

The Development of Learning the English Articles By EFL Learners

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Council of the College of Education, Ibn Rushd, University of Baghdad, in Partial fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education

(Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language)

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1427 A.H

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

(وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ
تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا)

صدق الله العظيم

(سورة النساء، الآية: ١١٣)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

إقرار الخبير العلمي

اشهد بأني قد قرأت هذه الأطروحة الموسومة (تطور تعلم أدوات التعريف والتكبير لدى متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة أجنبية). التي قدمتها الطالبة زينب عباس جواد السعدي إلى كلية التربية / ابن رشد / جامعة بغداد، وهي جزء من متطلبات نيل درجة دكتوراه في التربية / طرائق تدريس اللغة الانكليزية وقد وجدتها صالحة من الناحية العلمية.

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إقرار الخبير اللغوي

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الأستاذ المساعد

د. عبد الكريم فاضل جميل

To my supportive husband,

Ahmed and

My delightful son,

Seif Al-Deen

Zainab

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Abstract

One of the central parts of the English grammar is its article system, but acquiring this system is not an easy task as it may seem; it is a difficult one that takes a long life time of communication and practice .

The present study aims at finding out the level of achievement of Iraqi students in learning the English articles. It also aims at investigating the development of learning the English articles by Iraqi-Arabic speaking learners and identifying areas of difficulty which Iraqi Students face in learning the English articles and presenting the main factors behind such difficulties.

To achieve the aims of the study, a diagnostic test has been designed and exposed to a sample of 330 female students drawn from three stages intermediate school stage, preparatory school stage and college level of the academic year 2003-2004.

Face validity of the test is achieved by exposing it to experts in English language teaching and linguistics .

Before applying the test in its final version to the whole sample, a pilot test has been conducted to another sample of 100 female students selected randomly from the same population with the purpose of determining the sufficient time the testees need to answer the whole items , analyzing items difficulty level

and discriminating power, and computing the reliability coefficient of the test .

The whole sample of the study has exposed to the test which consists of two questions. The first question is a recognition one and it consists of 50 items while the second question is a semi-production one and it consists of 50 items as well.

The data of the test have been analyzed statistically using suitable statistical methods as one sample t-test, Analysis of variance and percentage. The analyzed data indicate that there are statistically significant differences among the three academic levels in the students' level of performance in learning the English articles , and those differences are in favour of the preparatory school stage students and those at the college level . They also show that there is no development in learning the English articles among Iraqi students and that the indefinite article *a(n)* is the easiest to acquire. The results also show that the error made by the testees are either intralingual, being due to the context of learning and the ignorance of rule restrictions, or interlingual, being due to interference of the first language.

On the basis of these results, conclusions and recommendations are drawn , and suggestions for further studies are put forward.

List of Abbreviations

Book4(NECI)	.	Book 4 of the New English Course for Iraq
Book7(NECI)	.	Book7 of the New English Course for Iraq
FL	.	Foreign language
IS	.	Iraqi Students
L ₁	.	First Language
L ₂	.	Second Language
LA	.	Language Acquisition
L ₁ A	.	First Language Acquisition
L ₂ A	.	Second Language Acquisition
LL	.	Language Learning
L ₂ L	.	Second Language Learning
No.	.	Number
TL	.	Target Language.

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1.1 Statement of the problem and its significance

The non-native speaker, unless (s)he has learned the language extremely well or has as his / her native language one in which there is an article system similar to, but not necessarily identical with that of English will continue to make mistakes when using the English articles. This leads us to emphasize that the teaching of the article system, is without question, one of the thorniest problems of instruction and one of the most difficult points in English grammar (See Oller & Redding, 1971:90 and Adams, 1962:60). Besides, the English articles are not acquired systematically, but rather naturally, i.e. learning this structure is a natural outcome of the process of learning the English language and it goes hand in hand with learning other English systems or structures.

Relating to the same point, Tipping (1940:93) mentions that the use of articles in English is so much governed by idioms and customs that it is a matter of some difficulty for all foreign students learning the English language.

Iraqi students for whom English is an FL often face a great difficulty in using the articles *a(n)*, *the* and \emptyset for various reasons. One major reason is related to the fact that these articles constitute a relatively complex system: for example:

\emptyset Shakespeare = the author William Shakespeare.

a Shakespeare = an author like Shakespeare.

This complexity is clearly reflected in the numerous mistakes Iraqi Students commit - sometimes they use the definite article *the* instead of the indefinite *a(n)* or \emptyset and vice versa. For example: they often slip up and say:

We all hope for *the* peace.

John was *the* good hearted.

We met \emptyset young man at the party.

The death is horrible.

The second reason is related to the fact that students usually tend to activate or generalize their native language competence, i.e. Arabic, while producing written work in English to make up for inadequate knowledge of English grammar and discourse. Lado (1957:2) expresses the same idea by contending that

individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture 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 practiced by natives.

According to Quirk et al. (1985:260) what makes determination "including articles" somewhat problematic is "the

dull class membership" of some nouns which may belong to countable and uncountable semantic categories as in the following examples:

She was beauty in her youth.

She has *a* great beauty in her youth.

Epstein (1994:182) argues that some data relating to the use of articles in English passed unnoticed by linguists because such data go beyond sentence level to that of discourse which has never been the concern of formal linguists.

There are many studies which have been tackled to investigate the development of some sub-systems as negative or interrogative or grammatical morphemes such as the plural {s}. In this field, English articles have been studied only to discover the errors committed by EFL learners or compare between Arabic and English articles but not to study the development or the sequence of progress in which this structure is acquired or not. Thus, the present study is expected to fill a gap in the literature of this field.

1.2 Aims

This study aims at:

1. Finding out the students' level of performance in learning the English articles,

2. Investigating the development of the acquisition of the English articles by Iraqi-Arabic speaking learners,

3. Identifying areas of difficulty which EFL learners face in learning the English articles, and presenting the main factors behind such difficulties

1.3 Value

It is hoped that this study will be of value to the learners of English, teachers and textbook writers.

This study may help the learners overcome some of their learning problems. It is of value to the teacher, since it gives feedback on what the learner knows and what (s)he still needs to know; thus, it enables the teacher to predict those areas his/her students face troubles in and to adapt his teaching methods according to the EFL learner's needs.

This study is also hoped to be of some interest to the textbook writers, in that it may serve as the basis for decisions about the grouping and sequencing of items and the types of exercises or drills where articles should be presented and practiced.

1.4 Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1. The students ' level of performance in learning the English articles of the three academic level is poor .

2. There are no statistically significant differences among the three academic levels in the students' level of performance in learning the English articles.

3. There is no development in the acquisition of the English articles by Iraqi-Arabic speaking learners.

1.5 Limits

The population of this study is limited to a cross-sectional female student at the following three stages: 2nd year intermediate school, 2nd year preparatory school, as well as 2nd year college level. This study is limited to the errors committed by the sample in using definite, indefinite and zero articles. The academic year is 2003-2004.

1.6 Procedures

The following procedures are adopted:

1-A thorough survey is done to identify the English article system components.

2-A sample consisting of three levels is selected as the subjects of this study.

3-A test is constructed including two parts: one deals with recognizing the English article system by the sample of the study, and the other deals with producing the English article system by the same sample of the study.

4-The sample of the study is exposed to the test. The data are collected and then analyzed statistically using suitable statistical methods.

5- At the end of the study, the results are computed and stated along with conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

1.7 Plan

The present study includes five chapters. Chapter one deals with the introduction of the study. Chapter two is an attempt to present the theoretical background of the study in respect to the English articles system and a review of relevant studies. Chapter three is concerned with presenting the methodology and procedures followed to achieve the aims of the study. Chapter four contains the presentation and discussion of the results. Chapter five presents conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies. Finally, a bibliography of the reference books used in the present study is introduced, followed by the appendices and an abstract in Arabic.

1.8 Definitions of Basic Terms

It is worth noting that the first definition of each of the following terms (article and learning) has been adopted by the researchers as being the operational definition .

1. Article

Hartmann and Stork (1972:18) define the term article as a word used as an adjunct to noun to modify or limit its meaning.

The English *the* or its equivalent in other languages is called "definite" whereas *a(n)* or their equivalent in other languages are called (non-definite) or indefinite articles.

A and *an* are indefinite articles that can be only used before a singular countable noun, the definite article *the* can be used before uncountable nouns, singular and plural ones. No article, often called the "zero article", identifies certain indefinite and general meaning of nouns. The articles are determiners that come before the nouns they modify. Except with ordinals such as first, second, third or last and one, the articles do not come directly before pronouns (Macline, 1981:58)

Webster (2002:65) defines articles as any of a small set of words or affixes as (*a*, *an* and *the*) used with nouns to limit or give definiteness to the application.

Crystal (1991:25) defines articles as a term used in the grammatical classification of words referring to a subclass of determiners which display a primary role in differentiating the uses of nouns. Many languages have no article system (e.g. Russian) Of those which do, a distinction is usually made

into definite and indefinite types, partly on semantic and partly on grammatical grounds. Articles may appear before nouns (as in English) or after (as in Swedish).

It should be noted that although the definite or indefinite articles occur in the same morphological environment especially before nouns, they are mutually exclusive, i.e. no more than one article can occur simultaneously before nucleus nouns, as shown in the examples below;

The apple / *an* apple

But not

The an apple / *a the* apple

2. Learning .vs Acquisition

Learning is seen as a conscious process which monitors the progress of acquisition and guides the performance of the speaker. Page et al.(1979:202) define learning by saying that it is a term used in educational psychology to refer to a relatively permanent change in behavior that is the result of past experience, either produced incidentally or through institutional learning through teaching.

Acquisition, on the other hand, is also used in the context of learning an FL. In fact, L₁A starts in very early childhood, but L₂A can happen in childhood, early or late, as well as in

adulthood. /L₂A is thus distinguished from L₁A. In this context, acquisition is sometimes opposed to learning (Crystal, 1991:6). Sometimes L₁A is called L₁L since LL is mainly a matter of imitation just like a small child who imitates everything (Stern, 1970:57-8). Another fact is that in language teaching /L₂A , an adult must practise and practise, again and again just like a small child learning his mother tongue. He repeats things over and over again. During LL stage, he practises all the time. This is what one must also do when learning an FL (ibid).

Ellis (1986:6) points out that the term "Learning" refers to the conscious study of an L₂, i.e. it occurs when the learner focuses on form in a formal setting, and the term "acquisition" refers to "picking an L₂ through exposure". Although the two terms differ but there are some specialists and psychologists such as Littlewood (1984) Ellis (1986), and Stern (1970) who use these terms interchangeably. Accordingly, the two terms will be used interchangeably in this study.

3. Development

Webster (2002:14) defines development as visible progress or growth .

A developmental study is then a type of research which looks at variables in the course of their growth over months or

even years. The two main types of developmental studies are longitudinal and cross-sectional (Page et al., 1979: 103).

It should be noted that the operational definition of "development " that has been adopted by the researcher is the significant differences among the three academic levels in the students ' level of performance in learning the English articles development .

4. EFL Learners

They are those who study English as an FL. In this study, they represent Iraqi-Arabic speaking learners who study English as an FL. It should be noted that both terms "foreign" and "second" will be used interchangeably in the present study.

2.1 An Introductory Note

Before discussing and identifying the developmental stages or the order of learning the Iraqi English learners undergo in acquiring the English articles system, it seems important to shed light upon the nature of the English articles system, second language acquisition and error analysis as well.

2.2 Articles

2.2.1 What is an Article?

Traditional grammarians as Sweet (1903), Poutsma (1914), Curme (1931), and Tipping (1940) have recognized three articles in English *the*, *a(n)* and \emptyset regarding the first two as adjectives not as a separate part of speech and, in turn, they define an adjective as a word used to qualify or modify a noun or a pronoun. Thus, in the phrase "the boy" for example, *the* is an adjective because it modifies or adds to the meaning of a following noun.

Traditionalists rely heavily on meaning, repeating the same ideas over and over again. In their works, one usually meets such expressions as "the definite/indefinite article really means..." or "it is used to mean". For example, a man means one unspecified member of the class referred to by the noun modified; "the man" signifies "the single definite man". This means that they start grammatical analysis by depending on semantic criterion.

Traditionalists, furthermore concern themselves with the meaning of a certain word preceded by *a(n)* as contrasted with the same word preceded by *the* or \emptyset e.g.

1. a. Queen Elizabeth = the Queen of England.
- b. *The* Queen Elizabeth = a ship named after Queen Elizabeth.

Structuralists as Bloomfield(1933), on the other hand, have recognized (*the, a(n), \emptyset* and some ⁽¹⁾ as articles and these are treated as belonging to the category of Noun-Determiners or to (Fries' s²⁾ Group A function-words. These determiners precede the nouns they mark either immediately or with certain types of words between, as follows:

2.a. *the* house, *a* house.

b. *the* big house, *a* big house.

But, since "these intervening words can be left out , the determiner is typically a marker immediately preceding the noun" (Francis, 1958:237 ;Gleason, 1961:156).

Crystal (1971:21) adds that structuralists reject the idea of categorizing articles with adjectives, stating that articles and adjectives display different patterns of form, function and usage.

2.2.2 The Position of Articles in the Noun Group

Articles usually come first in the noun group, i.e. " the noun

with the other words, like adjectives that can come before it"
e.g:

3. *the* last few days.

4. *a* very nice surprise.

In sentence 3 the definite article *the* comes before the adjective "last and few" and similarly in sentence 4 the indefinite article *a* comes before "very and nice". However, some words can come before articles in the noun group e.g. all, both, rather, just, such, exactly, and much in the expression "much the same", e.g. all the time, both the red dresses, rather a good idea,.. ..etc.

It should be noted that there is a special construction with *as*, *how*, *so* and *too* in which an adjective can come before an article, e.g.:

5. It was too nice *a* day to stay inside.

Here the adjectives "too and nice" come before the indefinite article *a* in sentence 5 (Swan, 1988:65-66).

2.2.3 The Syntactic Position of Articles

It is not only the meaning or the lexical features that a noun carries which determine the presence or absence of articles before it, but also the position it occupies and the function it carries in an utterance , i.e. " the syntactic position" which has

something to do with the usage of articles. Curme (1931:513) gives the following comment in this regard:

A noun is often without an article in the predicate when the noun does not designate a definite individual but something abstract, such as an estate, rank, relationship, calling or capacity of any kind e.g.: He turned traitor-He feel heir to-a large estate.

Relating to the same point, Yotsukura (1970:75-6) gives examples in which the position of the noun in the sentence restricts the usage of the articles; the positions are:

1-Subject Position

6. ——— left the house at about seven.

For this position *a / the* man, men, s'm⁽³⁾ men and *the* men can occur but man cannot.

2. Complement Position

7. He is ——— .

8. They are ——— .

For this position *a / the* man, boys, *the* boys can occur; but not s'm boys.

Poutsma (1914:647) mentions that "usage mostly rejects the indefinite articles after "to turn", but the article does not appear so

as is often believed. It is indispensable when the noun is modified by the adjective". He gives the following examples:

9. a. You bid me turn traitor.
- b. I turned *a* good fellow.

Modifiers also govern the choice of articles. The word "same" is an example of a prenominal modifier. This word is used as a prenominal modifier; there is only one choice: *the* same boy(s), but not *a* same boy, s'm same boys, or \emptyset same boys. Similarly, a postnominal modifier affects the use of the article. For example: when the word name is used before a proper noun like George Eliot, only *the* name George Eliot is possible, but *a* name George Eliot is not (Yotsukura, 1970:75).

2.2.4 Pronunciation of the Articles

The aim of this section is to present the morphophonemic phenomena of *the* and *a(n)*. The spelling of the indefinite article and the pronunciation of both the definite and indefinite depend on the initial sound of the word following the articles.

The definite article *the* has three forms in pronunciation: the strong form / i:/ when specially emphasized, and two weak forms: / / before a word beginning with a consonant sound, and / i/ before a word beginning with a vowel sound. The indefinite article is *a* when the following word begins with a

consonant sound and **an** when the following word begins with a vowel sound. **A** has the strong form /ei/ and the weak form / ə / Similarly, **an** has the strong form /an/ and the weak form / ə n /.

It should be noted that it is the pronunciation not the spelling of the following words that determines their forms, e.g.

a European car	/ ju r pi n /
a UN spokes man	/ ju: en /
an X ray	/ n ks rei /
an FB	/ n ef bi: /

(Leech & Svartvik, 1975: 205).

Speakers usually use the strong form / i:,ei,an/ under conditions of contrastive stress and in such cases as grammatical discussion, slow dictation, hesitation, careful and deliberate speech ...etc. the strong form can also be heard when the speaker utters the article and then pauses before selecting the word he wants, e.g:

10. I did not say my book; I said **the** / i:/ book.

11. **The** / i:/ is one form of the definite article.

The stressed definite article is also used to indicate excellence or superiority in some respect as:

12. Is he **the** / i:/ Mr. Johnson? (Zandvoort, 1975:117).

2.2.5 Repetition of the Articles

Concerning the repetition of the article, Tipping (1940:101-2) forms the following rules:

1- When two or more adjectives refer to the same thing , the article needs only be used before the first adjective, e.g:

13. They hoisted *a* red and green flag.

"It means, they hoisted one flag, coloured green and red".

14. *The* captain and goal keeper saved the game.

"It means, one person".

15. Napoleon was *a* great soldier and statesman.

"It means, one person".

2- When two or more adjectives refer to two or more things , the article should be repeated before each adjective, e.g:

16. They hoisted *a* red flag and *a* green flag.

"It means two flags: one green and one red".

17. We need *a* great soldier and *a* great statesman.

"It means, two persons".

2.2.6 Types of Articles

1. The Definite Article (The)

The definite article *the* has no content. It merely indicates

that the item in question is specific and identifiable, i.e. when one uses the definite article, he presumes that both the speaker and the hearer know what is being talked about.

(Leech & Svartvik, 1975:52).

Halliday and Hasan (1976:74) state that the function of the definite article means that the noun it modifies has a specific referent and that the information required for identifying the referent is available. It does not contain that information in itself; it is the "definite article" in the sense that its function is to signal definiteness, without itself contributing to the definition.

Etymologically, the definite article *the* is a weak or reduced form of the demonstrative *the* and it still has much the meaning of "this" or more frequently of that, e.g.:

18. Tell him I am busy at *the* "i.e. this moment".

19. The people of *the* "i.e. this/that" sort never fail.

(Zandvoort, 1975:119).

Epstein (1996:100) contends that "felicitous" use of the definite article is contingent not only on the speaker's knowledge and referential intention, but also on the speaker's assessment of the hearer's knowledge of the referent. He (ibid: 109) concludes that "in its referential function, it signals also that a referent is

accessible from the point of view of both the speaker and the hearer.

It is worth mentioning that serious changes in meaning will be signalled in the presence or absence of the definite article *the*. A good example is the absence of the "definite" article *the* from the "United Nations Security Council Resolution" (No. 242, 1967) and the like. The omission of the article has given rise to immense speculations and sharp controversies over the actual purport of this resolution, which reads as follows:

Withdrawal of Israel armed forces from \emptyset territories occupied in the recent conflict.

The interpretation of the meaning of this resolution varies so greatly that the whole Palestinian issue is confused and the chances "of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East" are endangered.

1.2. Uses of The Definite Article

The main uses of the definite article *the* are presented in the following pages:

1- It is used before nouns of which there is only one or which are considered one, e.g: *the* earth, *the* sea, *the* weather , *the* North Pole, *The* Bible, *the* Lord "God", *the* human race ...etc.

This is the unique use of *the* and it also arises where what is referred to is "understood" to be unique in the context, e.g. *the* sun, *the* moon *the* kitchen, *the* queen, *the* president.. .etc.

2- It is used before a noun which has become definite as a result of being mentioned a second time. This is the back-pointing use of *the* and it has sometimes referred to as the "anaphoric" function of the definite article which is only one means whereby *the* achieves specificity, e.g.:

20. His car struck *a* tree; you can still see the mark on *the* tree .

(Leech & Svartvik, 1975:53; Halliday & Hasan, 1976:73).

Quirk et al. (1985:267) distinguish two kinds of anaphora: direct and indirect. A definite noun phrase receives direct anaphoric interpretation where the same noun head has already occurred in the text, e.g.:

21. John bought *a* TV and *a* video recorder, but he returned *the* video recorder.

Indirect anaphora, on the other hand, arises when a reference becomes part of the hearer's knowledge indirectly, i.e. not by direct mention, e.g:

22. John bought *a* bicycle , but when he rode it, one of *the* wheels came off.

In this sentence, the wheels of the bicycle can be taken for granted because (a)-a bicycle has already been mentioned "anaphora" and (b)-we know that bicycles have wheels and this is "general knowledge".

3- It is used before musical instruments, e.g:

23. She learns to play *the* guitar. (Swan, 1988:70)

4- It is used before the names of meals if these are qualified by a definite clause, e.g:

24. *The* dinners Peter used to give were really memorable.

5- Before a noun which by reason of locality can represent only one particular thing, e.g:

25. Ann is in *the* garden, "the garden of this house"

26. He sent for *the* doctor, "his own doctor"

6- It is used before superlatives "used attributively and adverbially" and before first, second, next, last, same, etc. and only," used as adjectives or pronouns" e.g:

27. Mont Blane is *the* highest mountain in Europe.

28. Most people think that Monday is *the* worst day of the week.

29. I like Shakespeare but it is modern drama that interests me *the* most. (Thomson & Martinet, 1980:4-5)

It should be noted that when a possessive adjective precedes the superlative and before noun in the vocative case, *the* is omitted e.g:

30. She is our youngest sister, dearest girl.

(Tipping, 1940:197)

7- It is used before a noun made definite by the addition of a prepositional phrase or clause, e.g:

31. *The* boy that I met.

32. *The* road to London.

33. *The* letter from America.

8- The definite article has a generic use referring to what is general or typical for a whole class of objects, animals or things, e.g:

34. *The* whale is in danger of becoming extinct.

35. *The* deep-freeze has made life easier for housewives.

9- It can be used with adjectives to represent a class of persons ; the meaning is always plural, e.g:

36. Do you think *the* rich should pay more taxes?

(The rich people in general)

37. That man over there is collecting money for *the* blind, (the blind people in general).

(Thomson & Martinet, 1980:4)

Those expressions are always plural and one cannot say *a* blind or a rich. There are also some nationality adjectives "mostly ending in "-ch or -sh" are used in the same way to refer to people collectively, e.g. *The* Irish, *The* English, *The* Dutch ...etc.

(Leech & Svartvik, 1975:55).

10- It is used before certain proper names of seas, rivers, groups of islands, chains of mountains, plural names of countries, desert, e.g.: *The* Atlantic , *The* ALPS , *The* U.S.A ,*The* Saharaetc.

It is also used before names consisting of nouns +of+ noun, e.g:
The Cape of Good Hope ,The Bay of Biscay,etc.

It is also used before nouns consisting of adjectives + noun, e.g.:
The new forest, The high street.. .etc.

It is worth mentioning that *the* is not used before east, west, north, south + noun, e.g:

38. Yucatan is in North America.

But *the* can be used if east/west ...etc. is followed by of, e.g: *The* west of Spain; and with east/west ...etc. used alone as nouns, e.g:

39. *The* South is warmer than *the* North.

(Thomson & Martinet, 1980:4-5)

11- It is used when the reference is made to an institution ; shared by the community, e.g. *the* radio, *the* television, *the* telephone, *the* cinema, *the* paper "newspaper", *the* theatre ...etc., for example:

40. Can you turn off *the* television , please ? "the television set ", " but not in watch television, on television"

41. My sister goes to *the* theatre every month.

Quirk et al (1985:269) name this use as "the sporadic use of *the* because reference is made to an institution which may be observed recurrently at various places and times.

12- It can be used with seasons. This means that one can say spring or *the* spring, summer or *the* summer .. etc. There is a very little difference between the expressions with and without the article.

13- It is used in the names of ships , e.g *The* Tony Canyon, *The* Queen Mary...etc. (Swan, 1988:70).

14- It is used before a common noun followed by a proper noun which identifies it, e.g: **The** poet Byron, **the** play "King Lear"... etc.

Nouns expressing trades or professions often follow the proper noun; they are preceded by **the**, e.g: Brow, **the** general manager.

Similarly with nouns in apposition, e.g.: Rome, **the** capital of Italy.

15- It is used before abstract nouns that are limited or qualified, e.g:

42. **The** life we live here is hard.

43. **The** freedom of the seas

16- There is an idiomatic use of **the** with **the** comparative of adjectives, e.g:

44. **The** harder you work, **the** more you will be paid.

45. **The** more he gets, **the** more he wants.

17- It is used instead of possessive pronouns "my, your, her, their, .. .etc." with reference to parts of the body , and following a preposition, e.g. :

46. Mary banged herself on **the** forehead

47. They pulled her by *the* hair.

(Eckersly & Eckersly, 1960:57-61)

2- The Indefinite Article

According to Thorne (1982:481) the indefinite article is used to "indicate that something is of the kind that can be counted and therefore denotes no class but a member of class".

Zandvoort (1975:124) expresses the same opinion. He believes that : **The principle function of the indefinite article is to denote that we have to do with a single specimen of the class of persons, animals or things indicated by the noun "often with the implication that any other specimen of the class would have done just as well".**

The indefinite article admits both a specific and non-specific "generic" interpretation, but there is a slight difference between the generic use of *a(n)* and *the*. This can be shown in the following two sentences:

48- *The* tiger is a beautiful animal = generic.

49- *A* tiger is a beautiful animal = generic.

The tiger "generic" refers to the species as a whole, while *a* tiger "generic" refers to any member of the species:

50- *The* tiger is in danger of becoming extinct.

But not

51 - *A* tiger is in danger of becoming extinct.

(Leech & Svartvik, 1975:54).

2.1 The Indefinite Article and the Numeral One

Etymologically, the indefinite article is a weakened form of the numeral one when it functions as head on an elliptical nominal group (Halliday & Hassan, 1976:100).

Kurisinga (1932:32) comments on this point saying:

The indefinite article is, historically speaking, the weak form of attributive one. The two words, although formally distinct, have so much in common that a treatment of the uses of the indefinite article can best be made intelligible if we base it on the original identity of the two.

The following examples show this point clearly:

52- It cost *a* (i.e. one) penny.

53- I have *a* sister and two brothers.

The use of the indefinite article in a numerical or quantifying function is perhaps most obvious in its occurrence in such expressions as: *a* hundred, *a* dozen, *a* score, *a* thousand, a million and *a* half, *a* quarter, *a* twelfth + noun. Other uses are

seen in quantifiers such as: *a* few, *a* little, *a* great-many, *a* large number of ...etc.; also in measure phrases such as half *an* hour, six miles *an* hour, ten dollars *a* day.

It is worth mentioning that in the use of indefinite article in a generic sense "A tiger can be dangerous" *a(n)* cannot be replaced by one. (Quirk et al, 1985:273)

Eckersley & Eckersley (1960:193-4) mention the same point and add that there is another meaning of the indefinite article which is "any" in addition to the usual meaning of it which is "one" e.g:

54-A Shilling is equal to 12 Pennis.

5 5-Pass me *a* fork, please.

2.2 Meanings of the Indefinite Article

Chalker (1986:54-55) states that the indefinite article has two distinct meanings: indefinite meaning-specific , and indefinite meaning-classifying.

1- Indefinite meaning-specific.

It indicates a particular, actual example of the class and no other-even though indefinite, e.g:

56- *A* dolphin has just leapt out of the water.

The plural of indefinite-specific can be "some" or zero and the second mention is definite, e.g:

57- Some dolphins have just leapt out of the water.

58- *The* (new) dolphin is very young.

2- Indefinite meaning-classifying, e.g:

59- *A* dolphin is highly intelligent animal.

The plural of the indefinite meaning-classifying must be zero, e.g:

60- Dolphins are highly intelligent animals, "not some dolphins"

This means that some is not used in the general sense of meaning, (ibid).

2.3 Uses of the Indefinite Article

The main uses of the indefinite article *a(n)* are summarized as follows:

1 - It is used before a singular noun which is countable when it is mentioned for the first time , and presents no particular person or thing, e.g:

61-I need *a* holiday.

62- They live in *a* bungalow.

2- It is used with a noun complement. This indicates names of professions, e.g:

63- He is *a* teacher. (Thomson & Martinet, 1980:1).

Relating to the same point, Eckersley & Eckersley (1960:53) add that if the noun denotes a title or office that can only be held by one person at a time, the indefinite article is not used. e.g.:

64- They made him king. (not *a* king).

Similarly, the indefinite article is not used after the verb "turn" in the meaning "become": and nor after the nouns "rank" or "title", e.g.:

65- He was *a* conservative but he turned socialist.

66- He used to be *a* teacher till he turned writer.

67- He gained *the* rank of colonel.

68- He was given *the* title of Duke.

3- It is used in certain numerical expressions, e.g: *a* couple, *an* eighth, *a* hundred, *a* great many, *a* thousandetc.

4- It is used in expressions of price, speed, ratio .. .etc. e.g:

a couple, *an* eighth, *a* hundred, *a* dozen, *a* quarter, *a* thousand

5- It is used with " few " and "little" . *A* few means a small number or what the speaker considers a small number, i.e.,

to mean some but not many. **A** little means a small amount or what the speaker considers a small amount.

It should be noted that "few" and "little" can be also used without an article but then have almost negative meaning and can usually be replaced by "hardly any" e.g:

69- We have little time for amusement, i.e "implies that we were always busy".

70- Few people know this. "It is almost unknown".

6- It is used in exclamations before singular countable nouns, e.g.:

71- What *a* pretty girl!

But it is not used with plural nouns, e.g.:

72- What pretty girls!

7- It can be placed before Mr. / Mrs. Miss + surname, e.g: *a* Mr. Smith, *a* Mrs. Smith, *a* Miss. Smith.

A Mr. Smith means "a man called Smith" and implies that he is a stranger to the speaker. Mr. Smith " without a" implies that the speaker knows Mr. Smith or knows of his existence .

(Thomas & Martinet , 1980: 1-3)

8- It is used before names of meals when they are preceded by an adjective, e.g.:

73- He gave us *a* good breakfast.

The indefinite article is also used when there is a special meal given to celebrate something or in someone's honour, e.g:

74-I was invited to dinner (at their house, in the ordinary way).

But :

I was invited to *a* dinner given to welcome the new ambassador, (ibid).

9- It is used with the meaning "same" in proverbs and certain fixed expressions, e.g.:

75- Birds of *a* feather flock together,
a feather = the same kind.

76- They were much of *a* size =
of the same size.

10- It is used before a noun in opposition when the thing or person is assumed to be unfamiliar, e.g:

77- Blake, *an* English poet.

78- Lycidas, *a* poem by Milton.

11- It is used in the constructions: such *a*, quite *a*; many *a*;

rather *a*, e.g:

79- I have had such *a* busy day.

80- They are quite *a* lot of people there.

And the construction so + adjective + *a*, e.g.:

81 - We have not had so good *a* day at this for a long time.

12- It is used in a number of phrases such as:

82- It is *a* pity that.....

83- to take *an* interest in

84- to make *a* fool of oneself

85- *a* short time ago.

(Eckersley & Eckersley 1960:53-4)

3- The Zero Article

The zero article simply refers to the omission of *a(n)* or *the* , and contributes to the meaning of the noun with which it occurs. It is no less of a clue in the identification of the speaking voice and it tends to co-occur either with plural or with mass nouns or abstract ones . According to Lester (1980:28) the use of the null

article with nouns seems to be generalizations about the whole class of objects the nouns refer to, e.g:

86- He loved Ø books.

87- Ø Cigarettes cause cancer.

Poutsma (1914:530) states that suppression or omission of articles "is sometimes simply a matter of arbitrary usage, and any attempt to account for it would often seem to be futile", i.e. the question "why the articles are not used in one context and used in another" often has no answer in relation to language forms.

3-1 Uses of the zero Article

The main uses of the zero article are clearly shown and presented in the following points.

1- Some groups of common nouns are used without articles occurring in idiomatic expressions. These include :

1- Institution, e.g

88- be in

89-go to

bed

church

prison

school

hospital

court

90- be at home

It should be noted that those nouns are used without an article when the idea expressed concerns the use made of the building, e.g.:

91- He has gone to school, "to learn".

92- They are in church just now, "to worship".

But:

93- He has gone to *the* school, "just to see the place".

94- They are in *the* church just now. "merely looking around"

2- Means of transport "with by", e.g:

95-They travel	}	by bus
Leave		by car
come		by train

3- Times of the day and night , e.g:

96- They met	}	at dawn
		at sunrise
		at noon, midnight
		at night, by night

4- Meals, e.g:

97-we'll { have } breakfast
 { stay for } lunch

5- Parallel phrases, e.g:

98- They walked hand in hand

99- They are husband and wife.

100-We met face to face.

(Leech & Svartvik, 1975:206).

2- Articles are not normally used in genitive expressions when the first word is a proper name, e.g: America's economic problems, John's coat

3- When a noun is used as an adjective (before another noun), the first noun's article is dropped.

101- Lessons in how to play the guitar are guitar lessons.

102- A spot on the sun is a sunspot.

4-"Man" and "woman" can be used without an article when used in a collective or abstract sense, e.g:

103- God created man and woman for each other.

5- Articles are sometimes dropped after "all" and "both",,
 e.g:

all year, all week, all day, all night, all summer, all winter, but not in: all hour or all century.

104-All (*the*) eight students in the class passed the exam.

105-Both (*the*) children are good at matches.

6- The nouns of illness are usually uncountable, so they are used without articles, e.g:

106-I think I've got measles.

107-I've got bad toothache.

But I've got « headache because headache is always a countable noun

7- In certain constructions, the names of positions that people occupy are used without articles, e.g:

108-They elected George chairman.

109- He was elected president for the third time.

8-No article is used with continents, countries, states, departments, towns, streets, lakes, etc.

9-No article is used with expressions which refer to the principal building of a town, e.g: Oxford University, Cambridge Polytechnic, Westminster Abby, Birmingham Airport,

(Swan, 1988:70).

10- Names of single mountains usually have no article, e.g.: Everest, Snowdon, but the definite article is used with the names of European mountains if their names have an article in the local language , e.g.: Das Matterbom = *The* Matterbom, La Meije = The Meije

11- There are some styles in which articles are not used, e.g: newspaper headlines, titles in notices, posters ...etc, instructions, telegrams and lists (ibid).

12- It is not used before the names of festivals, e.g:

110-We are going there at Easter.

13- Sometimes it is dropped before predicative superlatives, e.g:

111 -He is happiest when he is working.

14- It is not used with words like "cook, nurse, teacher" when they have the meaning "our cook, teacher", e.g:

112-Cook has made mince-pies for Christmas.

113-Teacher was very pleased with my work.

Here, they have the function of names, so the omission of the article is natural.

15- It is not used before plural nouns used in general sense, e.g:

114-Books are my best friend.

16- It is not used before names of materials used in a general sense e.g:

115-Wheat is grown in Canada.

116-Butter is made from cream.

17- It is not used with the names of languages, e.g:

117-She speaks Spanish.

(Eckersley & Eckersley, 1950:59-60)

2.3 Second Language Acquisition

2.3.1 Learning & Acquisition

There are two mental processes operating in L₂ development. The first of these is the acquisition process, while the second is the learning process. The acquisition process is very similar, if not identical, to what goes on in LL, whereas learning is a conscious process, an interim device to help the learner cope with the TL in the short term (Nunan, 1991:240). There is a distinction between the two terms "learning & acquisition" that is presented by Wilkins (1974:31) who states that the contrast between LL and LA is in the amount of exposure to language. One year in the classroom provides the equivalent of three weeks contact in an LA situation.

Ellis (1986:292) states that acquisition is the internalization of rules and formulas which are then used to communicate in L₂

irrespective of whether conscious or subconscious processes are involved.

According to Krashen (1981:1), LA requires meaningful interaction in the TL and natural communication in which speakers are concerned not with the forms of the utterances, but with the messages they are conveying and understanding. LL, on the other hand, is available to the performer only as a monitor. In general, one formal knowledge of L_2 , and (his) conscious learning, may be used to alter the output of the acquired system, sometimes before and sometimes after the utterance is produced.

Reich (1986:325) adds that LA is not essentially different from comprehension. The act of the comprehension of new information presented linguistically or otherwise involves making new connections in a person's cognitive network. If the cognitive network is similar in nature to the network that stores linguistic information, then the same learning rules that are used for comprehension would also be used for acquisition.

So the term "acquisition" refers to the process of acquiring L_1 whereby children acquire their L_1 or their mother tongue, and the process of acquiring L_2 whereby adults or children acquire L_2 .

2.3.2 Theories of Second Language Acquisition

Theories of LA are used to describe and discuss what language is

acquired , how it is acquired , why and when it is acquired. This means that they are used to explain the learner's interlanguage which is defined by Selinker (1974:37) as: "a separate linguistic system that results from the learner's attempted production of the TL norm".

2.3.2.1 The Variable Competence Model

Ellis (1984:20) has proposed this model which is based on two distinctions: language use and language product. The process of language use is based on the distinction between "competence" which is the linguistic knowledge and "performance" which is the ability to make use of this knowledge. Language product, on the other hand, consists of discourse types ranging from entirely unplanned "free speech or writing" to entirely planned discourse "careful speech or writing".

The learner passes through a series of developmental stages in order to achieve the TL competence. These stages include formula speech, propositionally-reduced speech and syntactic utterances. This development occurs as a result of the learner's engagement in real communication with others and as a result of such factors as cognitive and physical ones. The TL performance, on the other hand, is a variable as a result of the primary and

secondary processes[^] played by the learner through his communication with others (Ellis, 1986:286).

This model shows that through acquiring new L₂ rules and through activation of these rules, the development of language occurs. This model is applicable to both naturalistic and classroom L₂A. As far as Iraqi learners are concerned, this theory is not applicable or it lacks some aspects, i.e. more detailed analysis and explanation of the primary and secondary processes responsible for use and acquisition are needed. The rules of input and L₁ of the learners should be pointed out, too.

2.3.2.2. The Acculturation Model

In this model, Schumann (1978:69) tries to shed light on the importance of both social and psychological factors in L₂L. He suggests that social and psychological maturation is more important than neurological maturation in accounting for adult learning. These factors control the level of linguistic success achieved by L₂ learners. To put it differently, one can say that when the social and psychological distances are great between the learner's group and the TL group, the learner fails to progress beyond the early stages of L₂A.

He (ibid) mentions six groups of factors that influence L₂A. They are: social, affective, ability, biological, cognitive and linguistic factors. He also argues that social distance and bad LL

situation will exist where the L₂ learners group is either dominant or subordinate and both groups desire preservation and high enclosure for the L₂ learner group. Bad LL situation will also exist where the L₂ learner group is both cohesive and large, and the two cultures are not congruent. It is also argued that a good LL situation will exist where the opposite of all the above occurs, i.e., where the L₂ learner group is non-dominant in relation to the TL group, ...etc.

The present study is concerned with the linguistic aspects of LA and not the social or psychological factors. Therefore, this model cannot be applied to Iraqi learners' situation. Yet, it may be considered one of the reasons behind the failure of some L₂ learners to achieve the TL competent.

3- The Accomodation Theory

This theory is concerned with how the learners' group "intergroup" defines themselves in accordance with the TL group "out group", i.e. when two groups are in contact, they compare each other in terms of abilities, physical characteristics, material possessions, etc (Giles , 1977:267).

This theory shows that factors such as the learners' group attitude and motivation towards the TL community play an important role in determining the level of the linguistic development of the learners. It also shows that the learner's

language is variable because (s)he can shift from a careful to a vernacular style . Since this model is only concerned with describing the processes underlying the motivation and attitude of L₂ learners to acquire L₂, it is not applicable to the present study, i.e., it does not account for the developmental stages the learners go through acquiring L₂.

2.3.2.4. The Nativization Model

This model is suggested by Anderson (1979:109) who tries to include the learner's internal learning processes. According to Anderson, L₂ is the result of two processes, nativization and denativization. Nativization is L₂ toward an internal norm, i.e. it takes place when the learner tries to assimilate the language input in such a way that it conforms to his internalized knowledge of the L₁ and the world. Denativization, on the other hand, is an acquisition toward an external norm. This means that it involves the learner's adjustment of his internalized knowledge to make it fit the language input.

To recapitulate, this model shows that L₂ development is the result of the gradual transition of attention from an internal to an external norm. Therefore, this model deals with a naturalistic L₂A and not a classroom L₂A setting. So this model cannot be applied to Iraqi learners since they learn English language in a classroom setting.

2.3.2.5. Discourse Theory

This theory is presented by Hatch (1978:56) who states that in studying discourse analysis, the speaker and the learner's discourse should be taken into consideration in order to know how L2 learners learn.

He (ibid) mentions that in adult-adult conversation, the native speaker always tries to simplify and adjust the language he uses in order to make it understandable by L₂ learners. The learner also uses certain strategies and tactics "requesting clarification, topic switching" to overcome learning difficulties.

Ellis (1986:157) adds that the order of acquisition is determined and reported according to the frequency of certain structures in the input. There are certain structures that naturally occur more frequently than others; thus "any similarities between input and output frequencies may be coincidental and not indicative of any conscious teaching strategy".

To sum up, one can say that when addressing learners of the language, native speakers always adjust their speech to facilitate understanding and these adjustments influence the rate and route of LA. The learner at the beginning produces ready made chunks and later he analyses them. This model then can be applied to

both children learning their L₁ and adults learning an L₂ , but it cannot be applied to the present study because it requires a face to face interaction with the native speakers of English. In addition, Iraqi learners are unable to go on a long conversation in English.

2.3.2.6. Universal Hypothesis

This theory is derived from Chomsky's theory of universal grammar which differentiates between two components of LA: The principles which should be available to constrain LA at any age and the parameters which constitute a set of options that may more or less irreversibly set by exposure to L) (Snow, 1993:20).

Rutherford (1987:13) states that universal principles apply to all human languages without exception because they are innate, i.e. they are never violated by the language learner, whether it is the mother tongue or some other languages. Similarly, Flynn (1987:28) points out that

... the uniformity of acquiring any human language is due to the existence of the principles of universal grammar which determine the basic grammar of the language being acquired and comprise the essential language faculty which all individuals are in general uniformly and equally endowed.

So the way to make progress in understanding LL is to develop better theories of innate universals ; that is , of what

constitute the linguistic rules and principles (Chomsky, 1975:207).

Eckman (1981:12) proposes a useful method for determining the directionality of difficulty. His Markedness Theory accounts for a relative degree of difficulty by means of the principles of universal grammar. He (ibid) shows that marked items in a language will be more difficult to acquire than unmarked, and degrees of markedness will correspond to degrees of difficulty.

Rutherford (1987) uses the Markedness Theory to explain why there seems to be a certain order of acquisition of morphemes in English: He explains that marked structures are acquired later than unmarked ones. Relating to the same point, Celce-Murica and Hawkins (1985:66) state that in the case of the English indefinite articles (*a*, *an*), *an* is the more complex or marked form (it has an additional sound), and *a* is the unmarked form with the wider distribution.

Brown (2000:214) states that Markedness Theory and universal grammar perspectives provide a more sophisticated understanding of difficulty in learning an L₂; therefore, teachers of an FL can benefit from both in their field.

2.3.2.7 The Monitor Model

Krashen (1977:25) has suggested this model for adult L₂ performance. It is an attempt to account for the discrepancies in oral and written L[^] performance. It also differentiates between careful and casual conversation, between the learner and the observation that certain students display a firm ground of the structure of the TL but seem unable to function in language, whereas others do poorly on structure and appear to be able to communicate quite well.

Krashen's hypotheses have had a number of different names. In the earlier years the "Monitor Model" and the "Acquisition-Learning Hypotheses" were more popular terms; in recent years the "Input Hypothesis" has come to identify what is really a set of five interrelated hypotheses. These five hypotheses are summarized in the following pages.

1- The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis:

Krashen (1981:99) claims that adult L[^] learners have two means of internalizing the TL. The first is "acquisition" which means a subconscious and intuitive process of constructing the system of a language like the process used by a child to "pick up" a language. The second means is a conscious "learning" process in which learners attend to form, figure out rules and generally aware of their own process. According to Krashen (ibid), " fluency

in an L₂ performance is due to what we have acquired, not what we have learned". Adults should, therefore, do as much acquiring as possible in order to achieve communicative fluency; otherwise, they will get bogged down in rule learning and too much conscious attention to the forms of language and to watching their own progress.

2- The Monitor Hypothesis

The "monitor" is involved in learning not in acquisition. It is a device for "watch dogging" one's output, for editing and making alterations or corrections as they are consciously perceived. Only once fluency is established should an optimal amount of monitoring, or editing, be employed by the learner.

3- The Natural Order Hypothesis.

Krashen has claimed that a learner acquires language rules in a predictable or "natural" order, i.e., according to the situation he engaged in, the order of acquisition will be identified. If the learner is engaged in free communication, the result will be a natural order of acquisition but if he is engaged in conditional situation (i.e. classroom), a different order will emerge.

4- The Input Hypothesis.

The input hypothesis claims that an important "condition for LA to occur is that the acquirer understands (via hearing or

reading) input language that contains structure "a bit beyond" his or her current level of competence", i.e. the language that learners are exposed to should be just far enough beyond their current competence that they can understand most of it but still be challenged to make progress. The corollary to this is that input should neither be so far beyond their reach that they are overwhelmed; 'nor so close to their current stage that they are not challenged at all.

An important part of the Input Hypothesis is Krashen's recommendation that speaking should not be taught directly or very early in the language classroom. Speech will "emerge" once the acquirer has built up enough comprehensive input.

5- The Affective Filter Hypothesis.

Krashen (1985:3) defines it as "a mental block that prevents acquirers from utilizing the comprehensive input they receive for LA" The filter controls how much input the language comes into contact with and how much input is converted into intake. It is determined by the learner's attitude, motivation, self-confidence and anxiety state. Thus, the best acquisition will occur in an environment where anxiety is low and defensiveness is absent or in a context where the "affective filter" is low.

2.4 Error Analysis

Human learning is fundamentally a process that involves the making of mistakes. Mistakes and errors form an important aspect of learning any skill or acquiring information.

Error analysis handles errors as necessary stages of learning as in any other kind of non-linguistic learning. It equates L₂L with L₁A because the child and the learner go through the same stages of learning (Brown, 2000:217).

For Corder (1967:167) learner's errors are significant in that "they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, and what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in the discovery of the language". Wilkins (1974:36) believes that mistakes are an inevitable and necessary part in the process of learning a language.

Selinker (1974:120) isolates five different strategies adopted by learners in interlingual building as potential sources of errors. If errors occur as a result of the native language, the process is called "language transfer" or "interlingual transfer". These errors could systematically be found at the beginning of L₂L . If they are a result of identifiable items in training procedures, then the process known as the transfer-of-training". These errors may occur when students make "induced errors" as a result of a misleading explanation from the tutor. If, however, errors occur

as a consequence of "an identifiable approach by the learner to the material to be learned, then, we are dealing with strategies of L₂L". But if they are the outcome of "identifiable approach by the learner to communication with native speakers of the TL, then we are dealing with strategies of L₂ communication". Last, if they can be proved to be a result of "a clear overgeneralization of TL rules and semantic features, then we are dealing with the overgeneralization of TL linguistic material". These are the case of negative intralingual transfer" committed later in the learning process.

The following section will be devoted to explaining one of the most important causes of errors; that is transfer.

2.4.1 Transfer

Brown (1987:177) states that transfer is a general term describing the carry over of previous performance or knowledge to subsequent learning. It is also one of the main sources behind the learner's errors. Transfer is either positive or negative. Positive transfer takes place when the prior knowledge benefits the learning task, i.e. it helps new learning. Negative one is referred to as "interference" and it occurs when the previous performance disturbs the performance of a second task, i.e. it hinders new learning.

Carroll (1968:114) adds that wherever there are similarities between the two languages, learning can be facilitated (i.e. positive transfer), and wherever there are contrasts, learning may be retarded or interfered with (i.e. negative transfer).

Language transfer is looked upon as an exclusively learning strategy. This means that it plays a role in an L₂L as Al-Jumaily (1982:219) states that native-language interference is surely the most immediately noticeable source of errors among L₂ learners.

The two main types of transfer are presented below:

1- Interlingual Transfer

Corder (1967:151) emphasizes that interlanguage is an idiosyncratic dialect which is regular, systematic, meaningful, unstable and creative, i.e. the learner's language does not belong to either his L₁ or to the TL he is learning.

Interlanguage is then a halfway type of language which contains errors that come from a mistaken use of rules or a use of vocabulary which is inadequate for what the students want to say (Sesnan, 2000:261).

Brown (2000:224) states that interlingual transfer from L₁ is very common at the beginning stages of learning an L₂ as L₁ is the only linguistic system in previous experiences upon which the

learner can draw. For example: learners may say "sheep" for "ship" or "the book of Jack" instead of "Jack's book".

2- Intralingual Transfer

Intralingual transfer "within the TL itself is a major factor in L₂L. Taylor (1975:395) has found that the early stages of LL are characterized by predominance of interlingual transfer, but once learners have begun to acquire parts of the new system, more and more intralingual transfer "generalization" within the TL is manifested. This according to Brown (1987:178) follows logically from the tenets of learning theory. As the learners progress in L₂, their previous experiences and their existing subsumers begin to include structures within the TL itself. Overgeneralization has been illustrated in such utterance as "Does John can sing?" or "He goed". Generalization involves transfer and transfer involves generalization.

2.5 Review of Related Studies

Reviewing previous related studies is of considerable importance in deciding the dimension of any study, and in selecting the sample and determining the suitable statistical tools used in analyzing the data. Consequently, some of these studies are directly relevant to the present work, while the others have indirect relation . These studies are presented chronologically

discussed and compared to the present study on the following points.

- 1- the nature of the problem, and the aims of the study ,
- 2- the population and sample selection, and
- 3- the procedures followed.

2.5.1 Arabic Studies

1-Joodi(1985)

The purpose of this study was to carry out a contrastive analysis of the article system in English and Arabic to identify the points of similarities and differences between the two languages. This study aimed at presenting few elementary techniques for teaching the English Articles to I S to help them overcome the difficulties they encounter in the area of article usage.

The sample of this study was the undergraduate learners of English at the college of Arts, University of Baghdad. The subjects are 60.

To achieve the aims of this study, a diagnostic test was conducted. It included 56 items chosen as a result of the contrastive analysis carried out by the researcher. The test items constituted a sample of the various uses of the articles *the* , *a(n)*

and \emptyset . A 24-item test for the use of *the*, an 11-item test for the use of *a(n)*, and a 21-item test for the use of \emptyset .

The findings of the study revealed the following:

- 1) Some language problems were the result of negative transfer from L₁ habit-interference through translation or of the conflict between the structure of the learner's L₁ and the TL, i.e. there was a positive correlation between error areas and areas where the two languages use different articles with noun classes that appear to be wholly or at least partially identical in both languages.
- 2) English areas that coincide in article usage with their counterparts in Arabic were easier to master than areas which differ in the two languages.
- 3) The errors made by I S in the use of the English articles are due to the negative transfer from Arabic, incorrect generalization about English, and ignorance of rule restriction.

2.5.1.2 Kharma and Hajjaj (1997)

The aim of this study was to investigate the main errors made by the learners of English in Kuwait in the use of the articles: *the*, *a(n)* and \emptyset . The study also aimed at carrying out a comparison of the article system in both Arabic and English. To achieve the aims of the study, a diagnostic test has been

conducted to a sample of 128 students from the Department of the English at the University of Kuwait. It concluded that:

- 1) The indefinite and definite articles were really difficult to acquire by Arab students and one of the main reasons that contribute to such a problem came from the students' L1 interference.
- 2) Arabic has a different system for indicating definiteness and indefiniteness, e.g. English has three forms of articles whereas Arabic has /al the/ and zero. Therefore, Arabic students tended to equate "*a/an*" and often \emptyset with the Arabic \emptyset and vice versa, e.g:

Howa Modarris.

He is teacher.

- 3) Arabic has often used the definite article , whereas English does not. One instance of this is the abstract noun which normally takes the definite article in Arabic but fareless frequently in English, e.g:

a tarikh laisa ailm.

The history is not a science.

- 4) In certain idiomatic expressions, English speakers omitted the definite article, but the Arabic students usually reinstated it, e.g:

Ana thahabt ela a sareer asaah al ashera msaan.

I went to *the* bed at 10:00 pm.

2.5.2 Foreign Studies

2.5.2.1. Oiler and Redding (1971)

This study was conducted to answer four questions regarding the English articles usage. These questions are:

- 1) What is the degree of correlation between knowledge of articles usage and English grammar in general?
- 2) Are there significant differences in knowledge of English between language groups which have formal article equivalents and those which do not?
- 3) Are there differences in article usage skills between groups of non-native from genetically different language families?
- 4) What do answers to the foregoing questions suggest with respect to the contrastive analysis?

The sample of the study consisted of 120 subjects, divided into two groups. Group (G₁) included learners whose native languages have equivalent articles such as Spanish language speakers. On the other hand, group (G₂) included learners whose native languages do not have equivalent articles such as Japanese language speakers.

The questions of this study included an additional section in a replacement test for (G₂) which was required for all non-native

speakers who are admitted at the University of California at Los Angeles. The subjects were not informed about the study; they treated the article usage questions as part of the replacement test.

The findings showed that there was a significant correlation between knowledge of article usage and overall English language proficiency in both groups. Moreover, learners who use equivalent articles in their native languages would learn English articles better than those who do not have such articles in their L₁. Concerning Q3, the results showed that there were different levels of skills in terms of article usage among the four different language families (Japanese, Romance language, Indian and Chinese or Thai).

Based on the contrastive analysis, it was found that learners who have articles in their LI would have a positive transfer from their LI in learning English language.

2.5.2.2. Kambou (1997)

This study discussed the results of a cross-sectional study, undertaken in 1996 which re-examined the phenomenon of transfer in the acquisition of English as a foreign language by Francophone English major college students in Burkina-Faso (West Africa). The theoretical framework on which this study was based was the semantic model developed by Huebner ⁽⁵⁾ (1983), which is known as "the semantic wheel for noun phrase

reference". The study focused on the acquisition of the English article system. The sample involves 177 undergraduate students at the University of Ouagadougou with at least seven years of English instruction. A cloze test of 107 items as well as error identification and correction tasks with 70 items of which 33 were incorrectly used serve as data collection instruments. Demographic information was also collected using a 16-item questionnaire. The overall rate of accuracy with regard to the correct use of the three articles studied here was above average: cloze test was 71%, error identification was 75% and error correction was 61 %. The results also showed that:

- 1) Learners faced difficulties with article usage in all the four semantic categories: generic, referential definite, referential indefinite and non-referential contexts.
- 2) Learners associated the zero article with [-HK] feature in [-SK+HK] contexts and the indefinite article with the [+SR] features in [+SR-HK] context.
- 3) Learners exhibited interlingual (L1 and L2) as well as intralingual transfer. The study discussed the implications of these results in the concept of referentiality, and questions the generalized ability of Huebner's (1985) model to all languages.

The study provided not only data, but also evidence of the level of difficulty, constraints and source of transfer in LA.

2.5.3 Discussion of the Related Previous Studies

Concerning the aims of the studies, the aim of both Joodi's and Kharama & Hajjajs' was to carry out a contrastive analysis of the article system in English and Arabic to identify the points of similarities and differences between the two languages. They also aimed at investigating the main errors made by the learners in using the English articles. The present study also aims at identifying areas of difficulty which EFL learners face in learning the English articles and presenting the main factors behind such difficulties. Kambou's, on the other hand, focused on the acquisition of the English articles system, and both of them used annotation based on "Huebner's model". The present study also aims at investigating the development of learning the English articles by EFL learners.

The samples of subjects were all students at the university level. The sample of the present study is across-sectional one; they are students at the intermediate, preparatory school stages as well as university level.

The numbers of subjects were 60 in Joodi's, 120 in Oiler & Reddings', 177 in Kambou's and 128 in Kharama and Hajjajs'. The sample of the present study is 330; they are drawn from the

second stage intermediate school, fifth stage preparatory school, and second year college level.

Concerning the tools of the previous studies, Joodi, Kharma & Hajjaj, and Oiler used a diagnostic test. Kambou, on the other hand, used a cloze test plus a questionnaire. In the present study, a diagnostic test has been constructed to achieve the aims of the study including a cloze test and fill in the blank test.

The results of the related previous studies will be compared to those of the present study and presented in chapter four.

Notes to Chapter Two

- 1- "Some" will not be considered in this study.
- 2- See Fries (1952:87:89)
- 3- Yotsukura (1970) considers only the unstressed some "written as s'm" an article.
- 4- The processes are referred to as primary because they involve semantic simplification. They also help the learner to acquire new non - analytic knowledge as well as to produce simple structure in an informal style spontaneously. Secondary processed such as "monitoring and borrowing" help the learner to lead more L2 forms with the results that these are available with the primary processes (Ellis, 1986:286).

5- In discussing articles relating to her study, the writer used a notation based on "Huebner". It classifies nouns as plus or minus specific referent [+/-SR] and plus or minus assumed to be known to the learner [+/-HK]. As a result, there are four combinations of these features: [-SR+HK] for generic nouns, [+SR+HK] for referential definites , [+ SR-HK] for referential indefinites, and [-SR-HK] for non- referential nouns.

3.1- An Introductory Note

This chapter provides a description of the main steps and procedures followed in selecting the population and sample of the study, as well as constructing and applying the test. This chapter, therefore, is an attempt to present the field work of the study practically and scientifically.

3.2- Population and Sample Selection

Although longitudinal studies are preferable in the investigation of language development, a number of practical difficulties such as the length of data collection period, often lead to the use of supposedly viable alternatives such as the cross-sectional studies. In a cross-sectional study, several subjects from the same L 1 background, but at various stages of exposure to the TL are observed. The data collected at this time are claimed to give the researcher a picture of what might be expected to occur in the period between the shortest and the longest times of exposure in this experiment (Hatch, 1978:35).

The population of the present study is a cross-sectional one consisting of the intermediate school level, preparatory school level, and college level; all situated in Diyala Governorate which is divided into the Centre of Baqubah district and five other districts, which are, in turn, divided into many sub-districts. These

districts are: Al-Khalis, Al-Muqdadiyah, Khanaqeen, Beledruze , and Kifri (see table 1).

Table 1
Distribution of Students of the Intermediate and Preparatory Schools (for girls) in Diyala Governorate

Name of the District	No. of Students in the Intermediate School	No. of (Second-class) Intermediate female School students	No. of female students in the Preparatory School	No. of Fifth Class Scientific Branch Preparatory School female Students
1 - The centre of Baqubah	8548	2781	3450	644
2- Al-Khalis	3835	1221	1344	218
3-Muqdadiyah	3015	1002	1249	101
4- Khanqeen	1939	600	899	176
5- Beldruze	1305	425	674	100
6- Kifri	184	56	94	9
Total	818727	6112	7710	1248

So the population of the present study includes:

- 1- second class of the intermediate school stage for girls⁽¹⁾
 - 2- fifth scientific class of the preparatory school stage for girls,
- and

3- second stage of college level female students majoring at the Department of English /College of Education at the University of Diyala.

As for the sample of the study, AL-Khalis⁽²⁾ district has been chosen in respect to the application of the test at the intermediate and preparatory school. AL-Khalis district is, in turn, divided into the center of AL-Khalis district and many other villages. As a result, the center of AL-Khalis district has been chosen (see table 2).

Table 2

Names of Intermediate & Preparatory Schools (for girls) and the Number of their intended the Centre of Al-Khalis District

No.	Names of Intermediate and Preparatory Schools (for girls)	No. of Female Students
1	Al-Insanya Intermediate School	165
2	Asia Intermediate School	160
3	Hei-Al-Zahra'a Intermediate School	165
4	Al-Khalisa Intermediate School	150
5	Al-Iraqiya Preparatory School	135
6	Al-Hawra'a Secondary School	180+70

The sample of the present study contains the following:

- 1- The total number of the population of the second class intermediate school stage is 1221 out of which 244 female students are randomly selected as a sample.
- 2- The total number of the population of the 5th class scientific branch preparatory school stage is 218 out of which 44 female students are randomly selected.
- 3- The total population of the female students at the college level is 42 who are selected wholly from the Department of English at the College of Education / University of Diyala to represent the sample of this level.

It is worth mentioning that intermediate and preparatory schools for males and evening ones for males and females are dropped out of the total population of the present study.

3.3 Construction of the Test

3.3.1. Description of the Test

The test of the present study has been constructed to provide answers to the following three questions:

- 1- What is the level of achievement of the IS in using the English articles (*the, a(n)* and \emptyset)?
- 2- How does the development of learning the English articles occur among IS?

3- What errors are made by the sample of the present study in using the English articles and which types of articles these errors are mostly frequent in?

All the items of the test have been selected from various⁽³⁾ grammar authorities and textbooks to include every information tackled in the textbooks of the intermediate and preparatory schools stages and college level as well.

The test consists of two questions representing recognition and semi-production levels. The total number of the items in both question 1 and 2 is 100. Question number one includes 50 items, of which 18 items are about the use of *the*, 15 items are about the use of *a(n)* and 17 items are about the use of \emptyset . This question is a recognition one and the students are required to fill in the blanks with the suitable articles (*the*, *a(n)* and \emptyset) (See Table 3).

Table 3

Distribution of Articles in Question One

Type of Article	No.of items	Items which Deal with each article.
the	18	5-6-8-9-13-14-16-18-22-25-26-32-34-36-41-43-47-50.
a(n)	15	4-7-10-15-21-24-27-28-30-33-37-38-39-40-49.
\emptyset	17	1-2-3-11-12-17-19-20-23-29-31-35-42-44-45-46-48.
Total	50	

Question number two, on the other hand, is a modified cloze test. It is a passage with 50 blanks and the students are required to fill in these blanks with the suitable articles (*the*, *a(n)* and \emptyset). It is then a semi-production one (See Table 4).

Table 4
Distribution of Articles in Question Two

Type of Article	No.of items	Items which Deal with each article.
<i>the</i>	38	1-3-5-7-8-10-11-14-15-17-18-19-21-22-24-25-26-27-28-29-31-33-34-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49.
<i>a(n)</i>	10	2-6-12-13-16-23-30-32-35-50.
\emptyset	2	9-20
Total	50	

As it is seen in tables 3 and 4, the definite article *the* has been given high weight in the test. This may be due to the following reasons:

1- Problem

Since the definite article *the* constitutes the major problem to most students as they tend to use the definite article *the* instead of \emptyset and *a(n)*(see Joodi,1985; and Kharma & Hajjaj, 1997)

2- Importance

Since the definite articles *the* has many uses in the English

language, and it has more distribution among the English articles especially in NECI textbooks, it is given more emphasis in the present test.

3.3.2. Validity of the Test

The most important quality to be considered when selecting or constructing an evaluation instrument is validity . According to Heaton (1975:153) validity of a test "is the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure and nothing else".

There are several types of validity such as: construct validity, empirical validity that constitutes predicative validity and concurrent one, content validity and face validity (Harris, 1969:19) According to Lehamann & Mehrens (1973:135) the most important types of validity in relation to the construction of a test are face and content validity.

The items in question number one and the passage in question number two are authentic as they have been taken from many books and textbooks which means that their content validity is already confirmed. In order to find out face validity of the test, the items of the test have been exposed to nine⁽⁴⁾ jurors and experts specialized in English language teaching and linguistics. Each expert has been requested to put his remarks and suggestions about the suitability of the test items in reference to the level of the students of the sample (See Appendix 1). They

have been asked to decide whether the test techniques are suitable or not for the sample of the present study or whether the items cover the structure under investigation in the way it is meant to or not. Accordingly, some of the items were dropped out, others were modified or re-constructed; yet, some others were added (See Table 5). Then, the final form of the items is approved according to the jurors' suggestions (See Appendix 2 and 3).

Table 5
Percentage Ratio of the Test Items to ensure Face Validity

No. of Question	No. of Items	No. of Experts	No. of Experts who Agree	No. of Experts who Disagree		Percentage
				Deletion	Modification	
Q1	1-2-3-4- 5-6-7-8- 9-10-11- 13-14- 15-16- 17-18- 19-20- 21-22- 23-24- 25-26- 27-28- 29-30- 31-32- 33-34- 35-36-	9	9			100%

	37-39- 40-42- 43-44- 45-46- 47-48- 49-50					
Q1	12	9	1	✓		11%
	38	9	2	✓		33%
	41	9	2	✓		33%
Q2	1-2-3-4- 5-6-7-8- 9-10-11- 12-13- 14-15- 16-17- 18-19- 20-21- 22-23- 24-25- 26-27- 28-29- 30-31- 32-33- 34-35- 36-37- 38-39- 40-41- 42-43- 44-45- 46-47- 48-49- 50	9	9			100%

3.3.3. Pilot Administration and Item Analysis of the Test

In order to discover the weaknesses in the test, check the estimated time required for answering the items, and analyze the test items in terms of their difficulty level and discriminating power, the test has been administered to a sample of 100 students selected from Al-Khalisa intermediate school for girls, Al-Iraqiyah preparatory school in Al-Khalis district and second-class college students/ Department of English/ College of Education/ University of Diyala.

The findings of the pilot test have revealed that most students are able to answer the test. The time computed for answering the test items ranges between 60 - 80 minutes, therefore the average time needed to complete the test is 70 minutes. It has been also observed that the test items are clear, i.e., having no ambiguity in their vocabulary or instruction.

After scoring the pilot test papers, they have been arranged in an order of scores from high to low and then separated into two groups: an upper group consisting of 27% of the total groups who gained the correct highest scores on the test, and a lower group consisting of an equal percentage of papers from those who gained the correct lowest scores. The frequency of each item on the papers of the upper group and the lower one has been counted.

After the application of the formula of the item discriminating power, it has been found that the discriminating power ranges between 0.32 - 0.72. According to Ebel's index of discriminating power, "good classroom test items have discriminating indices of (0.30) or more". (Ebel,1972:399). Therefore, the discriminating power here is satisfactory and acceptable (see table 6).

After the application of the item difficulty level formula, it has been found that it ranges between 0.34-0.78. "Good spread of results can be obtained if the average difficulty of the items is around 50 to 60 percent and items vary in difficulty from 20 to 80 percent"(Bloom et al, 1981:95). Therefore, the level of difficulty of the items of the present test is considered acceptable (see table 6).

Table 6
Item Analysis of the Test

Q	Item NO.	Item Difficulty	Item Discriminating Power
1	1-	0.66	0.68
	2-	0.62	0.36
	3-	0.42	0.44
	4-	0.58	0.36
	5-	0.74	0.52
	6-	0.46	0.36

Q	Item NO.	Item Difficulty	Item Discriminating Power
	7-	0.68	0.32
	8-	0.72	0.48
	9-	0.52	0.48
	10-	0.34	0.36
	11-	0.64	0.72
	12-	0.42	0.44
	13-	0.62	0.44
	14-	0.64	0.48
	15-	0.66	0.52
	16-	0.68	0.56
	17-	0.64	0.72
	18-	0.38	0.44
	19-	0.38	0.44
	20-	0.72	0.48
	21-	0.74	0.52
	22-	0.38	0.44
	23-	0.38	0.44
	24-	0.78	0.44
	25-	0.68	0.32
	26-	0.74	0.36
	27-	0.46	0.36
	28-	0.46	0.36
	29-	0.58	0.36
	30-	0.38	0.46

Q	Item NO.	Item Difficulty	Item Discriminating Power
	31-	0.38	0.44
	32-	0.68	0.32
	33-	0.78	0.36
	34-	0.72	0.48
	35-	0.68	0.32
	36-	0.68	0.32
	37-	0.58	0.36
	38-	0.44	0.48
	39-	0.34	0.36
	40-	0.72	0.48
	41-	0.72	0.48
	42-	0.34	0.36
	43-	0.34	0.36
	44-	0.34	0.36
	45-	0.72	0.48
	46-	0.72	0.48
	47-	0.68	0.32
	48-	0.74	0.52
	49-	0.72	0.48
	50-	0.72	0.48
2	1	0.48	0.48
	2	0.72	0.58
	3	0.46	0.44
	4	0.72	0.56

Q	Item NO.	Item Difficulty	Item Discriminating Power
	5	0.34	0.36
	6	0.34	0.36
	7	0.34	0.36
	8	0.66	0.68
	9	0.42	0.44
	10	0.42	0.44
	11	0.62	0.36
	12	0.52	0.48
	13	0.34	0.36
	14	0.42	0.44
	15	0.42	0.44
	16	0.38	0.44
	17	0.38	0.44
	18	0.38	0.44
	19	0.52	0.48
	20	0.52	0.48
	21	0.68	0.32
	22	0.58	0.36
	23	0.44	0.48
	24	0.44	0.48
	25	0.34	0.36
	26	0.72	0.48
	27	0.72	0.48
	28	0.68	0.32

Q	Item NO.	Item Difficulty	Item Discriminating Power
	29	0.46	0.44
	30	0.34	0.36
	31	0.34	0.36
	32	0.34	0.36
	33	0.42	0.44
	34	0.48	0.48
	35	0.48	0.48
	36	0.64	0.32
	37	0.42	0.44
	38	0.42	0.44
	39	0.62	0.44
	40	0.64	0.52
	41	0.66	0.52
	42	0.66	0.56
	43	0.68	0.72
	44	0.64	0.44
	45	0.38	0.48
	46	0.72	0.56
	47	0.74	0.36
	48	0.38	0.44
	49	0.38	0.44
	50	0.46	0.36

3.3.4. Reliability of the Test

Reliability is the measure of stability of test scores. "A test cannot measure anything well, unless it measures consistently" (Harris, 1969:14). Lado (1961:330) states that reliability means the stability of scores for the same individuals. If the scores of the students are stable, the test is reliable, if the scores tend to fluctuate for no apparent reason, the test is unreliable.

There are four major methods to estimate test reliability: split-halves method, Kuder-Richardson method, equal forms method and the test-retest method (Fox, 1969:353). Kuder-Richardson formula 21 (KR-21) has been used for estimating the reliability coefficient of the present test.

The statistical analysis has shown that the reliability coefficient is (0.51). In this respect, Nunnally (1967:226) states that "in the early stages of research on predictor tests or hypothesized measures of a construct, one saves time and energy by working with instruments that have only modest reliability, for which purpose reliability of (0.50) or (0.60) will be suffice". Therefore, the present test reliability coefficient is considered acceptable.

3.3.5. Scoring Scheme of the Test

For the purpose of objectivity and reliability, an accurate

scoring scheme should be developed for the whole test

(Al-Hamash et al ., 1982 : 23)

One mark has been given for the correct answer of each item, and zero for the wrong one. There are 50 items in question number one and 50 blanks in question number two. The highest mark for the test is 100, while zero is the lowest. Failure to tick any choice or leaving out any item by the testees has been given zero. The success mark is 50.

3.4. The Final Administration of the Test

The test has been administrated empirically on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of May/2004 to second-class Al-Insanyah intermediate school, fifth-class scientific-branch Al-Hawra'a secondary school in Al-Khalis district and second-class university students at the department of English, College of Education, University of Diyala.

The instructions of the test have been presented and explained especially for the intermediate and preparatory schools testees. The test lasted 70 minutes. After answering exam sheets completely, the testees were asked to deliver them to the researcher to be corrected and marked after that.

3.5. Statistical Methods

The following statistical methods are used:-

1. Percentage: It is used to find out the agreement and disagreement of the experts to determine the face validity of the test.
2. Item Discriminating Power is used to find out the discriminating power of the test items. The following formula is used:

$$Dp = \frac{Ru - RL}{\frac{1}{2}T}$$

Where:

DP = Discriminaing Power.

Ru = The number of students in the upper group who has got the item right.

RL = The number of students in the lower group who has got the item right.

T = The total number of students included in item analysis. (Madsen, 1983:180)

3. Item Difficulty formula is used to calculate the level of difficulty of the test items. The following formula is used:

$$DL = \frac{Hc + Lc}{\text{Total number of the sample}}$$

Where:

DL = Difficulty level.

Hc = High correct.

Lc = Low correct (Valette, 1977:38)

4. Kuder-Richardson formula 21 is used to compute the reliability coefficient of the test. The formula is:

$$rtt = \frac{nv - m(n - m)}{(n-1)v}$$

Where:

rtt == the reliability index.

n = the number of items.

v = test variance.

m = mean scores.

(Alderson etal, 1995: 282)

Notes to Chapter Three

1. The choice of the girls' schools may be justified by the fact that the male / female distinction, in the opinion of the researcher, is beyond the scope of the present study.
2. The choice of Al-Khalis-District for the application of the test to the students of the intermediate and preparatory school level has been justified on the ground that the pupils of Al-Khalis- district represent 20% of the total number of pupils at the intermediate and preparatory school level in Diyala Governorate i.e., it can represent the population of this study since it follows or comes after the population of the centre of Baqubah district.
3. Taylor & Ballard (1967), Eckersley & Eckersley (1960), Leech & Svartvick (1975), Swan (1988) and NECI (Books-4 - 7).
- 4- The following are the names of the jury members arranged alphabetically and according to their academic titles:
 - 1- Prof. Al-Ani, Ayif Habeeb, M.A. - University of Baghdad, College of Education/ Ibn Rushed.
 - 2- Prof. Al-Rawi, Sabah, Ph.D - University of Baghdad, College of Languages.
 - 3- Asst. Prof. Al-Ani, Lamy'a, M.A. - University of Baghdad, College of Education/ Ibn Rushed.

- 4- Asst Prof. Al-Jumaili, Abdullatif, Ph.D - University of Baghdad, College of Arts.
- 5- Asst. Prof. Atallah, Dhuhah, Ph.D - University of Al-Mustansiriyah, College of Basic Education.
- 6- Asst. Prof. Awad, Firas, M.A. - University of Baghdad, College of Education / Ibn Rushed.
- 7- Asst. Prof. Namiq, Ilham, Ph.D - University of Diyala, College of Education.
- 8- Asst. Prof. Sa'eed, Muayed, Ph.D - University of Baghdad, College of Education/Ibn Rushed.
- 9- Asst. Prof. Salman, Abdullah, Ph.D - University of Diyala, College of Education.

4.1 An Introductory Note

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the results of the test and their discussion. It is divided into three sections. The first one deals with presenting the results of the students' performance in acquiring the English articles at the three stages (2nd class intermediate school, 5th class preparatory school, and 2nd stage college level). The second one is an attempt to investigate whether or not there is a development in learning the English articles by IS. The third section is intended to analyze the students' errors in using the English articles at the three stages to identify the areas of difficulty and present the main reasons and factors behind such errors.

4.2 Students' Performance on the Test

To achieve the first aim of the present study which is the investigation of the students' performance in acquiring the English articles, t-test⁽¹⁾ formula for one sample has been used and the results are shown in table 7.

Table 7
The Results of t-test

Level of acquisition	No. of students	Mean score	SD	Theoretical mean	Computed t-test	Table t-test	df	Level of significance
Intermediate school	244	48.03	12.210	50	-2.522	1.69	243	0.05
Preparatory school	44	63.34	12.293		7.199	2.021	43	
College	42	60.45	9.658		7.014	2.021	41	

Table 7 shows that the computed mean score of the level of acquisition in the intermediate school which is 48.03 is lower than the theoretical mean score ⁽²⁾ which is 50, whereas the computed mean score for the preparatory school is 63.34 which is higher than the theoretical mean score which is 50 ; The computed mean score for the college level is 60.45 which is also higher than the theoretical mean score which is 50. This shows that the level of acquisition at the preparatory school and college level are higher than that at the intermediate school, and are both higher than the theoretical mean score which is the score of success (50 out of 100).

By comparing the computed t-test value with that of the table t- value, it is found out that there are significant differences among the three stages in favour of the preparatory school stage and college levels. The degree of acquisition which has been used in this study is 50 since the total score of the whole test is 100. Depending on this degree, many students especially at the preparatory school and college level are found out to be of an acceptable level of acquisition. The minimum score at the intermediate school stage is 26 and the maximum score is 75, while the minimum score at the preparatory school stage is 43 and the maximum score is 82, whereas the minimum score at the college level is 40 and the maximum one is 85. This means that

the performance of the students at the preparatory school stage and college level is considered acceptable since most of the students' scores range between (50-70). This shows that they have an acceptable level of acquisition. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is rejected .

4.3 Students’ Development in learning the English Articles

To achieve the second aim of the present study which is "finding out the development in learning the English articles among IS" i.e. finding out the differences among the testees' ability of using the three forms of the English articles, the analysis of variance ⁽³⁾(ANOVA) has been applied . The results are presented in table 8.

Table 8
Results of ANOVA for the differences among the testees at the three stages.

Source of variance	Sum of squares	d.f.	Mean square	Computed f-ratio	Table f-ratio	Level of significance
Between groups	12467.834	2	6233.917	43.794	3.02	0.05
Within groups	46547.090	327	142.346			
Total	59014.924	329				

Table 8 shows that the computed f-ratio is 43.794 which is higher than the table f-ratio which is 3.02 on two degrees of freedom which are 2 and 327, and on a level of significance of 0.05. Accordingly, there are statistically significant differences

among the testees at the three stages of the present study and those differences are infavour of the preparatory school stage students and those at the college level , Therefore , the second null hypothesis is also rejected .

In order to show the sources of differences among the three stages, multi-post comparisons are applied by using Scheffe ⁽⁴⁾ formula and as shown in table 9.

Table 9
Differences among the three stages and their significance according to scheffe for multi - post comparisons.

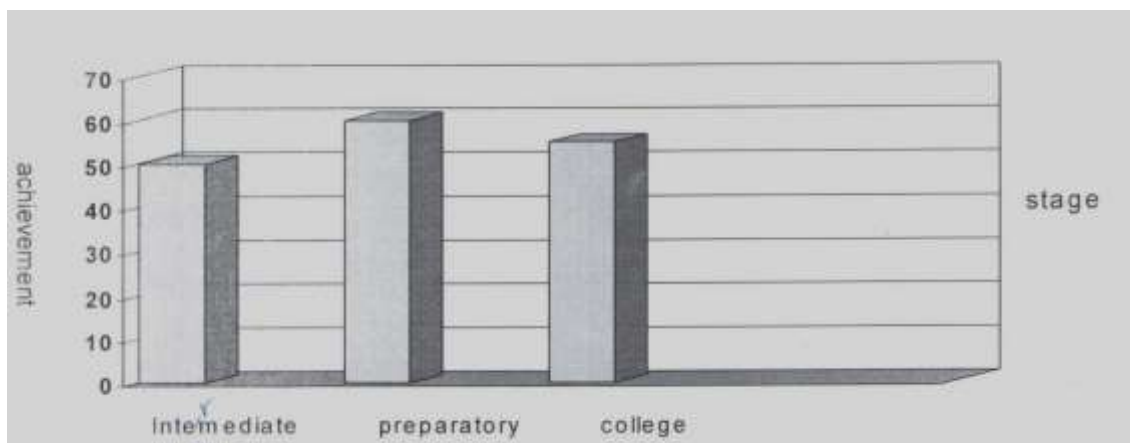
Group A	Group B	Computed Scheffe-value	Table Scheffe-value	Level of significance
Intermediate	preparatory	15.31	3.401	0.05
Intermediate	College	12.42	3.400	
preparatory	College	2.89	4.498	

Table 9 shows that the comparison among the intermediate school stage, preparatory school stage and college level is statistically significant infavor of the preparatory school stage. This means that the acquisition of the preparatory school stage testees of the English articles is better than that of the other testees at the two stages. This reveals that there is no development in learning the English articles among IS since it

begins slow at the intermediate stage and increases at the preparatory stage, but decreases at the college level. Consequently, the second null hypothesis is accepted (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Column chart of the development of the acquisition of the English article



This may be interpreted on the ground that the pupils at the intermediate school stage are still beginners; they do not understand completely the various uses of the English articles or because of the lack of sufficient practice or drills about using the English articles.

It is expected that the performance of the students at the college level should be better than that of the preparatory school

stage, but the analysis of the data has revealed that the performance of the latter stage is better than that of the former one. From the researcher's point of view and her experience as a college teacher, this may be interpreted on the ground that most students at the college level do not acquire knowledge as an aim in itself, rather, they acquire it as a means to achieve success or to be qualified professionally , so they rarely comprehend completely all the aspects of the English language particularly its grammar. Besides, there is a more particular reason which is the impact of the political conditions that our country has passed through. It has been noticed that the motivation towards learning the English language has been increasing in the last two years especially at the preparatory school stage. This idea is also stressed by Al-Azzawi (2005:1) who believes that the need for a new syllabus of English as an FL and new teaching methods as well have become more acute due to the inadequacies of structuralism (as also emphasized by Al-Jumaili, 2002:33ff), the developments in multi-media (telecommunication, satellite, internet. E-mail, etc..), and the political changes which have taken place in our country. Moreover, the motivation of IS towards English is undergoing a considerable change. At one time, English was unpopular to them. Now, it is becoming more and more attractive to them due to the increasing need for it in

everyday life and in career development. It is an important means of communication in modern life. This is also proved by asking the testees themselves about their motivation towards learning English. So the motivation of the preparatory stage pupils is higher than that of the college level students. In addition to these two main reasons behind such results, students at the college level are already weak since the process of their LA has finished at this stage and the process of learning English during the previous academic years is insufficient as a result of inadequate English language teaching methods and syllabuses.

4.4 Areas of difficulty

4.4.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Students' Errors

To identify the main areas of difficulty in learning the English articles, the students' responses on the test items are analyzed and presented as follows: -

1- Intermediate school stage.

The students' responses on the test item are presented in Appendix 4 which reveal that the total number of responses in Q1 is 12200. The total number of responses that use *the* is 4392, 1756 responses are correct and 2636 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use *a(n)* is 3660, of which 1924 are correct and 1736 are incorrect.

The total number of responses that use \emptyset is 4148, of which 140 are correct and 3008 are incorrect. In respect to Q2, the total number of responses that use *the* is 9272, of which 4291 responses are correct and 4981 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use *a(n)* is 2440, of which 1079 are correct and 1361 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use \emptyset is 488, of which 68 are correct and 420 are incorrect. The distribution and percentage of incorrect responses in Q1 and Q2 are presented in table 10.

Table 10
Distribution and Percentages of Incorrect Responses at the
Intermediate school stage

Question No	Type of Article	No. of incorrect responses/Total responses	Percentage %
Q1	<i>the</i>	2636/4392	60%
	<i>a(n)</i>	1736/3660	47%
	\emptyset	3008/4148	73%
Q2	<i>the</i>	4981/9272	54%
	<i>a(n)</i>	1361/2440	56%
	\emptyset	420/488	86%

As it is seen in table 10, most students face a great difficulty in using \emptyset article since the number of errors constitute 73% of the total number of responses that use \emptyset article in Q1 and 86% of the total number of responses that use \emptyset article in Q2. Next to this is the use of the. Comparatively, fewer errors are committed in the use of *a(n)*.

2. Preparatory School Stage:

The students' responses on the test items are analyzed and presented in Appendix 5 which reveals that the total number of responses that use *the* in Q1 is 792, of which 474 are correct and 318 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use *a(n)* is 660, of which 462 are correct and 198 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use \emptyset is 748, of which 257 are correct and 491 are incorrect. According to Q2, the total number of responses that use *the* is 1672, of which 909 are correct and 763 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use *a(n)* is 440, of which 309 are correct and 137 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use \emptyset is 88, of which 48 are correct and 40 are incorrect. The distribution and percentages of incorrect responses are presented in table 11.

Table 11
Distribution and percentages of incorrect responses
At the preparatory school stage.

Question No.	Type of article	No of incorrect responses/Total responses	Percentage %
Q1	<i>the</i>	318/792	40%
	<i>a(n)</i>	198/660	30%
	\emptyset	491/748	66%
Q2	<i>the</i>	763/1672	46%
	<i>a(n)</i>	137/440	31%
	\emptyset	40/88	45%

It is clear from table 11 that most errors are committed in the use of \emptyset since they constitute 66% of the total number of responses that use \emptyset in Q1. Next to these errors are committed in the use of *the* and fewer errors are made in the use of *a(n)*.

3- College level.

The students' responses on the test items are analyzed and presented in appendix 6 which shows that the total number of responses that use *the* in Q1 is 756, of which 450 responses are correct and 306 are incorrect . The total number of responses that use *a(n)* is 630, of which 413 responses are correct and 217 are incorrect . The total number of responses that use \emptyset is 714, of which 287 are correct and 427 are incorrect . In Q2 , the total number of

responses that use *the* is 1596, of which 927 responses are correct and 669 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use *a(n)* is 420, of which 234 responses are correct and 186 are incorrect. The total number of responses that use \emptyset is 84, of which 40 responses are correct and 44 are incorrect. The distribution and percentages of incorrect responses in Q1 and Q2 are presented in table 12.

Table 12
Distribution and percentages of incorrect responses at the college level

No. of question	Type of Article	No. of incorrect responses/Total responses	Percentage%
Q1	<i>the</i>	306 /756	40%
	<i>a(n)</i>	217/630	34%
	\emptyset	427/714	60%
Q2	<i>the</i>	669/1596	42%
	<i>a(n)</i>	186/420	44%
	\emptyset	44/84	52%

It is found out that most students face a real difficulty in using the \emptyset article even at the college level. This may be due to the main factor of causing errors which is the negative transfer from Li, i.e. students usually use the definite article *the* instead of

Ø as in the Arabic language. This point is discussed thoroughly in the following pages.

4.4.2. Causes of Errors.

In general, the following causes are behind committing errors by EFL students in using the English articles:

4.4.2.1 Negative Transfer.

As it has been mentioned in 2.4.1 that the main causes of errors are the interference or negative transfer from L₁ (i.e. Arabic language) . In the following examples , the errors that are committed in the use of the article are caused by negative transfer.

We all desire *the* happiness.

The physics is an interesting subject.

The meat is full of protein.

The breakfast is the first meal of the day.

The water is mainly found in oceans and lakes.

She can speak *the* English fluntly.

We go to college three times in *the* week.

Here, most students use the definite article *the* instead of Ø, as in Arabic, forgetting the grammatical restrictions to which article usage is subjected in English.

4.4.2.2 Overgeneralization.

It involves the creation of a deviant structure on the basis of the learners' experience of other structures in the TL. As the Ø article

comes with singular proper nouns and plural countable nouns, overgeneralization eliminates *the* in front of such words like English, Tigris ...etc. as shown in the following examples.

English are fond of playing football.

Tigris is a river.

Susan usually goes to theatre on Sundays.

ALPS are magnificent.

In addition to these two main causes of errors, sometimes IS commit errors in the uses of the English articles because of their ignorance of rule restrictions, i.e. they fail to observe the restrictions on the applications of rules to context where they should not be applied, e.g. the use of *a(n)* in context where it should not be used, as shown in the examples below :

An English poets.

I love *a* music.

We all desire *a* happiness.

An ALPS are magnificent.

An English are fond of playing football.

Here, IS violate the limitations on the use of *a(n)* with uncountable nouns and plural countable ones.

4-5 Discussion of Results

The results of the present study show that the development of IS in learning the English articles is different according to their

stages, i.e., the development begins slow at the intermediate stage, and then increases at the preparatory stage, but decreases at the collage level. This means that there is no development among IS in learning the English articles. So these results can be considered as a contribution in the field of L₂L. In the field of error analysis, the results of the present study seems to be inconsistent with Joodi's in that one of the main reasons behind some language problems is L₁ interference through translation or conflict between the structure of L₁ of the learner and the TL, i.e., there is a positive correlation between error areas and areas where the two languages use different articles. This means that the articles uses areas that coincide with their counterparts in Arabic are not expected to constitute a learning problem.

The results of the present study seem to be similar to Kharma & Hajjajs' in that most students use the definite article *the* instead of \emptyset article as in Arabic forgetting the grammatical restrictions to which article usage is subjected in the English language. The results of the present study also come inline with Kambou's in that both kinds of transfer i.e. (interlingual as well as intralingual) are the main causes behind committing errors by EFL learners in using the English articles. In this respect, both kinds of transfer i.e. (interlingual as well as intralingual) are the main causes behind committing errors by EFL learners in using

the English articles. In this respect, the analysis of data of the present study indicates that *a(n)* is the easiest to acquire since fewer mistakes are made in the use of *a(n)*. The findings in Oller & Reddings' show that there is a significant correlation between knowledge of article usage and overall English language proficiency. Moreover, learners who use equivalent articles in their L₁ would learn English articles better than those who do not have such articles in their L₁.

To sum up, the acquisition of an FL may be made more difficult by age, lack of contact and communication with the foreign speech community, interference between two languages, insufficient motivation, speech problems, insufficient teaching methods, etc..

Notes to Chapter Four

1. t-test formula for one sample has been used to investigate the performance of IS in learning the English articles, the following formula is adopted: -

$$t = \frac{x - m}{\frac{\delta}{\sqrt{n}}}$$

Where:

x = The mean score of the sample.

μ = The mean score of the population.

n = The number of the sample.

δ = Standard deviation.

2. The theoretical mean is computed by using the following equation-

$$\text{Theoretical mean} = \frac{\text{Higherscore} + \text{Lowerscore}}{2}$$

3. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) has been used to find out the differences among the subjects' ability of using the three forms of the English articles.

4. Scheffe method has been used to show the source of differences among the three academic levels in the preset study. The following formula is adopted.

$$(F)_s = \frac{(X_1 - X_2)^2}{s.m.w \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right) (k-1)}$$

5.1 Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn in the light of the results of the present study:

1- The level of performance of IS in acquiring the English articles is considered acceptable since most students especially at the preparatory school stage and college level are able to achieve success in the test items, i.e. to achieve the degree of acquisition which is (50) in this study.

2- There is no development in learning the English articles among IS. It means that it begins slow at the intermediate stage, then increases at the preparatory stage, but decreases at the college level.

3- It is found out that articles usage areas in English that coincide with their counterparts in Arabic are not expected to constitute a learning problem since most students at the three stages are able to respond correctly to test items related to this point.

4-The areas where the two languages differ in using the articles are expected to constitute trouble spots to IS in a way that the IS overused the definite article *the* where it should not be used.

5- Correct responses are not entirely due to positive transfer. Non-errors may be the result of adequate exercises or intensive instruction IS have received in the course of their study and the like.

6- It is not always true that errors in learning the TL are all due to negative transfer from L₁ to TL. The errors committed by IS in the use of the English articles may arise from negative transfer from Arabic into English, or ignorance of rule restrictions, or incorrect generalization about English (i.e. interference).

7- The results of error analysis have pointed out that most of the errors are made in the use of \emptyset article firstly, and in the use of the secondly. Comparatively, fewer mistakes are made in the use of *a(n)*, whose usage mostly coincides with that of its counterparts in Arabic. This means that *a(n)* is the easiest to acquire and \emptyset is the most difficult.

5.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the results of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1- Article use may have more to do with communication and communicative competence than with grammar and linguistic competence; therefore EFL students should be exposed to communicative contexts in using articles in order to be aware of the variation of articles.

2- EFL instructors or students should record a sample of real conversations regarding requesting, giving directions, etc. in order to have empirical data of how speakers use English and particularly the English articles.

3- EFL teachers should encourage students to interact with native speakers because classroom environment by itself cannot provide the necessary language experience for EFL learners.

4- Teachers and textbook writers should present sufficient material and exercises on the various uses of the English articles especially at the intermediate school stage. There is a need here to make dramatic changes in Iraqi English syllabuses to suit modern needs.

5- It is not the case that students are the only part to be blamed for hindering learning. The teaching policy and instructors, too, have a lot to do in this process. So something should be done to remedy this situation by focusing on both the quantity and quality of teaching in our schools and English departments at college level as well.

6- Since interference of LI has been found to be more acute in most of the students' errors, more attention should be paid by all those interested in teaching English to Arabic-speaking students to help them overcome this difficulty. This could be done by intensive- drilling and at later stages by pointing out this problem to the students themselves. It is also the task of the EFL teachers to provide extra drills and exercises because it is impossible for textbooks writers to provide the whole material for the learning process.

7- The results of this study could provide college instructors at the English departments with the necessary information for the preparation of effective remedial teaching programs aiming to help their students overcome the difficulties they encounter in using the English articles.

8- EFL learners should join intensive courses in English either inside or outside Iraq in order to increase their fluency and competency in English since learning the English articles is best done by intensive exercises .

5-3 Suggestions for Further Studies

The following suggestions for further studies are presented:

1- The similarity of routes of language development in L₂ learners makes it advisable to make use of the immense researches and practices in the field of L2 learning and teaching.

2- A research may be carried out to account for the English determiner system which is still "a terra incognita" that has not yet been mapped out with complete success. A comparative study may then be carried out about the determiner system in both languages "i.e. English and Arabic" to account syntactically and semantically for the distribution of determiner and the way they fit into patterns.

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Appendix -1-
A letter to the Jury Members

University of Baghdad
College of Education (Ibn Rushed)
Department of Educational & Psychological Sciences

Dear Sir, Madam.

The researcher intends to conduct a study entitled "The Development of Learning the English Articles by EFL Learners".

The study aims at finding the students' achievement or performance in acquiring the English articles. It also aims at investigating the development of learning the English Articles by Iraqi - Arabic speaking learners .

It aims at identifying areas of difficulty which the learners of English face in learning the English articles.

The subjects of the study will be a cross - section of the students at the three stages (the intermediate school, preparatory school, and college level). To achieve the aims of the study, a diagnostic test has set up for all stages. As specialists in the field of teaching English , please read the items of the test and

thankfully state if they are suitable for this study or not. Any addition or modification will be highly regarded.

Thank you in advance for cooperation.

Zainb Abbas

Ph.D Candidate

Appendix 2

The first version of the test.

I- Insert the article in the blank space where necessary,
otherwise leave the space blank :

- 1) They are playing _____ volleyball.
- 2) They can speak _____ English fluently.
- 3) I came to _____ school by bus.
- 4) He should have _____ holiday next month.
- 5) I was listening to _____ radio.
- 6) Can you touch _____ ceiling ?
- 7) I shall buy _____ new pair of shoes.
- 8) _____ moon gives us light during the night.
- 9) Iraq is one of _____ richest countries in the middle east.
- 10) I needn't take _____ umbralla.
- 11) _____ water is mainly found in ocean and rivers.
- 12) I need _____ lot of milk.
- 13) _____ English are fond of playing football.
- 14) Iran lies on _____ east of Iraq.
- 15) what _____ brave man Ali is !
- 16) _____ Tigris is a river.
- 17) _____ London is a city.
- 18) My father gets paid by _____ hour.
- 19) _____ Breakfast is the first meal of the day.

- 20) ————— physics is an interesting subject.
- 21) We go to college three times ————— week.
- 22) ————— more we are together, the merrier we shall
be.
- 23) ————— meat is full of protein.
- 24) In teaching English as ————— foreign language, the use of
pictures is very useful.
- 25) Susan usually goes to ————— theatre on Sunday.
- 26) I'm practicing ————— guitar.
- 27) my brother is studying to be ————— doctor.
- 28) I've got ————— headache.
- 29) I love ————— music.
- 30) It's such ————— beautiful day.
- 31) Men fear ————— death.
- 32) ————— life we live here is hard.
- 33) We had ————— meal in the restaurant.
- 34) ————— young are impatient, they want changes.
- 35) ————— life is very hard for some people.
- 36) Can you turn ————— television down, please. It's a bit
loud.
- 37) Byrd ————— Elizabethan Musician, wrote many
songs.
- 38) This ring is made of ————— gold.

- 39) There is _____ hair in my soup.
- 40) Patience is _____ virtue.
- 41) I borrowed that _____ women's book.
- 42) _____ Baghdad is the capital of Iraq.
- 43) _____ roof of the house is leaking.
- 44) Dryden, Blake and Keats are _____ English poets.
- 45) We all desire _____ happiness.
- 46) John was sent to _____ prison for hitting Marry on
the head.
- 47) _____ car over there is old.
- 48) This knife is made of _____ steel.
- 49) He studied _____ great deal of literature.
- 50) _____ ALPS are magnificent.

II-Read the following passage carefully, then fill in the blanks with suitable articles (*a, an, the*, or leave the space blank).

(The Spider's Story)

When I lived in South America and came to Africa by boat, I did not live in 1———— forest as I do now. I lived in 2 ————— magnificent white stone palace. I lived in 3 ————— height of that palace, for 4 ——— king who owned it was my good friend 5———— palace was kept shining white by 6 ————— thousand servants. But there was one corner in 7 ——— throne room, right over 8 ——— king's head and this is my place and no one was allowed near it, on pain of 9 ——— death except 10—— king himself. One day, every single corner has been cleaned for 11 ——— king lay sick in his bed with 12 ——— fever, caused by 13 ——— wound in his leg while he was out hunting.

14—— king was getting weaker and weaker every day as nothing would stop 15 ——— bleeding. At last they sent out 16 ——— letter from 17 ————— palace that any one who could stop 18 ——— bleeding of 19 ——— king's leg could have any reward he liked to name.

20———— hundreds of doctors and others gathered round 21—— king's bedside. They tried every thing they could think of, but nothing did any good and 22 ——— king's leg continued to bleed.

During this time I had managed to find 23 ——— corner in 24 —— curtains above 25 —— king's head where I could see but not be seen. I felt sorry for 26 —— poor king, for it looked as

though he would die anytime now He had no strength left in his body at all, although he had been 27 — fine strong man before 28— blood slowly drained out of him and it would have continued to drain away to 29 — last drop if I had'nt thought of 30 — idea.

I waited until 31 — room was empty for 32 —moment then I stood on 33 — king's pillow close by his royal ear "your Highness" I whispered for I didn't wish to frighten him "I think I can cure you". 34 — king opened 35 — eye and looked at me out of 36 — comer of it. "When 37 — servant comes back, I continued, "tell him to take 38 — fine strong web I have woven for you and warp it round your leg. This will stop 39 — bleeding though nothing else will and you will soon be well and strong again".

Then 40 — servants called 41— doctors together round and watch and wait, for none of them really believed that I could do what I said. None of them believed in me except my good friend 42 — king.

43 — next morning 44 — king was feeling better as he asked 45 — servants "to go and tell all people that 46 — king is heald by 47 — little king spider to whom I will gave whatsoever he desire". All people left 48 — royal bedchamber saying that 49 — king has been healded by 50 — miracle.

Appendix 3

The final form of the test

Q- Insert the articles (*a*, *an*, or *the*) in the blank space where necessary otherwise leave the blank space.

- 1) They are playing _____ volley ball.
- 2) They can speak _____ English fluently.
- 3) I came to _____ school by bus.
- 4) He should have _____ holiday next month.
- 5) I was listening to _____ radio.
- 6) Can you touch _____ ceiling ?
- 7) I shall buy _____ new pair of shoes.
- 8) _____ moon gives us light during the night.
- 9) Iraq is one of _____ richest countries in the middle east.
- 10) I needn't take _____ umbrella.
- 11) _____water is mainly found in oceans, rivers and Lakes.
- 12) We are going there at _____ Easter.
- 13) _____ English are found of playing football.
- 14) Iran lies on _____ east of Iraq.
- 15) What _____ brave man Ali is !
- 16) _____ Tigris is a river.
- 17) _____London is a city.
- 18) My father gets paid by _____ hour.
- 19) _____ Breakfast is the first meal of the day.

- 20) _____ physics is an interesting subject.
- 21) We go to college three times _____ week.
- 22) _____ more we are together, the merrier we shall be.
- 23) _____ meat is full of protien.
- 24) In teaching English as _____ forigen language, the use of pictures is very useful.
- 25) Susan usually goes to _____ theatre on Sunday.
- 26) I'm practicing _____ guitar.
- 27) My brother is studying to be _____ doctor.
- 28) I've got _____ headache.
- 29) I love _____ music.
- 30) It's such _____ beautiful day.
- 31) Men fear _____ death.
- 32) _____ life we live here is hard.
- 33) We had _____ meal in the restuarant.
- 34) _____ young are impatient, they want changes.
- 35) _____ life is very hard for some people.
- 36) Can you turn _____ television down, please Its abit loud.
- 37) Byrd _____ Elizbethan Musician, worte may mobrs.
- 38) They gave _____ good dinner in his honour.
- 39) There is _____ hair in my soup.
- 40) Patience is _____ virtue.

- 41) I have a pen and a pencil ————— pen is broken.
- 42) ————— Baghdad is the capital of Iraq.
- 43) ————— roof of the house is leaking.
- 44) Dryden, Blake and Keats are ————— English poets.
- 45) We all desire ————— happiness.
- 46) John was sent to ————— prison for hitting Marry on the head.
- 47) ————— car over there is old.
- 48) This knife is made of ————— steel.
- 49) He studied ————— great deal of literature.
- 50) ————— ALPS are magnificent.

Q\ Read the following passage carefully, then fill in the blanks with suitable articles (a, a(n), the, or leave the space blank).

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14—— king was getting weaker and weaker every day as nothing would stop 15 —— bleeding. At last they sent out 16 —— letter from 17 ——— palace that any one who could stop 18 —— bleeding of 19 ——— king's leg could have any reward he liked to name.

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Then 40 ———— servants called 41——— doctors together round and watch and wait, for none of them really believed that I could do what I said. None of them believed in me except my good friend 42 ———— king.

43 — next morning 44 — king was feeling better as he asked 45 ——— servants "to go and tell all people that 46 ——— king is heald by 47 ——— little king spider to whom I will gave whatsoever he desire". All people left 48 —royal bedchamber saying that 49 — king has been healded by 50 — miracle.

Appendix 4

Number and percentage of correct responses , incorrect responses and avoided responses as applied to each individual item at the intermediate school stage

	Item No	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage	No. of avoided responses	Percentage
1	1	200	82%	40	16%	4	2%
	2	144	59%	95	39%	5	2%
	3	84	34%	150	61%	10	4%
	4	112	46%	130	53%	2	1%
	5	150	61%	94	39%	-	-
	6	60	25%	180	74%	4	2%
	7	190	78%	54	22%	-	-
	8	200	82%	39	16%	5	2%
	9	30	12%	210	86%	4	2%
	10	190	78%	54	22%	-	-
	11	20	8%	220	90%	4	2%
	12	115	47%	129	53%	-	-
	13	115	47%	129	53%	-	-
	14	110	45%	130	53%	4	2%
	15	120	49%	122	50%	2	1%
	16	120	49%	120	49%	4	2%
	17	40	16%	200	82%	4	2%
	18	40	16%	195	80%	9	4%
	19	47	19%	197	81%	-	-
	20	120	49%	120	49%	4	2%
	21	123	50%	121	50%	-	-
	22	123	50%	121	50%	-	-
	23	40	16%	200	82%	4	2%

	24	70	29%	170	69%	4	2%
	25	160	66%	80	32%	4	2%
	26	4	19%	198	81%	-	-
	27	162	66%	82	34%	-	-
	28	54	22%	190	78%	-	-
	29	41	17%	200	82%	3	1%
	30	122	50%	120	49%	2	1%
	31	44	18%	198	81%	2	1%
	32	112	46%	132	54%	-	-
	33	102	42%	142	58%	-	-
	34	05	43%	139	57%	-	-
	35	39	16%	200	82%	4	2%
	36	50	20%	190	78%	5	2%
	37	155	64%	89	36%	-	-
	38	79	32%	165	67%	-	-
	39	180	74%	60	24%	4	2%
	40	120	49%	120	49%	4	2%
	41	111	46%	128	52%	5	2%
	42	30	12%	210	86%	4	2%
	43	44	18%	195	80%	5	2%
	44	55	22%	185	76%	4	2%
	45	44	18%	190	78%	10	4%
	46	40	16%	200	32%	4	2%
	47	120	49%	120	49%	4	2%

	48	37	15 %	202	83 %	5	2 %
	49	145	59 %	90	37 %	9	4 %
	50	60	24 %	180	74 %	4	2 %
2	1	190	78 %	54	22 %	-	-
	2	197	81 %	47	19 %	-	-
	3	84	84 %	160	66 %	-	-
	4	122	50 %	120	49 %	2	1 %
	5	105	43 %	139	57 %	-	-
	6	24	10 %	220	90 %	-	-
	7	59	24 %	180	74 %	5	2 %
	8	111	45 %	128	52 %	5	2 %
	9	24	10 %	200	82 %	20	8 %
	10	105	43 %	139	57 %	-	-
	11	162	66 %	82	34 %	-	-
	12	46	19 %	198	81 %	-	-
	13	120	49 %	120	49 %	4	2 %
	14	112	46 %	120	49 %	12	5 %
	15	114	47 %	130	53 %	-	-
	16	48	20 %	196	80 %	-	-
	17	48	20 %	196	80 %	-	-
	18	112	46 %	132	54 %	-	-
	19	112	46 %	132	54 %	-	-
	20	44	18 %	200	82 %	-	-

	21	182	75 %	47	19 %	15	6 %
	22	70	29 %	173	71 %	1	0.4 %
	23	200	82 %	40	16 %	4	2 %
	24	129	53 %	100	41 %	15	6 %
	25	110	45 %	134	55 %	-	-
	26	94	39 %	150	61 %	-	-
	27	170	70 %	64	26 %	10	4 %
	28	74	30 %	170	70 %	-	-
	29	47	19 %	197	81 %	-	-
	30	198	81 %	46	19 %	-	-
	31	34	14 %	210	86 %	-	-
	32	32	13 %	200	82 %	12	5 %
	33	200	82 %	44	18 %	-	-
	34	61	25 %	175	72 %	8	3 %
	35	190	78 %	54	22 %	-	-
	36	47	19 %	195	80 %	2	1 %
	37	31	13 %	200	82 %	13	5 %
	38	130	53 %	114	47 %	-	-
	39	128	52 %	101	41 %	15	6 %
	40	57	23 %	187	77 %	-	-
	41	120	49 %	122	50 %	2	1 %
	42	157	64 %	87	36 %	-	-
	43	120	49 %	124	51 %	-	-
	44	172	70 %	72	30 %	-	-
	45	130	53 %	104	42 %	12	5 %
	46	37	15 %	195	80 %	12	5 %
	47	195	80 %	40	16 %	9	4 %
	48	130	53 %	114	47 %	-	-
	49	130	53 %	114	47 %	-	-
	50	24	10 %	220	90 %	-	-

Appendix 5

Number and percentage of correct responses , incorrect responses and avoided responses as applied to each individual item at the preparatory school stage

Q	Item No	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage	No. of avoided responses	Percentage
1	1	34	77%	7	16%	3	2%
	2	30	68%	10	23%	4	2%
	3	12	27%	30	68%	2	4%
	4	33	75%	11	25%	-	-
	5	34	77%	10	23%	-	-
	6	30	68%	14	32%	-	-
	7	40	91%	4	9%	-	-
	8	40	91%	4	9%	-	-
	9	20	45%	24	55%	-	-
	10	40	91%	4	9%	-	-
	11	4	9%	40	91%	-	-
	12	4	9%	40	91%	-	-
	13	30	68%	14	32%	-	-
	14	14	32%	30	68%	2	-
	15	33	75%	11	25%	-	-
	16	35	80%	9	20%	-	-
	17	40	91%	4	9%	-	-
	18	6	14%	38	86%	-	-
	19	4	9%	40	91%	-	-
	20	22	50%	22	50%	-	-
	21	34	77%	10	23%	-	-
	22	9	20%	35	80%	-	-
	23	22	50%	22	50%	-	-
	24	35	80%	6	14%	-	-
	25	35	80%	9	20%	-	-

	26	15	34%	29	66%	-	-
	27	35	80%	9	20%	-	-
	28	9	20%	35	80%	-	-
	29	4	9%	40	91%	-	-
	30	40	91%	4	9%	-	-
	31	5	11%	39	89%	-	-
	32	39	89%	5	11%	-	-
	33	38	86%	6	14%	-	-
	34	37	84%	7	16%	-	-
	35	2	5%	42	95%	-	-
	36	22	50%	22	50%	-	-
	37	6	14%	38	86%	-	-
	38	6	14%	38	86%	-	-
	39	37	84%	7	16%	-	-
	40	38	86%	6	14%	-	-
	41	20	45%	24	55%	-	-
	42	25	57%	19	43%	-	-
	43	40	91%	4	9%	-	-
	44	19	43%	25	57%	-	-
	45	18	41%	26	59%	-	-
	46	3	7%	41	93%	-	-
	47	3	89%	5	11%	-	-
	48	9	20%	35	80%	-	-
	49	38	86%	6	14%	-	-
	50	9	20%	35	80%	-	-

2	1	24	55%	20	45%	-	-
	2	30	68%	14	32%	-	-
	3	14	32%	30	68%	-	-
	4	24	55%	18	41%	2	4%
	5	30	68%	12	28%	2	4%
	6	10	23%	34	77%	-	-
	7	30	68%	14	32%	-	-
	8	30	68%	12	28%	2	4%
	9	9	20%	34	77%	1	3%
	10	26	59%	18	41%	-	-
	11	28	64%	16	36%	-	-
	12	30	68%	12	28%	2	4%
	13	35	80%	9	20%	-	-
	14	38	86%	6	14%	-	-
	15	20	45%	21	48%	3	7%
	16	22	50%	22	50%	-	-
	17	28	64%	16	36%	-	-
	18	30	68%	14	32%	-	-
	19	40	91%	4	9%	-	-
	20	39	89%	5	11%	-	-
	21	35	86%	9	20%	-	-
	22	35	80%	9	20%	-	-
	23	39	89%	5	11%	-	-
	24	20	46%	22	50%	2	4%
	25	6	14%	38	86%	-	-
	26	5	11%	38	86%	3	1%
	27	39	89%	4	8%	3	1%
	28	35	80%	9	20%	-	-
	29	35	80%	9	20%	-	-
	30	36	82%	8	18%	-	-
	31	14	32%	30	68%	-	-
	32	40	91%	4	9%	-	-

	33	38	86%	4	9%	5	2%
	34	14	32%	29	65%	3	1%
	35	39	89%	5	11%	-	-
	36	10	23%	34	77%	-	-
	37	28	64%	16	33%	3	1%
	38	25	57%	18	40%	3	1%
	39	37	89%	6	14%	3	1%
	40	38	86%	6	14%	-	-
	41	40	91%	4	9%	-	-
	42	35	80%	9	20%	-	-
	43	35	80%	9	20%	-	-
	44	38	86%	6	14%	-	-
	45	28	46%	16	36%	-	-
	46	8	18%	36	82%	-	-
	47	33	75%	9	25%	-	-
	48	22	50%	22	50%	-	-
	49	28	64%	16	36%	-	-
	50	28	64%	16	36%	-	-

Appendix 6

Number and percentage of correct responses , incorrect responses and avoided responses as applied to each individual item at the college level

Q1	Item No	No. of correct responses	Percentage	No. of incorrect responses	Percentage	No. of avoided responses	Percentage
	1	5	12%	36	86%	1	2%
	2	20	48%	19	45%	3	6%
	3	12	29%	30	71%	-	-
	4	30	71%	10	24%	2	5%
	5	35	83%	7	17%	-	-
	6	34	81%	6	14%	1	5%
	7	35	84%	6	14%	1	2%
	8	32	76%	10	24%	-	-
	9	30	71%	12	29%	-	-
	10	31	74%	10	24%	1	2%
	11	19	45%	23	55%	-	-
	12	19	45%	23	55%	-	-
	13	18	43%	21	51%	3	6%
	14	30	71%	10	24%	2	5%
	15	29	69%	10	24%	3	7%
	16	10	24%	28	7%	4	9%
	17	29	69%	13	31%	-	-
	18	5	12%	36	86%	1	2%
	19	8	19%	32	77%	2	4%
	20	7	17%	28	66%	7	7%
	21	20	48%	19	45%	3	6%
	22	19	45%	21	51%	2	4%
	23	18	43%	23	57%	-	-
	24	30	71%	11	27%	1	2%
	25	30	71%	12	29%	-	-

	26	19	45 %	22	53 %	1	2 %
	27	35	84 %	7	16 %	-	-
	28	30	71 %	12	29 %	-	-
	29	19	45 %	23	57 %	-	-
	30	30	71 %	12	29 %	-	-
	31	15	36 %	2	4 %	1	2 %
	32	25	60 %	17	40 %	-	-
	33	30	71 %	12	29 %	-	-
	34	30	71 %	11	27 %	1	2 %
	35	25	66 %	15	36 %	2	4 %
	36	30	71 %	12	29 %	-	-
	37	8	19 %	34	81 %	4	9 %
	38	20	48 %	22	52 %	-	-
	39	30	71 %	12	29 %	-	-
	40	29	69 %	11	27 %	2	4 %
	41	28	66 %	13	32 %	1	2 %
	42	35	84 %	7	16 %	-	-
	43	36	86 %	6	43 %	-	-
	44	19	45 %	23	57 %	-	-
	45	10	24 %	32	76 %	-	-
	46	8	19 %	34	81 %	-	-
	47	30	71 %	12	29 %	-	-
	48	19	45 %	22	53 %	1	2 %
	49	30	71 %	11	27 %	1	1 %
	50	18	43 %	23	55 %	1	2 %

2	1	20	48 %	22	52 %	-	-
	2	20	48 %	22	52 %	-	-
	3	12	29 %	30	71 %	-	-
	4	21	50 %	21	50 %	-	-
	5	35	84 %	7	16 %	-	-
	6	28	66 %	14	34 %	-	-
	7	38	90 %	4	10 %	-	-
	8	32	76 %	2	24 %	-	-
	9	12	29 %	28	67 %	2	4 %
	10	35	84 %	7	16 %	-	-
	11	28	66 %	14	34 %	-	-
	12	29	69 %	13	31 %	-	-
	13	20	48 %	21	50 %	1	4 %
	14	35	84 %	7	16 %	-	-
	15	19	45 %	22	55 %	-	-
	16	12	29 %	30	71 %	-	-
	17	22	52 %	19	46 %	1	4 %
	18	22	52 %	20	48 %	-	-
	19	22	52 %	20	48 %	-	-
	20	30	71 %	12	29 %	-	-
	21	30	71 %	12	29 %	-	-
	22	31	73 %	11	27 %	-	-
	23	20	48 %	22	52 %	-	-
	24	24	57 %	17	41 %	1	4 %
	25	11	27 %	30	71 %	1	4 %

	26	19	45 %	22	53 %	1	2 %
	27	35	84%	7	16 %	-	-
	28	30	71%	12	29 %	-	-
	29	19	45%	23	57 %	-	-
	30	30	71%	12	29 %	-	-
	31	15	36%	2	4 %	1	2 %
	32	25	60%	17	40 %	-	-
	33	30	71%	12	29 %	-	-
	34	30	71%	11	27 %	1	2 %
	35	25	66%	15	36 %	2	4 %
	36	30	71%	12	29 %	-	-
	37	8	19%	34	81 %	4	9 %
	38	20	48%	22	52 %	-	-
	39	20	71%	12	29 %	-	-
	40	29	69 %	11	27 %	2	4 %
	41	28	66 %	13	32 %	1	2 %
	42	35	84 %	7	16 %	-	-
	43	36	86 %	6	43 %	-	-
	44	19	45 %	23	57%	-	-
	45	10	24%	32	76%	-	-
	46	8	19%	34	81%	-	-
	47	30	71 %	12	29%	-	-
	48	19	45 %	22	53%	1	2 %
	49	30	71 %	11	27%	1	1 %
	50	18	43 %	23	55%	1	2 %

تشير النتائج النهائية الى وجود فروق ذات دلالة احصائية بين المراحل الدراسية في مستوى الاداء لصالح المرحتين الاعدادية و الجامعية و عدم وجود تطور في تعلم ادوات التعريف و التتكير لدى الطلبة العراقيين . وتشير النتائج ايضاً الى ان اداة التتكير (n) a هي الاسهل في التعلم وان اخطاء الطلبة تعود اما الى اللغة الاجنبية نفسها بسبب سياق التعلم والجهل بالقواعد او الى التداخل بين اللغة الام و اللغة الاجنبية .

ووفقاً للنتائج التي تم التوصل اليها ، فقد قُدمت بعض الاستنتاجات والتوصيات و المقترحات الخاصة بالبحوث المستقبلية .

ملخص الاطروحة

ان من الاجزاء الرئيسة لقواعد اللغة الانكليزية نظام ادوات التعريف والتكثير . اكتساب هذا النظام ليس بالامر السهل كما يبدو ، بل انه مهمة صعبة تأخذ وقتا طويلا من التواصل والتدريب .

تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى ايجاد مستوى تحصيل الطلبة العراقيين في تعلم ادوات التعريف والتكثير وكذلك الى البحث عن تطور تعلم هذه الادوات . وتهدف الدراسة ايضا الى تحديد مجالات الصعوبة التي يواجهها الطلبة العراقيون في تعلم هذه الادوات وعرض اهم العوامل وراء مثل تلك الصعوبات .

ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة ، بُني اختبار شخصي وعُرض على عينة مكونة من ٣٣٠ طالبة من ثلاث مراحل : المتوسطة -الاعدادية ، الجامعية وذلك للعام الدراسي ٢٠٠٣-٢٠٠٤ . وقد تم التحقق من اصدق الظاهري للاختبار بواسطة عرضه على عدد من الخبراء في مجال تدريس اللغة الانكليزية وعلم اللغة .

قبل تطبيق الاختبار بصورته النهائية على العينة بكاملها ، أُجري اختبار استطلاعي لعينة اخرى مكونة من ١٠٠ طالبة ، أُختبرن عشوائيا من نفس مجتمع الدراسة . والغرض من ذلك هو تحديد الوقت الكافي الذي يحتاجه الممتحنون للاجابة على جميع الفقرات وتحليل درجة الصعوبة وقوة التمييز للفقرات وحساب معامل الثبات للاختبار .

وبعد ذلك عُرِضت العينة الخاصة بالدراسة الى اختبار مكون من سؤالين . السؤال الاول هو للتمييز مكون من ٥٠ فقرة بينما السؤال الثاني هو شبه - انتاجي مكون من ٥٠ فراغا بشكل اختبار اغلاق . ولقد عولجت نتائج الاختبار احصائيا وذلك باستخدام الوسائل الاحصائية المناسبة مثل الاختبار التائي وتحليل التباين والنسبة المئوية .

تطور تعلم ادوات التعريف والتكثير لدى متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية

اطروحة

مقدمة الى مجلس كلية التربية (ابن رشد) / جامعة بغداد وهي جزء من متطلبات
نيل درجة دكتوراه فلسفة في التربية طرائق تدريس اللغة الانكليزية لغة أجنبية

تقدمت بها

زينب عباس جواد السعدي

بإشراف

الاستاذ المساعد

د . فاتن خيرى الرفاعي

الاستاذ المساعد

د . منذر منهل الدليمي

٢٠٠٦

