activities in the use of the progressive ; with an increasing tendency as the level of proficiency of the learners evolves with a very slight decrease at the last level. Then, we can observe the emergence of events (accomplishments and achievements) at low and very close rates.

Figures 40 and 32 Show that a combination of the progressive with a stative meaning is met only once at an intermediate level of proficiency and with a low rate. Our observation goes confirming the results found by other researchers in the field of SLA such as Gialcalone Ramat(1997), Shirai (1995), Collins (1997) and Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds (1995).

6.4.3.2 Use of the Perfective Aspect of the Past

The first claims was that the perfective past starts with events (accomplishments and achievements) , then it extends to activities and states, This progression is confirmed as far as the P.S. is concerned . It is confirmed by the interpretation of diagram 51.The P. Perf. S on the other hand, has rather low

and decreasing rate of use which does not coincide with the progression described in the aspect hypothesis. We can say that the claim of the hypothesis is partly confirmed if we define as perfective past all past that is not carry a progressive connotation. In this case, the perfective past would include the P.S. and the P.Perf.S. It must be admitted that that the association of the perfective past with events can be partly resulting from the fact that the perfective past is the first past morpheme acquired (see the form oriented study in this same volume).So, it will be more easily observable in the productions of learners at the early stages of their apprenticeship.In addition to that , we can observe a dominance of achievements due to the narrative nature of the written productions. However, it must be noted that the use of the past and present perfect (figures 50 and 50) do not go confirming this element.

Conclusion

This research shows that lexical aspect influences the pattern of distribution of verbal morphology throughout the evolutionary stages of the learner's morphological development. The results we have found confirm the other research works dealing with the same object of study and consolidate the grounding of the aspect hypothesis. All the claims we have examined were confirmed by our results. All evidence comes in support of the claims concerning the effect of lexical aspect on the pattern of emergence of grammatical aspect throughout the building-up and metamorphosis of IL.

CHAPTER SEVEN
PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Outline

Introduction

7.1 Influence of Instruction

7.2 Implications of the Three Studies

7.2.1 The Longitudinal Study

7.2.2 The Error Analysis Study

7.2.3 The Cross-sectional Study

Conclusion

Introduction

Our research work has been looking at the acquisition of the tense-aspect system of the English language from three different corners: the three views provide us with considerable information about the processes, the strategies and the sequences the learners' IL uses and goes throughout its evolutionary stages. This information gives us data to improve the instructional programs and the teaching methods to speed-up the learning process, to facilitate acquisition and to remedy situations of error making that constitute a hindrance to the learners.

In our work, we have tried to present a view of tense and aspect acquisition that is dynamic . It is important to look at this process from various corners and to consider the diverse aspects affecting it to understand the complexities and interrelated links building up its evolution.

7.1 Influence of Instruction

The instructional orientation of the language classroom plays an essential part in the learning of the grammar element. Harley (1989) points out that learners who receive specialised instruction focussing on the form-meaning associations in the tense-aspect system are more successful than the learners who do not benefit from this focus. He considers that the longer the amount of time that is spent in building-up the form-meaning associations, the more successful the learners will be in acquiring the fixed objective notions. It is generally agreed on among researchers (Pienemann, 1989, 1998) that the general tendency is that focus-oriented instruction learners reach the fixed morphological stage of development more often than no-focus oriented instruction learners.

However, it has been found in studies on instruction (Klein, Dietrich & Noyau, 1995) that intensity of interaction is more important than the length of interaction.

They say (ibid:277):

> *Duration of stay is an uninteresting variable. What matters is the intensity, not the length of interaction. Therefore, ordering learners according to their duration of stay is normally pointless because [it is] to crude a measure for what really matters: intensity of interaction.*

In agreement with this, Bardovi-Harlig (2000,433) argues:

> *…in many instructional settings, length of study is an uninteresting , or uninformative, variable. It is the quality of and the intensity of interaction that is of critical importance.*

Bardovi-Harlig (2000: 341) sums up the role of instruction in language acquisition in four main points:

> *Instruction may be viewed as doing at least one of four things. It may provide input that is otherwise unavailable (or not salient); it may provide opportunities for interaction that are otherwise lacking ; it may provide form-focussed instruction; or it may enhance a learner's desire to speak or write in a target like manner.*

One main advantage of instruction as far as acquisition is concerned is that the stages of development seem to be very clear. The learner's IL exhibits more developmental stages and shows more attainment. Evidently, instruction has a positive effect on language acquisition. However, one must admit that it does not change the acquisitional sequences and it has not yet been proved to help

learners save steps . It has been found in many languages (English, German, Swedish, Dutch and French) that although learners are subject to specific instructional processes, they still exhibit the same pragmatic and lexical stages of temporal expression as those exhibited by learners who did not receive the focussed input.

Input is the starter of the acquisition process . it is the first element that raises attention and stimulates the cognitive processing reaction in the learners' mind. Gass (1989:35) describes this psycholinguistic process as follows:

> *All learners have the capability of taking information from the input and organising it within the framework of their current linguistic system and modifying and restructuring that system.*

Input itself can be subject to various interpretations and would best be experimented in the language classroom. We can speak about communicative input, negotiated input or focus on form input. Still, both form-oriented longitudinal and meaning-oriented cross-sectional studies show that following the instructional program and receiving various forms of input, learners throughout the process and evolving in the proficiency gradation end up making the correct form-meaning associations.

7.2 Implications of the Three Studies
7.2.1 The longitudinal Study

Among the observations made by researchers concerning tense and aspect acquisition, there is the point that the imperfect hardly spreads compared to some other tense forms. This could be explained by the fact that most learners have very limited stative vocabulary(Bardovi-Harlig & Bergström, 1996). A pedagogical suggestion to help learners overcome this difficulty would be to

orient the classroom input towards an intensification of stative lexicons. Another interesting suggestion would be to help learners develop more consciousness in the input phase of learning. By this, we mean that processing instruction helps learners make targetlike form-meaning associations when they are processing input. We could follow the model of the Spanish preterite that has already been subject to instruction processing (Cadierno, 1995).

7.2.2 The Error Analysis Study

It has been observed in the EA conducted as part of this study, that learners have a considerable rate of error making . Use errors seem to overcome form errors. This could be explained by a variety of reasons, the main one being the inherent complexity temporal system of the language subject to acquisition. The learners need context data to build-up form-meaning associations.

> *The learners have to develop a precise perspective of the events, acts and situations, which makes them difficult to practice in restricted contexts. Their teaching involves drawing the learners' attention to how they operate in larger contexts. Ideally, teaching exercises should be text base din away that forces the learner to look for the function of the verbs within the text rather than relying simply on decontextualised meanings. This has to do with the semantic value of the various tenses. (Bouras 1999, 178).*

The formal distinction between the various tense forms is rather easy to make. However, it is very restrictive. It does not bring the semantic and pragmatic dimensions. In fact, two tense forms, could be both correct and appropriate in the same situational contexts, however, only one would be and

appropriate. Going beyond these distinctive variations, learners will tend to use short and simple combinations and avoid lengthy complex ones. To cover the three dimensions (form , meaning, pragmatics), we suggest the following procedure made of three steps, each corresponding to the three dimensions. Every step requires the use of a specifically designed activity.

Step1: The teacher should start giving the formal rules, indicating the three verb forms of the tense with all the singular and plural persons : affirmative, negative, interrogative.

This step requires the use of stimulus-response patterns and repetition activities

Step2: At this stage, the teacher should answer the question: what does this tense form mean? (Form should be clearly explained in association with the three forms introduced in the first step).

This step needs the use of form discrimination activities in addition to form-meaning matching exercises

Step3: At this level, the learners should be able to discuss the discoursal and rhetorical values of the tense form **.** At the end of this phase, the learners should be able to distinguish the semantic values carried by each of the tense forms introduced in the earlier steps.

Step3 practices form-content association by means of close procedures made out of long texts. For example, a job interview could help to draw the distinction between the P.S. and the P.Perf.S. In texts, we can see that perfective verbs describe the important foreground situations while the perfective forms build-up the backgrounding. This is the reason why we rarely find progressive forms in scientific clear-cut texts while narrative texts tend to have the foregrounding/backgrounding distinction clearer.

The following figure and table represent the procedure here proposed:

Step1: Form
- Affirmative
- Negative
- Interrogative

Step2: Meaning
What do the various
forms mean?

Step3: Pragmatics
How can we use the
various forms
appropriatly?
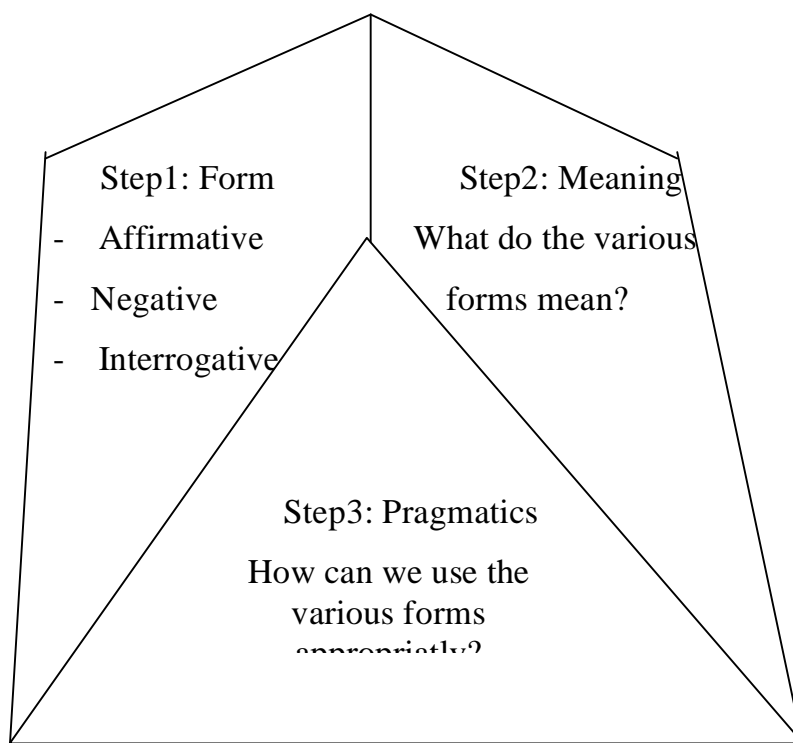
Diagram 06 :The Three Procedural Teaching Steps: Form, Meaning and Pragmatics

The following table represents the procedural phases with the appropriate accompanying activities

	Teaching phases		
	Form	**Meaning**	**Pragmatics**
Teaching Process	Stimulus-Response patterns	Discrimination of the Various Forms	Association of Form and Context (appropriateness)
Activities	Repetition Activities	Matching forms and meanings	Close procedure Long Texts Conversing

Table 48: Procedural Teaching Phases with the Associated Teaching Processes and Activities

7.2.3 The Cross-sectional Study

The effect of the L1 is very slight but still observable. This is why we consider that this element should be devoted a remedial approach. It is commonly believed that the use of the L1 in teaching a TL constitutes an obstacle , encourages the learners' laziness and helps them keep on thinking in the L1 and translate word by word into the TL. This , of course, must absolutely be avoided. However, we think that the L1 could be used in a positive way. It could help facilitate the learning process, by focussing on the nature of the transferred elements (facilitation, intrusion, avoidance and over-use). In some situations , when the teacher clearly and briefly makes the point about the similarities or differences between the two languages , this helps saving time and avoiding ambiguity which might create some uncertainty or misunderstanding and confusion in the learners' minds. This could also be done if the teacher observes recurring errors which are not corrected when s/he uses inherent TL explanations.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have brought suggestions resulting from the three experimental works we conducted and from the observations we made out of the various tense and aspect acquisition contexts we have encountered.
The existence of different approaches of the investigation and analysis of language acquisition lead to different but complementary results, responses and pedagogical implications. In our case, we have tried to sum-up our conclusions and build a coherent sum of suggestions in accordance with all what has been gathered as information about temporal morphology acquisition and form-meaning association. The linking element between all the data we collected is that of the sequential development of IL temporal semantics and the raising conscience about the form-meaning associations. The following question remains to be asked: Which element enhances the other or is the emergence of

the two totally simultaneous with complementarily and co-operative evolution between the sequential formal stages and the raise of the semantic consciousness about temporality?

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, we have looked at the acquisition of temporal expression by Algerian adult learners of English from three perspectives; longitudinal study of the acquisitional sequence by the analysis of the learners' written production over a period of two years of teaching input and data collection, an investigation of the aspect hypothesis based on proficiency variation through the analysis of learners' written narratives, and an error analysis of the learners written production.

The three co-existing approaches we have used helped us to come-out with complementary and converging answers and conclusions about the acquisition of temporal expression. Each approach brings its own participation and gives its particular answer. However, if we look at the various frame-works, we can see that they are all interrelated because each approach investigates a different part of the same and simultaneous acquisitional process. The testing of the aspect hypothesis looks in depth at the form-meaning association and its development as the level of proficiency grows. The longitudinal study observes the stages of emergence of tense and aspect morphology . The error analysis study draws a picture of the learners' mastery of the temporal system at the end of the acquisitional process. The essential links that build-up the unity and coherence of our work are the great concern for the association of form and meaning and the evolution and metamorphosis of the language learner's interlingual temporal semantic system.

The longitudinal study investigates the steps of acquisition of verbal morphology. Little first language influence has been identified. Examining the learners' evolving interlanguage, we observe that early simple and basic systems

of form-meaning associations are readjusted as new forms are acquired and assigned specific meanings. This goes confirming the point made by the error analysis included in our research about the phenomena of avoidance and over-use. The evolving temporal system may cause poor use of certain forms at specific stages as the learners will be using the emerging forms in the contexts of other tense-aspect ones. This is why the learners must build-up a semantic distinction between the various close but different forms.

The testing of the aspect hypothesis verifies the predicted influence of lexical aspect. The research shows how lexical aspect influences the distribution of verbal morphology in initial and later stages of morphological development through proficiency progression.

The error analysis on its part has drawn a picture of the learners manipulation of the temporal system of English after two years of intensive language input and grammar instruction. It comes out with the conclusion that the system is mastered quite adequately and when it is misused the errors are more often of use than of form. They are mainly due to the inherent complexity of the target language with some slight effect of the first language.

In this context of analysis, we have highlighted the importance of instruction and we have given a collection of pedagogical suggestions related to grammar instruction in general and to lesson organisation in particular.

For grammar instruction in general, we suggested that intensive input applied at appropriate moments is more beneficial than extensive and lengthy input without a focus element.

Concerning lesson organisation, we pointed-out that for the learner to be able to make the form-meaning association and to make the semantic distinctions it is important that the grammar lesson includes the three complementary elements of form (how is it formed?), meaning(when should I use it?) and pragmatics (what

makes it different from the other tenses?) in this specific evolutionary order of knowledge refinement.

The first language having a slight but still truly existing influence was suggested to be used as a help instead of being an obstacle. It could help save precious time and avoid ambiguities if it is used to explain complex concepts through the contrasts and similarities it has with the target language.

APPENDICES

*- **Appendix I***: Students Test

*- **Appendix II***: Summary of "Alone and Hungry" from the
   silent film Modern Times by Charlie Chaplin.

*- **Appendix III** : Extract Samples of the learners Narrative Written
   Production Errors.*

*- **Appendix IV** : Extract Samples of the learners Narrative Written
   Productionof the Four Lexical Aspect categories.*

Appendix I

Students' Test

Skinner is the father of the behaviourist school of psychology. Do you think his theory could be adapted to education? How would you apply it to teaching? Argue with concrete examples from a language teaching classroom context.

Appendix II

Summary of the Silent Film

Charlie Chaplin tries to return to jail where he has previously found food and shelter. At the same time, he befriends a woman who has stolen some bread. The segment includes four separate foreground episodes: (*on the street*) where we can see the stealing of the bread by the girl and the series of events leading to her arrest:

- *(in the cafeteria)* where we can see Chaplin eating food without paying and the events leading to his arrest.

- *(in the police wagon)* representing the meeting of Chaplin with the woman.

- *(on the street)* showing the ensuing escape scene.

The film ends with an imagined scene with Chaplin and the woman in a blissful domestic house ; the conclusion comes with Chaplin, at the end of the day dream, resolving to obtain the house of their dreams. The extract includes 10 tittles: the first one, "Alone and Hungry", sets the scene. The nine others report the speech of the characters. They are as follows in their order of appearance: " *She stole a loaf of bread", " No she didn't, I did", "It was the girl – not the man", " " Remember me – and the bread", "Now is your chance to escape", "*

Where do you live?", " No place – no anywhere", " Can you imagine us in a little home like that?", and the last and concluding scene *"I'll do it! We'll get a home, even if I have to work for it".*

Appendix III

Extract Samples of the Learners Narrative
Written Production Errors

Uninterpretable Errors

She *is stole* food….. (past simple /present continuous ?)

He *tooks* her hand and they run together….(past simple / present simple ?)

Interpretable Errors

She *stol* some food ….*(past simple)*

The police *caut* her…. *(past simple)*

 charlie *telled* the police he was responsible about the stilling….*(past simple)*

Appendix IV

Extract Samples of the learners Narrative
Written Production of the Four Lexical Aspect categories

Foreground

- She *met* Charlie……….. *(ACH)*
- The *police* chased her…..*(ACT)*
- She *ran* away…………..*(ACC)*

Background

- diferrent person *saw* her…..*(ACH)*
- Charlie *was trying* to help ..*(ACT)*
- She *was so sad*……………*(STA)*

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