

STUDIES ON THE INTERLANGUAGE OF ARAB EFL LEARNERS: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This study reports on a recent bibliography titled *The interlanguage of Arab learners of English: A preliminary annotated bibliography*. The bibliography, carried out over the last few years by the writer of this paper is now available on the home page of the *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies* (IJAES) at www.ijaes.org. In particular, the study highlights the type and nature of the studies listed in the bibliography through providing representative titles and sources. It also discusses the types of problems encountered in the process of compiling the bibliography. In this context it suggests, albeit briefly, a system for listing Arabic surnames of authors adopted in the bibliography, which may minimize the problem of referencing and documentation.

KEYWORDS: interlanguage; Arab learners; bibliography; problems of documentation; Arabic surnames.

1. Study objectives

This study seeks to introduce and report on a recent project carried out by the author that aimed at compiling a preliminary annotated bibliography of studies on the interlanguage of Arab Learners of English. The bibliography, carried out over the last few years, was published under the title *The Interlanguage of Arab Learners of English: A Preliminary Annotated Bibliography* (henceforth, *Bibliography*; cf. Mukattash 2005).¹

Secondly, the study provides some representative titles indicative of the type of the studies listed in the *Bibliography*. It also incorporates references to other relevant re-

¹ The bibliography is now available on the Home Page of the *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies* (IJAES) at www.ijaes.org.

sources and sources of information on various aspects of the interlanguage of Arab learners of English.

Finally, the study seeks to comment on the type and nature of the studies listed in the *Bibliography* as well as on the types of problems encountered in the process of compiling it. In this context it suggests, albeit briefly, a system for listing Arabic surnames of authors adopted in the *Bibliography*, which may minimize the problem of referencing and documentation.

2. Background information

As early as the beginnings of the second half of the twentieth century, Arab scholars and researchers, particularly students pursuing their graduate studies at American universities and later on at British universities, began to report on and investigate various aspects of the EFL teaching/learning situations in different Arab countries in particular, Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan.² At a later stage, this phenomenon spread to all Arab countries. Indeed, a quick survey of the titles in the *Bibliography* would not fail to convince us that names of all Arab countries are represented with varying degrees of frequency of occurrence.³

Studies on the learning/acquisition as well as on the production of English as a foreign/second language by Arab students/learners still appear in the form of MA and PhD dissertations produced at Arab and international universities. Further, recent issues of local, regional and international journals still carry papers on various aspects of the interlanguage of Arab learners in English. It is interesting to note in this context that such studies unmistakably reflected and still reflect current developments in international linguistic thinking, particularly research applications in the following fields: Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Interlanguage Studies, Discourse/Text Analysis, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), and Pragmatics.

The idea behind compiling the *Bibliography* was to bring together titles (and brief descriptions) of hundreds of studies that deal with various aspects of EFL learning/production by native speakers of Arabic in different educational and social contexts.⁴

The *Bibliography* is, as far as the researcher can tell, the first endeavour of its type not only in the Arab world, but also in the world at large. It is thus hoped that it will be of use

² Possibly the first two studies on the difficulties which Arab learners encounter in learning English are by Professor Raja Nasr, the first of which was a PhD thesis supervised by Professor Robert Lado, founder of the CA hypothesis; cf. Nasr (1955, 1963). Another study is Rammuny (1966).

³ Countries referred to in the *Bibliography* are (in alphabetical order): Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

⁴ Prior to the publication of the *ILALE Bibliography*, no attempt had been made to bring together hundreds of titles of studies on the acquisition of EFL by Arab learners. This is mainly due to the fact that many of these studies are not known/accessible to researchers (see below), and hence the idea of ILALE.

to scholars and researchers in the field of second/foreign language learning/acquisition, on the one hand, and to Arab applied linguists, textbook writers, and decision makers involved in English language teaching/planning in different Arab countries.

3. Sources and collaborators

The process of collecting relevant titles and data incorporated in the bibliography has been tremendous indeed. First, many papers/articles that deal with various aspects of EFL in the Arab World are published in local non-specialized journals that are neither indexed nor sufficiently circulated outside the country of publication. Secondly, the same is true of MA dissertations produced at different Arab universities. Thirdly, the overwhelming majority of dissertations and theses produced at international universities, notably British and American universities, have not been published nor adequately publicized in relevant publications. This is one of the major reasons underlying the phenomenon of duplication of titles in the *Bibliography*. I shall return to elaborate on this issue in an ensuing section.

In addition to printed materials in the form of books, journals and theses, and individual titles of studies provided by research collaborators at different Arab universities,⁵ several websites and search engines were utilized by the researcher in compiling this *Bibliography* (cf. Sources below). Furthermore, the Thesis Directory at the University of Jordan Library, which houses MA and PhD dissertations approved by institutions that are members of the Union of Arab Universities, has been a major source for titles of theses produced at Arab universities.⁶

4. Scope

The studies contained in the *Bibliography* (N=432)⁷ are thematically grouped into two major categories: (i) studies that deal exclusively with Arab EFL/ESL learners, and

⁵ The author would like to thank the following colleagues from different Arab countries for providing relevant titles that were not included in an earlier draft of this bibliography: Algeria: Zahia Roula (Mentouri University); Bahrain: Hameed Mattar (Bahrain University); Egypt: Refka Nounou (American University in Cairo), Asmaa Gheith (Ain Shams University), Magda Ibrahim (Alexandria University); Jordan: Abdullah Shunnaq (Yarmouk University); Lebanon: Nola Bacha (Lebanese American University); Libya: Nuwara Imssalam (Garyounis University); Palestine: Hanna Tushyeh and Khalil Aziz (Bethlehem University); Qatar: Murtadha Bakir (University of Qatar); Saudi Arabia: Ali Shehadeh (King Saud University), Hashem Noor (Taibah University); Sudan: Nada Wanni (Khartoum University); United Arab Emirates: Omar Atari (UAE University); Yemen: Ali Al-Zumor (Sanaa University), Zahraa Al-Sagaf (Aden University).

⁶ Available at <http://www.ju.edu.jo/library/english/folder.asp>.

⁷ The *ILALE Bibliography* does not incorporate titles of hundreds of relevant MA dissertations produced at international and Arab universities. Only some representative titles of MA dissertations are contained in *ILALE Bibliography*. See also Footnote 10 below.

these constitute the overwhelming majority of the titles in the *Bibliography*; and (ii) studies administered to different groups of EFL/ESL learners (including Arab subjects) that purport to investigate a particular issue in SLA or test a hypothesis or a language universal. Such studies (cf. Appendix 5 below) are not highlighted in the *Bibliography*. Below is a brief discussion of the two types of studies.

4.1. Studies that deal exclusively with Arab EFL learners

Studies that deal exclusively with Arab EFL learners are thematically grouped into four categories as follows: (i) studies on error analysis; (ii) interlanguage and proficiency studies; (iii) studies on learning problems/difficulties; and (iv) studies on transfer/interference (from Arabic). Below is a brief description of these four groups. Each group will be represented by 2–4 relevant titles. More representative titles are listed in Appendices 1–4 below. The idea of listing a fairly large number of studies under each category in the appendices is to show the scope of the studies listed in the bibliography, on the one hand, and to enable the reader to have an overall view of the type and nature of such studies.⁸ Furthermore, the studies listed below and in the Appendices are meant to acquaint the reader with the type of journals in which these studies appeared or the institutions in which the research was carried out. By and large, the titles listed under each of the categories below and in the corresponding appendices can be claimed to be representative of all Arab EFL learners' interlanguage studies.

- (i) **Studies on error analysis proper:** These studies (N=91) constitute 21% of the overall number of titles listed in the bibliography and fall into two distinct categories: those that use in their titles the cover term *Arab* (e.g. Arab learner(s)/student(s)) as in the title in (1) below; and those that refer to a specific Arab language community (e.g. Jordanian, Egyptian, Algerian, etc.) as in the title in (2). Other representative titles of the two groups are in Appendix 1 below.⁹
- (1) Hamdallah, Rami Walid (1988). *Syntactic Errors in Written English: A Study of Errors Made by Arab Students of English*. PhD dissertation, University of Lancaster, UK.
- (2) Hibir, Babiker el- (1976). *Sources of Common Errors in the Written English of Sudanese Secondary School Students*. PhD dissertation, University of Wales, UK.

⁸ Only PhD theses and papers published in international and/or indexed refereed journals are represented below.

⁹ Materials used as examples in this study will be numbered consecutively throughout this study. Within each set of titles of studies (under each group), studies are arranged in an alphabetical order according to author surnames.

It should be pointed out in this context, however, that some titles make no reference either to Arab learners or to any specific group of such learners. The following two titles are self-explanatory:

- (3) Ibrahim, Muhammad H (1978). Patterns in spelling errors. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 32.3: 207–212.¹⁰
- (4) Harbi, Lafi M al- (2000). “Communicative” and “Gopher” forms in cross-cultural communication: Analysis in linguistic and cultural components of the business letter. *Poznań Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, 36: 7-26. 7–26.¹¹
- (ii) **Interlanguage and proficiency studies:** Like studies listed in (i) above (i.e. studies on error analysis), studies in this group (N=139) are of two types: those that use in their titles the cover term *Arab* (e.g. Arab learner(s)/student(s)) and those that refer to a specific Arab language community (e.g. Jordanian, Egyptian, etc.) as in (5) and (6), respectively:
 - (5) Assaf, Azim Sudki (1990). *The Interrogative System of English Interlanguage: A Performance Analysis of Arabic-Speaking Adult Learners' Acquisition of English Oral Interrogatives*. PhD dissertation, Stanford University, California, USA.
 - (6) Abu-Jarad, Hassan Ali (1986). *English Interlanguage of Palestinian University Students in Gaza Strip: An Analysis of Relative Clauses and Verb Tense*. PhD dissertation, Ball State University, USA.

In some titles, however, there is no reference either to “Arab learners/students” or to any specific group of Arab learners as in the following title:

- (7) Mukattash, Lewis (1986). Persistence of fossilization. *IRAL, International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 24.3: 187–203.¹²

Furthermore, this group contains studies that seek to characterize and describe the overall proficiency level of certain groups of Arab EFL learners or their knowledge in a specific skill or linguistic area as in the following title:

- (8) Khered, Muhammad Omar (1983). *Measuring the Syntactic Maturity in the Written English of Arab Students at four Proficiency Levels and Establishing an EFL Index of Development*. PhD dissertation, University of Kansas, USA.

¹⁰ Ss were native speakers of Jordanian Arabic.

¹¹ Data consisted of English business letters written by NSs of English, Arabic, and other languages.

¹² Subjects were NSs of Jordanian Arabic.

- (iii) **Studies on learning difficulties/problems:** Studies in this group (N=66) are either of a general or of a specific nature dealing with a limited grammatical/phonological area as in (9) and (10) below respectively.
- (9) Hamdallah, Rami W. (1998). Linguistics problems facing Arab learners of English. *Research Bulletin*, King Saud University, Riyadh, 6. 1–8.
- (10) Kharma, Nayef (1987). Arab students' problems with the English relative clause. *IRAL, International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 25.3: 257–266.

Furthermore, as in the case of studies referred to above, some studies in this group deal with a specific group of learners: cf.

- (11) Balhouq, S.A. (1982). *Problems Encountered by Libyan Learners of English with a Special Reference to the Lexicon*. PhD dissertation, University of Sheffield, UK.
- (iv) **Studies on transfer/interference (from Arabic):** Studies in this group (N=74) are mainly of the “general” type that employ the cover term *Arab* since interference is assumed to be from Standard Written Arabic. The title in (12) below is self-evident. On the other hand, there are studies that refer to specific groups of learners, as in (13) below.
- (12) Hamdan, Jihad (1994). *Language Transfer and the Acquisition of the English Dative Alternation by Native Speakers of Arabic*. PhD dissertation, University of Reading, UK.
- (13a) Alam, Md Monirul (1993). *The Use of Arabic in the Composing Processes of Kuwait University Students Writing in English*. PhD dissertation, Indiana University, PA, USA.
- (13b) Dawood, Janan Jamil (1990). *Interference Patterns in the Spoken English of Iraqis with Particular Reference to Students Specialising in English*. PhD dissertation, University of London, UK.

It is interesting to point out in this context that although most studies in this category refer to the phenomenon of interference from Standard Arabic, very few studies refer to the interference from the spoken vernaculars of the learners as in the following study:

- (14) Mahmoud, Abdelmoneim (2000). Modern standard Arabic vs. non-standard Arabic: Where do Arab students transfer from? *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 13, 126–136.

Other studies that support the view that L1 interference in the interlanguage of Arab learners of English may be from either Standard Arabic or Spoken Arabic are Ibrahim, (1978) and Mukattash (1981).

4.2. Studies that do not deal exclusively with Arab EFL learners

As pointed out above, some studies contained in the bibliography, though dealing with certain aspect of the interlanguage of EFL learners, are not restricted to Arab learners. Such studies are typically administered to different groups of EFL/ESL learners (including Arab subjects) that purport to investigate a particular issue in SLA or test a hypothesis or a language universal. The title in (15) below is self-explanatory. More titles (with relevant explanatory annotations) are listed in Appendix 5 below.

- (15) Chen, Long (1993). *Constraints on the Acquisition of Anaphora in Adult English as a Second Language: A Developmental Model*. PhD dissertation, University of South Carolina, USA.¹³

5. Limitations

In compiling the *Bibliography* certain decisions were to be made with regard to the type and nature of studies to be included in it or excluded from it. First, the *Bibliography* does not include titles of the following types of study: (i) studies that deal exclusively with Arabic-English Contrastive Analysis (AECS) – such studies are listed in Mukattash (2002)¹⁴; (ii) studies that deal with the problems/difficulties which Arab students/translators face when translating from Arabic into English or vice versa although many of these studies are by and large studies in error analysis proper; (iii) developmental studies that deal with the acquisition of a certain linguistic aspect by an individual Arab learner or a group of Arab learners over a certain period of time. Secondly, the *Bibliography* does not list titles of hundreds of relevant MA dissertations produced at international and Arab universities. Only some representative titles of MA dissertations are contained in the *Bibliography*.¹⁵

¹³ Ss & data: Ss were from three designated language groups: Arabic, Japanese, and Spanish.

¹⁴ An updated version of the AECS bibliography is loaded on the homepage of the *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies: IJAES* (www.ijaes.org.).

¹⁵ Titles of MA dissertations are not included in ILALE on two different counts: (i) They are not easily accessible to researchers; and (ii) many of them cannot and should not be viewed as instances of original research having either theoretical or pedagogic significance. They are best viewed as acts of training in methods of research and bibliography. However, as pointed out above, readers are referred to University of Jordan Theses Directory at <http://www.ju.edu.jo/library/english/folder.asp> for titles of MA dissertations produced at Arab universities.

Readers may, however, notice that few titles in the bibliography may appear to belong more to AECS than to interlanguage studies. Such studies, though not exclusively devoted to the interlanguage of Arab learners of English as a foreign/second language, do have a substantial component that deals with errors that are typical of Arab learners or learning difficulties that they encounter in the process of EFL learning. Such difficulties are either predicted by Arabic-English contrastive analysis (i.e. hypothetical) and/or recorded in actual teaching situations. Readers may also notice that some titles are more related to translation problems than to interlanguage characterization. Admittedly, it is not always possible to draw clear-cut distinctions between different types of studies that deal with various aspect of the EFL teaching/learning process. For instance, a study claimed to be an Arabic-English CA of two grammatical categories/functions may turn out to be a mere interpretation of errors observed/recorded in the speech/writing of Arab learners of English (see Mukattash 2001). Similarly, it is not always easy to determine whether the problems identified in some translation studies are syntactic/lexical errors or whether their domain extends beyond sentence boundary to subsume discoursal and textual features. This is mainly due to the fact that in compiling the bibliography details of some of these studies were not accessible to the researcher, particularly in the case of MA dissertations produced at Arab universities that offer MA programmes in translation or articles published in non-specialized local/national journals that are not indexed and have no wide circulation.

Another limitation in the bibliography has to do with the fact that some studies are not annotated. First, due to space limitations and in order not to state the obvious some titles that are self-explanatory as in (16) below are not followed by such annotations:

- (16) **Majed, Hamad A. al** (1996). *An Analysis of Grammatical and Associated Errors Found in the Writing of Third Grade Saudi Male Students in Four High Schools in the City of Riyadh*. PhD dissertation, University of Hull, UK.

Secondly, in some cases it was not possible to obtain information about some dissertations or articles. This is particularly true in the case of dissertations and papers published before abstracts and other relevant information (e.g. descriptors/identifiers) were available online: e.g.

- (17) **Anani, Mohammad** (1968). *An Assessment of the Intelligibility of Jordanian English to Educated Speakers of British English*. PhD dissertation, University of Leeds, UK.

Other limitations in the *Bibliography* which the writer is aware of are the following: (i) the *Bibliography* cannot be claimed to be comprehensive under any circumstance; and (ii) the bibliographic information of some titles is incomplete, particularly the number of pages. This is particularly true in the case of studies published in local and regional journals, not accessible to the writer.

6. Problems encountered in compiling the *Bibliography*

Several problems were encountered in the process of compiling the *Bibliography*, two of which have to do with documenting authors' surnames and the places of publication. It is expedient, however, to point out that the identification of many of the problems discussed in this section was made possible through personal communication.¹⁶ Below is a list of the major problems which the present author has encountered in compiling the *Bibliography* with regard to documenting the authors' names and places of publication.¹⁷

6.1. Documenting the author's surname

The problems encountered in documenting "surnames" fall into four types: (i) same surname with different spellings; (ii) different surnames for the same author; (iii) inconsistent use of the prefix *al-/el-* with surnames; and (iv) inconsistent representation of compound nouns. Below is a brief discussion (with examples) of these problems.

- (i) Same surname with different spellings: A clear example is the surname *Tushyeh*, which is sometimes spelled with a <ch> and sometimes with <sh>. In all references to the authors PhD thesis produced at the University of Texas at Austin it is spelled with a <ch>, as in (18a), whereas in subsequent publications the surname is spelled with a <sh> as in (18b):

 - (18a) **Tuchyeh, Hanna** (1983). *Transfer and Related Strategies in the Acquisition of English Relative Clauses by Adult Arab Learners*. PhD dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, USA.
 - (18b) **Tushyeh, Hanna Y** (1996). Linguistic problems facing Arab learners of English. *IRAL: International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 111–112: 109–117.

A similar phenomenon occurs with surnames that are sometimes used with, and sometimes without the prefix *al-* that typically precedes most Arabic surnames (e.g. *Khanji* vs. *Al-Khanji*). We return to elaborate on this issue in point (iii) below.

¹⁶ This is due to the fact that many of the researchers whose works are listed in the *Bibliography*, particularly university lecturers/professors, are personally known to the researcher.

¹⁷ Readers are requested to observe the following notation which we have adopted for consistency with other similar studies and for ease of reference: The prefixes *al-/el-* will be placed as an independent form immediately before the surname. For example, the name *Saleh Al-Salman* will be listed under S in the following manner: *Salman, Saleh al-* (1980). More details can be found in the ensuing section.

- (ii) Different surnames for the same author: Another problem that emerged during the process of compiling the *Bibliography* has to do with the fact that some authors use different surnames in different works. For example, the following title of a PhD dissertation produced at Nottingham University in 1982 is listed under the surname *Hamdan* as in (19), whereas in all subsequent publications, the writer adopts the surname *Shakir*, which is seemingly his father's name (cf. 20):
- (19) **Hamdan, Abdullah Shakir** (1988). *Coherence and Cohesion in Texts Written by Jordanian University Students*. PhD dissertation, University of Manchester, UK.
- (20) **Shakir, Abdullah & Mohammed Farghal** (1997). When the focus of the text is blurred: A textlinguistic approach for analyzing student interpreters' errors, *Meta*, 42.4: 629–640.

This is due to the fact that, unlike Western surnames, Arabic surnames may be the name of the writer's family/tribe or his father/grandfather.

Another example can be seen in the publications of *Suleiman, Saleh*. The writer uses the surname *Suleiman* for his PhD dissertation produced at State University of New York at Buffalo (21a) and for some of his papers published afterwards (21b), whereas in more recent publications, he uses the surname *Al-Salman*, as in (21c):

- (21a) **Suleiman, Saleh Mahmoud** (1981). *Linguistic Interference and its Impact on Arabic-English Bilingualism*. PhD dissertation, State University of New York at Buffalo, USA.
- (21b) **Suleiman, Saleh M.** (1998). Some problems of writing research at the graduate level. *Dirasat: Humanities and Social Sciences*, University of Jordan, 25.1: 169–183.
- (21c) **Salman, Saleh al- & Raja'i Al-Khanji** (2002). The native language factor in simultaneous interpretation in an Arabic/English context. *Meta*, 47.4: 607–626.
- (iii) Inconsistent use of the prefix *al-/el-* with surnames: As pointed out above, another problem that seems to be idiosyncratic of Arabic surnames in general is the retention or avoidance of the prefix *al-* or *el-* (equivalent to the definite article *the*) as a morphological component of the surname. This is due to the fact that these two prefixes typically precede Arabic family/surnames names. In fact, most Arabic family names are variably used with/without such prefixes. However, due to assimilation in certain phonological contexts the /al/ or /el/ are pronounced as /as/, /es/; /ar/, /er/; or /at/, /et/. Even when the surname is preceded by one of these suffixes, there is no agreement whether the suffix should be represented in English as part of the surname or not. As far as I know, there

are 5–6 different ways of representing these prefixes, which seem to be in free variation. All the following orthographic representations for the surname *Rash-eed* are possible: *Al-Rasheed*; *al-Rasheed*; *Alrasheed*; *Al-Rasheed*; *alRasheed*; *al Rasheed*; and *AL Rasheed*. The following are some representative titles from the *Bibliography*:

- (22a) **Al-Qadi**, Nasser S. (1992). The acquisition of English derivational morphology by Arab speakers: Empirical testing. *Language Sciences*, 14.1–2: 89–107.
- (22b) **Al Harbi**, Lafi M. (1992). *Formal Analysis of Intonation: The Case of the Kuwaiti Dialect of Arabic*. PhD dissertation, Heriot-Watt University, UK.

Obviously this poses a serious problem in documenting the surname, particularly when the prefix is represented as an independent orthographic unit. The problem becomes graver when an author's name is variably used with or without a prefix. The following data show how the surname *Khanji* is used once with a prefix and once without one as in the following two examples respectively:

- (23a) **Rajai Khanji** (2001). Achievement Strategy Training in EFL Remedial Courses, *Journal of King Saud University, Language & Translation*, 13: 75–90.
- (23b) Salman, Saleh al- & **Raja'i Al-Khanji** (2002). The native language factor in simultaneous interpretation in an Arabic/English context. *Meta*, 47.4: 607–626.

There is no agreement as to whether such prefixes should count in arranging surnames alphabetically. In the *Bibliography*, these prefixes are disregarded for purposes of alphabetical ordering and hence, for ease of reference, the prefix is presented as an independent form immediately after the author's first name. For example, the name *Saleh Al-Salman* is listed in the following manner: *Salman, Saleh al-* (1980). All titles in the appendices below follow this system. Such a system will no doubt facilitate documentation as well as citations.

- (iv) Inconsistent representation of compound nouns: Compound nouns are a common phenomenon in Arabic, particularly in names of people or places. Two types of compound nouns are relevant to the theme of this study, namely orthographic representations of authors' surnames. Below is a brief description of these two types coupled with the types of problems involved in documenting such names.

First, some Arabic surnames consist of the sequence: *Abu* 'father of' + proper name, as in *Abu Hassan* 'Hassan's father'. The second noun in the sequence may also be a common noun as in *Abu al-ruz* [sic] 'father of + the rice' and *Abu al-ghanam* 'father of + the goats'. Obviously, the word *Abu* does not mean 'father of' in such sequences; it is used either in a metaphoric sense or to

refer to profession/occupation (i.e. ‘that dealing/working with...’). As pointed out above, the main problem involved in documenting such surnames in English has to do with the fact that there is no agreement on the spelling of the first constituent of the compound noun; there are three different spellings which I am aware of: *Abu*, *Abou*, *Abo*. There is also no agreement as to the orthographic relationship between the first and second constituents of the compound noun. Some writers prefer to represent the first constituent as an independent orthographic unit; some hyphenate the first and second constituents, whereas others amalgamate the two constituents in one orthographic unit as in the following three examples from the bibliography respectively:

- (24a) **Abu Nuwas**, Salah Nimir (1999). *The Influence of Certain Affective Factors on the Choice and Implementation of Interlanguage Communication Strategies*. PhD Dissertation, University of Khartoum, Sudan.
- (24b) **Abu-Ghararah**, Ali Hamzah (1989). Syntactic errors committed by Arab EFL learners. *Linguistica Communicatio*, 1.2: 112–123.
- (24c) **Abuhamdia**, Zakaria A (1995). Coordination in ESL writing: Is its use culture-specific? *Multilingua: Journal of Cross-Cultural and Interlanguage Communication*, 14.1: 25–37.

The situation is further complicated by the fact that some writers amalgamate the first constituent (*Abu*) with the prefix *al-/el-*. For example, the name: *Abou* + *el* + *Fetouh* is represented as: *Aboul Fetouh* as in the following title:

- (25) **Aboul** Fetouh, Nagla (1985). *An error Analysis of the Present Perfect with Reference to Errors Made by Egyptian Learners of English*. MA dissertation, American University in Cairo, Egypt.

In addition to the type of the Arabic compound noun illustrated above, there are compound nouns that consist of the sequence: *Abd* ‘servant’ + *al/el* + proper name, as in: *abd el Rahman* ‘servant of the Compassionate [God]’. Typically the second noun in the combination is one of God’s attributes/names (e.g. *al Raheem* ‘The Merciful’; *Al Rahman* ‘The Compassionate’). Like compound nouns discussed above, this type of noun poses different types of documentation problems. The following titles from the *Bibliography* exhibit several types of variation in representing some typical compound Arabic names:

- (26a) **Abd-el-Jawad**, H. R. (1987). Cross-dialectical Variation in Arabic: Competing Prestigious Forms. *Language in Society*, 6.3: 359–67.
- (26b) **Sa'Adeddin**, Mohammed Akram (1989). Text development and Arabic-English negative interference. *Applied Linguistics*, 10.1: 36–51.

- (26c) Taha, **Abdel Mageed** (1990). The Arabicization of higher education: The case of Khartoum University. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 11.4: 291–305.

6.2. Documenting Place of Publication

Another problem encountered in the process of compiling the *Bibliography* has to do with the fact that some studies are published under the same title with identical abstracts in more than one journal, sometimes in the same year. The three examples in (27) below are self-explanatory. More examples can be found in the Appendices below as well as in the *Bibliography*.

- (27a) Khuwaileh, Abdullah A (2000a). The effect of interactional classroom peer work on the treatment of mistakes in students' academic essays. *Dirasat, University of Jordan*, 27.2: 501–513.
- (27b) Khuwaileh, Abdullah A (2000b). The effect of interactional classroom peer work on the treatment of mistakes in students' academic essays. *ASP: La Revue du GERAS*, 27: 503–513.
- (27c) Khuwaileh, Abdullah A (2001). The effect of interactional classroom peer work on the treatment of mistakes in students' academic essays. *The ESPcialist*, 22.2: 169–189.¹⁸

7. Concluding remarks

Other general shortcomings and weaknesses of the studies contained in the *Bibliography* are detailed in Mukattash (forthcoming). It is convenient at this point, however, to point to one major shortcoming, namely the phenomenon of duplication of studies. Indeed, a brief glance at the titles in the bibliography will not fail to convince us that there is a great deal of repetition, quite often six or seven studies, even more, deal with the same category, process or phenomenon. The titles in Appendix 6 below represent a clear example of the phenomenon of duplication; over twenty titles deal with the English verbal system. Other examples of duplication in the bibliography are seen in the following grammatical areas: relative clauses, prepositions, the definite article, the passive voice, phrasal verbs, negation, word order, complex sentences, etc. Studies on lexical and textual and discoursal errors/difficulties also abound in the *Bibliography*.

¹⁸ Here are some more examples: Rabab'ah, Ghaleb. 2003. "Message transmission and comprehension of Arab learners of English in Jordan". *Grazer Linguistische Studien* 59. 95–112; Rabab'ah, Ghaleb Ahmed. 2004. "Message transmission and comprehension of Arab learners of English in Jordan". *Languages in India* 4(2), February, 2004.

Obviously the phenomenon of duplication is not a case of deliberate negligence but, as I argue elsewhere (Mukattash 2001: 120), is a logical conclusion of the fact that most linguistic research referred to in the *Bibliography* has been conducted individually and that dissemination of information amongst Arab universities has been and still is minimal.

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- CSA: Cambridge Scientific Abstracts.* <http://www.csa.com/>. [CSA Illumina provides access to more than 100 full-text and bibliographic databases published by CSA and its publishing partners.]
- CUP: Cambridge University Press.* <http://www.cambridge.org/uk/>. [Cambridge University Press is the printing and publishing house of the University of Cambridge.]
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- Elsevier.* <http://www.elsevier.com/>. [Publisher of more than 20,000 products and services, including journals, books, electronic products, services, databases and portals.]
- ERIC: The Education Resources Information Center.* <http://www.eric.ed.gov/>. [The ERIC online system provides researchers with a centralized ERIC Web site for searching the ERIC bibliographic database of more than 1.1 million citations going back to 1966.]
- FFF: FreeFullText.* <http://www.freecfulltext.com>. [FreeFullText provides links to the full-text content of over 7,000 scholarly periodicals that anyone may access online for free.]
- IngentaConnect.* <http://www.ingentaconnect.com>. [Academic and professional research articles online – some 17 million articles from 28,000 publications, including 6,100 online.]
- John Benjamins.* <http://www.benjamins.com/>. [Academic publishing program in Linguistics, Translation Studies and Terminology, Psychology, Philosophy, Literary Studies, Art and Art History.]
- LINGUIST List.* <http://cf.linguistlist.org/>. [The LINGUIST List provides information on language and language analysis and hosts searchable archives of over 100 other linguistic mailing lists.]
- LLBA: Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts.* [Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts provides access to citations and abstracts of books and book chapters, dissertations, and articles from over 1,300 scholarly journals in the fields of linguistic research, language research, and research in the areas of speech, hearing, and language pathology. The database contains over 300,000 records ranging from 1973 to the present.]
- MLA International Bibliography.* <http://www.mla.org/bibliography>.
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- Ovid.* <http://www.ovid.com/>. [Ovid provides access to thousands of journals, texts, and databases.]
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- University of Jordan Library – Thesis Directory.* <http://www.ju.edu.jo/library/english/folder.asp>. [The University of Jordan Library houses MA and PhD dissertations approved by Arab universities which are members of the Union of Arab Universities.]

University of Texas Libraries. <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>.
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APPENDIX 1

Studies on error analysis.

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APPENDIX 2A

Interlanguage studies.

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¹⁹ Ss were Jordanian university students.

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- Dahbi, Mohammed (1984). *The Development of English Writing Skills by Moroccan University Students*. PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, USA.
- Farraj, Ahmad Mohammad al- (1996). *Acquisition of Tense and Aspect in the English-Based Interlanguage of Non-Native Speakers*. PhD dissertation, Michigan State University, USA.²⁰
- Hamzii, Abdullah al- (2001). *Pragmatic Transfer and Pragmatic Development: A Study of the Interlanguage of the Yemeni Arab Learners of English*. PhD dissertation, Central Institute of Indian Languages, India.
- Hellwig, Cornelie (1986). *Verbal Negation in the Interlanguage of Arabic-Speaking Women Acquiring English as a Second Language*, MPhil dissertation, Aston University, Birmingham, UK.
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- Djoudi, Miriam (1991). *Linguistic Competence and Strategic Competence of Second Language Learners in the Area of the English Verb System: A Cross-Sectional Study of Interlanguage*. PhD dissertation, University of Essex, UK.²¹
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APPENDIX 2B

Studies on language proficiency of specific groups of learners.

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- Abdul-Fattah, Hussein & Saleh, Mahmoud H. (1995). Bilingual writing competence: An assessment of the transferability of macro-level skills. *Al-Abhath*, American University of Beirut, 43: 69–98.
- Addou, Ibrahim Hassan & Bernard A Hodinko (1980). Age, Marital Status and Time in U.S. as Correlates to English Language Proficiency of Male Arab University Students. *ERIC Document #*: ED309646, pp. 1–13.
- Barhoum, Khalil Issa (1986). *A Study of the English Oral Proficiency of Secondary School Students in Jordan*. PhD dissertation, Georgetown University, USA.
- Daly, Hosney Mostafa al- (1991). A Contrastive Analysis of the Writing Proficiency of Arabic and Spanish Speakers: Linguistic, Cognitive, and Cultural Perspectives. University of Pittsburgh, USA.

²⁰ Ss were 4 adult Arabic NSs who had come to the US to pursue their education. The study lasted over 18 months.

²¹ Ss were secondary school Algerian students.

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- Mukattash, Lewis (1980a). English language proficiency in Jordan. *Dirasat*, University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan, 7.2: 7–31.
- Qoqandi, Abdulaziz Mohammed Yar (1984). *Measuring the Level of Syntactical Growth of Saudi Twelfth Graders in EFL Writing Using T-Unit Analysis*. PhD dissertation, University of Kansas, USA.
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APPENDIX 3

Studies on linguistic problems/difficulties.

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- Hassan, Shahir el- (1984). English past tense: A problem for Arab students of English, *Abhath Al-Yarmouk* (Yarmouk University), 2.1: 7–16.
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²² Ss were multilingual university level Moroccan learners.

APPENDIX 4

Studies on L1 interference.

- Abu-Humos, Omar Mustafa (1992). *Interlingual and Cross-Modalities Relationships of First Language and Second Language of Adult EFL Arabic Speakers*. EDD dissertation, University of San Francisco, CA, USA.
- Badarin, Mohammed Nasser el- (1982). *Transfer, Strategies, and Structural Complexity in the Acquisition of English Syntax by Arabic Speakers*. PhD dissertation, Ball State University, USA.
- Daly, Hosney Mostafa al- (2000a). Investigating the relationship between L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English): Focus on language transfer: Where are we? *Cairo Studies in English*, Cairo University, 35–88.
- Diab, Nuwar (1997). The Transfer of Arabic in the English writings of Lebanese students, *The ESPpecialist*, 18.1: 71–83.
- Fakhri, Ahmed (1994). Text organization and transfer: The case of Arab ESL learners. *IRAL, International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 32.1: 78–86.
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- Hayes-Harb, Rachel (1999). *Native Speakers of Arabic and ESL Texts: Evidence for the Transfer of Written Word Identification Processes*. MA dissertation, University of South Carolina, USA.
- Issa, Ahmad Shihan al- (1998). *Sociopragmatic Transfer in the Performance of Refusals by Jordanian EFL Learners: Evidence and Motivating Factors*. PhD dissertation, Indiana University, PA, USA.

APPENDIX 5

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- Anderson, Janet I (1983). Syllable simplification in the speech of second language learners. *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, 7.1: 4–36.²⁴
- Ard, Josh & Taco Homburg (1992). Verification of language transfer. In Gass, Susan M & Larry Selinker [eds], *Language Transfer in Language Learning*, Amsterdam, Netherlands: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1992, pp 47–70.²⁵

²³ Data came from two groups of students receiving special instruction in conversational English. In one group the three speakers were Japanese NSs; in the other group, there were 2 Arabic speakers, a Chinese speaker, and a Spanish speaker.

²⁴ The paper examines syllabification errors in the spontaneous speech of NSs of Arabic and Chinese (N=20 each) who were acquiring English as an L2.

²⁵ Ss were NSs of Arabic (N=100) and Spanish (N=194).

- Babear, Saleh I (1988). *An Investigation of the Avoidance Behavior in Adult Second Language Learners*. PhD dissertation, Indiana University, USA.²⁶
- Bardovi-Harlig, Kathleen (1997). Assessing Grammatical Development in Interactional Contexts. *TESOL Quarterly*, 31.4: 797–806.²⁷
- Becker, Carl Preston (2001). *Pronouns that They Can't Get Rid of Them: Resumptive Pronouns in the English of L1 Hebrew and Arabic Speakers*. PhD dissertation, University of Delaware, USA.²⁸
- Bolotin, Naomi Abigail (1996). *The Effect of Age on Parameter Resetting: Arabic Speaking Children and Adults' Acquisition of English Relative Clause Structure as Assessed through Interlanguage Data and a Universal Constraint*. Harvard University, Cambridge MA, USA.
- Carrell, Patricia L (1984). Evidence of a formal schema in second language comprehension. *Language Learning*, 34.2: 87–112.²⁹
- De Jonge, Catharina Elizabeth (1995). *Interlanguage Phonology: Perception and Production*. PhD dissertation, Indiana University, USA.³⁰
- Knepler, Myrna Cohn (1980). *Errors Made by Students of English as a Second Language in Constructing Statements about Hypothetical Events*. PhD dissertation, Illinois Institute of Technology, USA.³¹

APPENDIX 6

Studies on the verbal system.

- Aboul Fetouh, Nagla (1985). *An Error Analysis of the Present Perfect with Reference to Errors Made by Egyptian Learners of English*. MA dissertation, The American University in Cairo, Egypt.
- Abu-Jarad, Hassan Ali (1983). *A Contrastive and Error Analysis of Tense in the Written English of Arab Palestinian University Students*. MA dissertation, Ball State University, USA.
- Ageli, Nuri R (1989). *Tense and Aspect in the English of Libyan Arabic-Speaking Students: A Contrastive/Error Analysis Study with Pedagogical Implications*. PhD dissertation, University of Wales, Cardiff, UK.
- Ayaseh, Taha Mohammad al- (1990). *A Study of the Nature and Sources of Common Errors Made by Second Secondary Students in Jordan in the Use of the English Verbal System*. PhD dissertation, Pacific Western University, USA.

²⁶ The study analyzed and compared the performance of a group of Arabic NSs with the performance of a group of Spanish NSs.

²⁷ Ss were NSs of Japanese, Arabic, Spanish and Korean enrolled in an American university intensive English program.

²⁸ Ss were NSs of Hebrew (N=30), Arabic (N=28) and English (N=30).

²⁹ Ss were NSs of Arabic (N=12), Spanish (N=8), Malaysian/Indonesian (N=8), Japanese (N=5), and other languages (N=7).

³⁰ Ss were 99 EFL learners belonging to three different NL backgrounds (Japanese, Arabic, and Spanish).

³¹ Ss were intermediate ESL learners who came from a variety of language backgrounds with Spanish, Farsi and Arabic speakers predominating.

- Bahumaid, Showqi Ali (1985). *A Performance Study of Tense, Aspect and Some One-Word Prepositions in the Written English of Yemeni University Students*. M.Phil. dissertation, University of Leeds, UK.
- Bouras, Mounira (1999). *Transfer from Standard Arabic in Tense and Aspect*. MA dissertation, Mentouri University, Constantine, Algeria.
- Buanain , Haifa al- (1992a). Present progressive: Suggestions for teaching this form to Arab students of English. *IRAL: International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 30.4: 329–350.
- Buanain, Haifa al- (1992b). Subject-verb concord in the interlanguage of some Arabic learners of English. *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 18: 1–28.
- Djoudi, Miriama (1990). *Linguistic Competence and Strategic Competence of Second Language Learners in the Area of the English Verb System: A Cross-Sectional Study of Interlanguage*. PhD dissertation, University of Essex, UK.
- Drid, Thouraya (2003). *Interlingual Errors in the Grammatical Categories of the English Verb: The Case of the First-Year Students of English at Ouargla University*. MA dissertation, Mentouri University, Constantine, Algeria.
- Ibrahim al- (1999). English tenses and aspects: Are they too difficult for Arab students to master. *Abhath al-Yarmouk: Humanities and Social Sciences Series* (Yarmouk University), 15.iv: 9–29.
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- Fawwaz , Mohammad Fateh Al- (1993). *An Investigation of the Errors in Verb Tense in Student-Written Texts: A Text-Typological Approach*. MA dissertation, Yarmouk University, Jordan.
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- Hazaymeh, Yahya Ahmed (1996). *An Analysis of the Errors Made by Jordanian Second Secondary Students in Learning English Verb Tenses*. MA dissertation, Yarmouk University, Jordan.
- Hellwig, Cornelie (1986). *Verbal Negation in the Interlanguage of Arabic-Speaking Women Acquiring English as a Second Language*, MPhil dissertation, Aston University, Birmingham, UK.
- Khafaji, Adel Hasoun al- (1983). *An Interlanguage System of Iraqi Learners in Relation to the Learning of the Progressive Aspect in English*. MA. dissertation, University of Wales, UK.
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- Melouk, Mohammed (1989). *The Acquisition of Modal Auxiliaries in English as a Foreign Language: The Case of Moroccan Learners*. PhD dissertation, University of Lancaster, UK.
- Mobaidin, Hosam Eddin Z (1988). *Tense and Aspect Transfer Errors: A New Analysis of Transfer Errors in English Compositions of Jordanian University Students*. PhD dissertation, University of Illinois, Urbana, USA.
- Shihab, Sabah Saudi (1984). *Analysis of Errors Made by Iraqi Students in secondary Schools in the Area of the English Verb Phrase*. M.A. Dissertation, Basrah University, Iraq.