A Psycholinguistic Perspective on Error Analysis: The Acquisition of Tense-Aspect

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Abstract

Many linguistic studies have been conducted as a reaction to this never-ending bewilderment at people's ability to acquire or learn two or more languages. This gave rise to Psycholinguistics as a major field of linguistics that explains the difficulties faced by learners of L2 during their long tiring journey of L2 acquisition. The present paper investigates the relation between psycholinguistics and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in general, and the way learners of L2 acquire *tense-aspect* in particular. It addresses the following questions: (1) What are the most commonly occurring English L2 language errors in the writing of Egyptian students with Arabic L1 language? (2) How can these errors be accounted for? (3) Does the acquisition of *tense-aspect* as a grammatical and lexical category by L2 learners foster these errors? (4) To which extent is the way learners of L2 acquire *tense-aspect* as a grammatical and lexical category affected by L1 interference? The data used in this paper come from 68 university students studying at the Department of English in Mansoura University. Learners have been requested to provide free composition writing, and a corpus of 184 structures was collected to analyze the source of verbs, verb types, functions and form associations. Results were discussed in the light of Error Analysis. The study concludes that learners tend to follow similar processing techniques no matter what language is being acquired; this gives rise to *Transfer*, and hence to written errors.

Keywords: Interference, Error Analysis, Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis, Transfer, First and Second language Acquisition, Interlanguage, Intralanguage

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1. Introduction

The main concern of Psycholinguistics is the study of language (of individuals as opposed to society) as a psychological phenomenon. It tackles some inquiries such as the nature of the relationship between language and the brain, the processes of acquisition and how people set about acquiring a language. Considerable amount of literature focuses on first language acquisition (e.g., Fletcher & Garman, 1986, Ingram, 1989, Guijarro-Fuentes, Larranaga & Clibbens, 2008, Clark, 2016, and Hickmann, Veneziano & Jisa, 2018); yet, great many others attempt to handle second language acquisition (e.g., Klein, 1986, Ellis, 1994 & 1997, Philip, Oliver & Mackey, 2008 and Slabakova, 2016). It is within the latter area that Error Analysis is mostly underpinned.

In the literature, psycholinguistic research has centered on investigating learning difficulties that second and foreign language learners face. Errors are the mistakes made by a group of learners, due to unawareness of the existing rules and the systems of the target language or the lack of knowledge of correct forms or structures of that language. There are two major approaches that handle and explain these errors: Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis (the difference between the two approaches will be discussed in a subsequent section). *Interference* and *Transfer* are claimed to be the main reasons behind the errors that learners of L2 commit. The present paper seeks to explain all the difficulties learners of L2 face, and see if these difficulties arise from interference/transfer, or competence/performance errors. So, the

objectives of this study are: to describe learners' competence regarding tense-aspect and to perform an error analysis of written texts with the goal of understanding how L1 influences L2 acquisition according to some psycholinguistic accounts of L2 acquisition;

2. Literature Review

In this section, three research papers (O'Brien, 2003, Alruwaili, 2014 and Alesawe, 2015) that handle the acquisition of aspect by some Arab learners, other than Egyptians, are briefly reviewed. O'Brien (2003) conducted a research on the acquisition of English by Arabic speaking Emirati students in a third level college system in the UEA. His analysis of interlanguage (defined in section 4.1) of Arabic speaking Emirati students has revealed the occurrence of non-target language forms. This suggests systematicity in these non-target forms. In this research, learners' choice of verb forms is justified in terms of verb type (influence of lexical aspect of verbs on their forms), and the possibility of transfer from the Arabic tense/aspect system. O'Brien (2003) has designed **English grammar and Arabic translation tasks** to collect data on English morphological forms examining verb types and functions. The study has found out that due to the existence of some aspectual concepts and tense factors, learners get confused and resort to the system of their L1 for the choice of the suitable verb form. O'Brien (2003, p. 233) assumes the possibility of direct and indirect influences from L1 on the learners' output in English. The former is seen in the learners' ability to encode single event in the perfective in Arabic and the past simple form in English. The latter arises from the idea that some aspectual functions can be performed in Arabic by a single imperfective form. Leaners selected for this study tend to use past simple form to refer to deictic location.

In another study on second language acquisition of tense and aspect by Saudi-Arabic learners of English, Alruwaili (2014) has divided the Saudi learners at different proficiency levels, and in different learning situations, into three learning groups; they were given both an **acceptability judgment task and a gap-filling task**. The research findings are opposite to the major claims of Interpretability Hypothesis adopted by Hawkins et al. (2008) which suggests learners' inability to retrieve forms from their UG. The analysis reveals that Saudi learners are able to retrieve un-interpretable features from their UG inventory. His findings are also opposite to the Aspect Hypothesis's main assumption that verbal morphology changes in accordance with lexical aspect. Alruwaili (2014) holds the view (following Lardiere, 2008) that features reassembly explains a type of disparity and inconsistency in the learners' performance. The study suggests that L2 acquisition is affected by the interaction between the properties of L1 and L2 input in the course of development.

Alesawe (2015) has conducted a research on the acquisition of English tense, aspect and voice by Libyan university students. A comparison between these grammatical structures in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Libyan dialect (LD), in terms of both syntactic structures and pragmatic use, is carried out. Data collection methods employed here are based on **unstructured focus group interviews**. The study finds some similarities and differences between MSA and LD regarding the presence and use of tense, aspect and voice. Some tenses are similarly used in MSA and LD, while others are either used in MSA or LD. The study also investigates the use of English tense, aspect and voice by Libyan learners of English. It concludes that the forms of tense, aspect and voice in Libyan Arabic, and the similarity of these forms to that of Modern Standard Arabic, significantly affect the Libyan learners' use of English tense, aspect and voice. Although the forms of MSA and LD have an impact on the acquisition and

use of English tense, aspect and voice, LD seems to be more effective. Libyan learners tend to use the simple past tense more frequently than the present perfect tense.

Following the brief review of the selected research papers, it is noticed that these previous studies rely on tasks that seek participants' grammaticality judgments or selection of structures, i.e., focus here is on learners' competence only; participants are not encouraged to supply their own structures which can offer implications about their acquisition, and hence their performance.

The present study follows a mixed method frame where it starts with reviewing how psycholinguistics describes the process of first/second language acquisition; then a description of aspect in Arabic and English is given. Similarities and differences between the two languages are the source of deriving conclusions on the errors committed by learners of L2. The study also highlights the difficulties in the acquisition of aspect.

3. Psycholinguistics and First/ Second Language Acquisition

Many linguistic studies are conducted on the idea of language learning (i.e., Goodluck & Solan, 1978, Baker & McCarthy, 1981, Hornstein & Lightfoot, 1981, Tavakolian, 1981 and Lightfoot, 1982). Similarly, the idea of language acquisition has been frequently discussed by Chomsky (i.e., 1976, 1980, and 1981). He argues that not all that the native speaker knows about his L1 comes from his own experience from the world as part of his knowledge of language comes from his own mind. For example, a native speaker of English judges a sentence such as "Is the programme that is on television any good?" as grammatical and "Is the programme that on television is good?" as ungrammatical (Cook& Newson, 1988, p.12). During his life, a native speaker accepts structures that he encounters. Hence, he acquires knowledge about what he can say, not what he can not say. The Chomskyan

view is that personal experience is not enough to account for native speaker's grammaticality judgments. Part of the speaker's knowledge is derived from some property of his mind.

Another example which stresses the idea that part of language is derived from a property of the mind is the distinction between structures such as "eager to please/ easy to please" (Chomsky, 1965). There is a property of the child's mind that facilitates his distinction between the two structures. This property is referred to as "the poverty of the stimulus", meaning that not all that children know about their L1 is learnt from outside since important features of their language can not be learnable. These assumptions underpin Chomsky's Universal Grammar (UG) which encompasses rules of particular languages and principles applied to all grammars.

Chomsky (1981, p. 8) argues that if certain environmental triggers are provided, UG (available in the child's mind) grows into adult's knowledge of language. Language acquisition takes place when the mental organ of language grows after being triggered by different language experiences. Children acquire language when both UG and a particular language are available. If a child is exposed to a certain language, he knows how to fix the parameter of that language. Actual sentences of a language are a type of positive evidence of that language. Negative evidence can be direct or indirect; the former includes adult's correction of a child's mistake, whereas the latter requires absence of ungrammatical structures from what the child hears. An adult native speaker has "a certain mental structure consisting of a system of rules and principles that generate and relate mental representations of various types" (Chomsky, 1980, p. 48 cited in White, 2003, p. 2).

Second language acquisition, a major field of psycholinguistics, is defined as "the process by which people develop proficiency in a second foreign language" (Richards,

1974). It is also defined as a 'subconscious, natural process, which is the primary force behind foreign-language fluency' (Carroll, 1968). Universal Grammar (UG) provides a model of SLA where speakers of a second language can say whether a structure is grammatical or not despite the non-occurrence of that structure in the language they have encountered. If this knowledge is not derived from experience, it must arise from the speakers' mind. L2 learner's knowledge emerges from some property of the mind since this knowledge is not likely to be drawn from experience. This idea applies to first language acquisition and many studies assumed that the strategies involved in acquiring a second language are similar to those employed in acquiring the native language though there are specific characteristics that are similar in the two processes (Norrish, 1983). This does not mean that two activities are the same; the only difference is that with SLA, the learner has already acquired the grammar of his first language, can incorporate the principles of UG and set the parameters for each language he acquires. Chomsky (1965 & 1976) proposes the following two possibilities that account for speakers' ability to distinguish between grammatical and ungrammatical structures of L2:

(1) Learners have access to UG through their first language

(2) The second possibility which formulates the relation between first and second language acquisition is the parameter- fixing; this refers to the learner's ability to approach his L2 through the value of the parameter for L1.

One of the main features common in both first and second language acquisition is learners' mistakes. Mistakes are an inevitable and essential part of the learners' progress; similarity of some errors in both first and second language acquisition supports the claim that the two processes proceed on parallel and analogous

lines. One of the studies that propose psycholinguistic view regarding overcoming L2 learners' errors is Hoxha (2015). She argues that if learners of L2 are made aware of the idea that errors (such as pauses, repetitions and insertions) normally occur during the process of first language acquisition, they will be natural to make mistakes. This might eliminate their struggle to produce error-free structures, so they get motivated.

4. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted in this study is multidimensional, as three main theories have to be tackled to explain the errors committed by learners of L2: Error Analysis and Transfer, on the one hand, and Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis (POA), on the other. These theories are integrated to analyze the English written texts produced by L1 Arabic learners.

4.1 Transfer as a Psycholinguistic Phenomenon

In the literature, many attempts are made to define *interference* and distinguish it from *transfer*. For example, Weinreich (1953, p. 1) argues that the phenomenon of interference refers to those cases of deviation from the norms of a language which occur in the speech of a bilingual speaker as a result of his/her familiarity with another language, e.g. language contact; this is a sociolinguistic definition that seeks to describe the interactions that take place when two different language communities come in contact. However, a psycholinguistic definition of interference as 'the errors made by carrying over the speech habits of the native language or dialect into a second language and dialect' is offered by Radford (1990). Other definitions of transfer as a psycholinguistic phenomenon are proposed by Dulay& Burt, 1974) and Odlin (1989). In recent SLA discourse, the term interference was replaced by transfer since it (interference) focuses only on highlighting the

negative influences of transfer and ignores positive ones; the term interference has also been claimed to carry behavioristic connotations (Ortega, 2009).

Odlin (1989) prefers the term transfer, which the present study approves, term) defines it as 'the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired' (p. 27). Amin (2017) also defines transfer as a phenomenon happening when a learner is acquiring a new language and is influenced by pronunciation, grammar or any other aspect of the learner's first language. Though *transfer* and *interference* are sometimes used interchangeably, some take the term *Interference* as a negative transfer, and the term transfer as being broader and inclusive (e.g., Ratner &Gleason, 1998).

Another distinction that has to be highlighted in this study is that between first language acquisition and second language acquisition; the latter can be described as a conscious process (Schmid, 1990). Nevertheless, a possible similarity between the two processes is that second language acquisition is the same as the child's acquisition of his native language; both involve the same developmental processes and the same types of errors, and *transfer* may still be at work at other levels. In fact, some empirical studies (e.g., Odlin, 1989) argue that 'transfer can take place within all linguistic subsystems, including morphology and syntax'. Odlin (1989) holds the view that both cross-linguistic factors and psychological factors control and shape developmental sequences. Heaton (1975) proposes the following factors which render the acquisition of a second language difficult: age, lack of contact with foreign speech community, insufficient motivation and interference between the two languages.

4.2 Error Analysis

There is no learning without errors. Khansir (2012) explains learners' errors in terms of the impact of L1 on L2. He formulates his analysis within the framework of the Behavioristic Theory: a note on this theory is not provided here as it falls beyond the scope of the present study. Carroll (1968) describes *Error Analysis* as a technique for detecting, categorizing and systematically understanding the inappropriate forms which foreign language learners produce; this technique normally employs any of the linguistic principles and procedures.

Contrastive analysis seeks to find out the differences between L1 and L2 and describe them, whereas Error Analysis invalidates any assumptions drawn from comparing a native language to a target language. Error Analysis focuses on proposing psycholinguistic accounts and strategies employed by the learners when acquiring their L2 (Fauziati, 2014). Error Analysis identifies two types of errors: interlingual and intralingual errors. Interlangauge is "a popular term to refer to learners' versions of the target language. It usually contains elements of both the learners' native language and target language. Interlanguage is resulted from the learner's attempts to produce the target language construction; so, it is the product of the second language learning process" (Fauziati, 2014, p. 15). Intralanguage highlights the wrong application of a rule in L2 to produce a structure in this L2, a term generally known as 'overgeneralization' (Köhlmyr 2001, p. 193).

In sum, Error Analysis is a method for validating the theory of transfer, and it actually does more than this; it seeks to provide us with information about the psycholinguistic processes of language learning. Through such information, the nature of the strategies adopted by the learners in the process of learning can be discovered. Therefore, we can say that Error Analysis is an empirical procedure

employed in psycholinguistic investigation of the language learning (Corder, 1974).

4.3 Description of Aspect in Arabic and English

Norrish (1983) claims that by comparing two linguistic systems (that of L1 and L2), areas of difficulty can be predicted. While English is a part of Germanic language branch which is an SVO language, Arabic is one of the most widely spoken Semitic language which has a variety of word order (e.g., SVO & VSO). To investigate the difficulties faced by learners of L2 when acquiring aspect, it is crucial to describe the learners' language in order to understand the process of SLA; thus, the description of syntactic and morphological Aspect in Arabic and English is provided here.

4.3.1 Arabic Aspect

In this section, the description of aspect system in Arabic is based on Badawi, Carter and Gully (2004, pp. 363-369); the illustrative examples given here are mine:

In Arabic, aspect is usually linked to two forms of conjugation: الماضي "the past" referred to as **perfective** and المضارع "the present" referred to as **imperfective**. The perfective corresponds to English past and perfect. Both the perfective and imperfective are formed from the same root. Internal flexion and suffixes are employed to form perfectives while suffixes and prefixes are used to form imperfective as in: يسافرُ "to travel = imperfective" and سافرَ "travelled = perfective". Imperfective verbs have four modes:

1. Indicative (الرفع) يسافرُ
2. Subjunctive (النصب) يسافرَ
3. Jussive (الجزم) يسافرْ
4. Imperative (الأمر) سافر

Imperfective verbs and nouns can have the same vocalic ending as illustrated by the following

table:

	Verb		Noun
Indicative	يسافرُ	Nominative/subjective	السفرُ
Subjunctive	يسافرَ	Accusative	السفرَ

Both adjectives (which are normally derived from verbs) and the imperfective express the same state where no temporal point is defined as in نام باكيًا 'he slept crying' and نام و هو باكيًا 'he slept crying'. The perfective expresses results and achievements. The verb كتبَ 'he wrote' expresses a punctual and dynamic action. If the same verb is used in the imperfective mood as in يكتبُ 'he writes', it represents a state rather than a result. So, the imperfective normally indicates completeness of an action. When the imperfective is in the passive and is preceded by a noun, it gives the same meaning of an adjective as in كلماتٌ لا تكتبُ 'unwritten words'. The use of the particle "قد" with the perfective verb indicates completeness of the action, as in قد كتب الولدُ الدرسَ 'the boy has written the lesson'. But if this particle is used with the imperfective, possibility is expressed, as in قد يكتبُ 'he can write'. The imperfective can also be used to denote negative past action when preceded by negative particle "لم", as in لم يكتبْ الدرسَ 'he has not written the lesson'.

4.3.2 English Aspect: Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis (POA)

Anderson & Shirai (1996) differentiate between tense and aspect as follows:
Tense has temporal deixis (referring to the time of utterance). Accordingly, *he is playing* is different from *he was playing*. Tense is

"a deictic category that locates a situation in relation to some other time, usually the time of speech" (Alsalmi, 2013, p. 273). Aspect is described as *non-deictic* which only features perceptions of internal temporal constituency of a situation (p. 530). So, *he played tennis* and *he was playing tennis* differ in aspect, based on the way the speaker views the internal temporal constituency of the situation. With *he played tennis*, the speaker expresses *external view*, as he looks at the whole situation, whereas in *he was playing tennis*, the speaker expresses the idea that the situation is taking place in phases *internal view*. In other words, tense refers to a time line that stretches from the past towards the future; its major focus is on when an event took place. Aspect refers to whether the action is completed or not, from the speaker's point of view; it centers on duration and completeness of event. While tense relates to the grammar or the outer shape of the verb, aspect considers the temporal semantics of that verb from the speaker's perspective. Aspect is defined as a different way of considering the internal time-based constituency of a situation (Comrie, 1976). Tense and aspect are two terms used to refer to temporality which is restricted to the explicit use of morphological ending on verbs to denote tense and aspect

Anderson & Shirai (1996) classify aspect into two main types: grammatical aspect and inherent lexical aspect. So, in describing a situation, the speaker has two choices: grammatical aspect (viewpoint aspect as Smith, 1983 called it) and inherent lexical aspect (situation aspect). To start with grammatical aspect, Smith (1983) argues that it refers to auxiliaries and inflections which are explicitly used to distinguish aspect. Description of grammatical aspect relies on the distinction between perfective and imperfective; such distinction is clarified by the use of grammatical markers such as auxiliaries and inflections (Alsalmi, 2013, p. 273). Below are some examples on perfective and imperfective aspects:

(1) He drew a table
(2) He was drawing a table
(3) He draws a table
(4) He is drawing a table

In (1), the verb 'drew' is *perfective* as it refers to completeness of the action; in (2), (3) and (4) the verbs lack this reference, and it is not possible to tell whether the actions they refer to are completed or not, so these verbs are *imperfective*.

As for lexical aspect, it refers to what the lexical items imply about the situation; accordingly, verbs normally represent the following four main cases: states, activities, accomplishments and achievements, as indicated by table 1, which is based on Anderson &Shirai (1996, p. 532):

Table 1: Semantic Features for the four categories of Inherent lexical Aspect

Semantic features	Lexical aspectual classes States Activities		Accomplishments (telic events)	Achievements (punctual events)
Punctual	-	-	-	+
Telic	-	-	+	+
Dynamic	-	+	+	+

L1 and L2 learners use tense- aspect during their early stages of acquiring verbal morphology selectively based on the "inherent lexical aspect of the verb" to which the tense- aspect marker is attached. The following are Anderson & Shirai's remarks on children's acquisition of English as their L1 (p. 529):

(1) Children attach past marking on accomplishment and achievement verbs more frequently than on activity and stative verbs.

(2) Progressive *–ing* is attached to activity verbs more frequently than accomplishment and achievement verb.

(3) Such tendency in acquiring verbal morphology is referred to as "The Primacy of Aspect (POA).

Inherent aspect is more important than grammatical aspect in the early phases of acquiring verbal morphology. Verbs such as *like* and *know* are stative, whereas *jump* and *bounce* are punctual verbs that have no duration. The classification of verbs (summed up in table 2) is linguistic universals that can be applied to many languages:

Table 2: Classification of verbs

-	Type of Verb	Reference	Example
1	Achievement	Punctual events which have no duration	Recognize – die
2	Accomplishment	Telic events which have inherent endpoints	Clean the house
3	Activity	Verbs which have duration and arbitrary endpoints	Dance – sing
4	State	Verbs which are non-dynamic	Feel- hate

Boland (2006, pp2-3) propose two types of linguistic universals: implicational and unconditional. The former refers to the situation where the absence or presence of a linguistic property is related to absence or presence of another property. If a language has a singular pronoun, it implies that it has a plural pronoun. So universals are typically implications. The latter refers to cases where a language restricts the occurrence of a certain parameter independently of other linguistic properties. Anderson & Shirai (1996) propose the "Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis" (POA), which is observed in L1 acquisition. The main assumption of this hypothesis is that children, during their acquisition of L1, use past marking or perfective marking with achievement and accomplishment verbs, and apply these markings to activity and

stative verbs. Imperfective past appears later than perfective past. Children first use imperfective past marking with stative and activity verbs, then they extend these markings to accomplishment and achievement verbs. Progressive marking which starts with activity verbs is incorrectly attached to stative verbs.

The POA Hypothesis is also observed in L2 acquisition. Anderson & Shirai (1996) argue that most studies on English as L2 come to the conclusion that past morphology is mostly used with achievement and accomplishment verbs. The progressive marking (-*ing*) is used with durative verbs whether these verbs are stative, activity or accomplishment verbs. Only activity verbs receive more –*ing* marking. The term perfective is used to describe the use of past marking with event verbs such as achievement or accomplishment verbs. The overextension of progressive forms in L2 acquisition, compared to its absence in L1 acquisition, suggests that adults' ability to separate and distinguish L1 aspect system from that of L2 is declined. Finally, POA Hypothesis suggests the existence of linguistic and cognitive universals during the process of acquisition and manipulation of verbal morphology (p. 546).

In the present study, I adopt Alsalmi's choice of investigating the acquisition of lexical and grammatical tense- aspect by Arabs (Egyptian learners of L2 are selected here) by using an analytical technique of Error Analysis. The study is meant to be a continuation to previous research on the acquisition of tense- aspect by Arabs (as exemplified in the literature review section); but the analysis focuses on Egyptian learners who are to obtain an English degree. The study aims at offering new implications and insights on the way English is taught at university levels particularly in Mansoura University.

5. Participants and Data Collection Method

Sixty nine undergraduates studying at the Department of English in Mansoura University participated in this study. Most of the students are 18 to 20 years old. They share the same mother tongue, and they all have prior knowledge of English, though their exposure to English is only through academic instructions at the school level, and later at the university level. None of participants can be described as being at a beginner's stage of English language acquisition. They were classified into three groups: group one encompassed year two students (16 students); the second group included year three students (21 students) and the last group included year four students (31 students). The data collection procedure was based on collecting sample of students' writings: the first group was asked to submit 300 word essays on two given topics in English: *'your daily activities'* and *'how you revised for your last exam'*. The second group was instructed to write 350 word essay on *'your last visit to a summer resort'*. The third group submitted a 400 word essay about *'the importance of family meals'*. A corpus of 184 sentences was selected from the written texts submitted by the participants. First year students were not selected here, as the way they acquired English before the university level falls beyond the scope of this study. During their first year, students at the Department of English normally study ten intensive English courses. This year shapes the way students comprehend and learn English rules and systems (both grammatical and phonological). So, data were deliberately collected from year two, three and four students. The collection of data took place after the students had completed their final exam of May, 2018 to guarantee completion of all English courses offered in this academic year.

6. Discussion and Analysis of Data

Data were selected to be of relevance to the theories of SLA and Error Analysis. Errors made by the participants when forming aspectual structures are analyzed based on the theories of SLA, Error Analysis and Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis. In this section, written texts produced by each group of the students are analyzed separately, and then overall remarks on the findings will be drawn.

6.1 Group One (year two students)
Year two students were given the following writing task:

> **Writing Task 1**
> **Write an essay (approximately 300 words) on each of the following topics**
> *(a) your daily activities*
> *(b) how you revised for your last exam*

In section 4.1, definitions of transfer proposed by some linguists (such as Weinreich, 1953, Dulay & Burt, 1974, Oldin 1989, Radford, 1990 and Ortega, 2009) were given. Transfer is a psychological phenomenon where a learner applies his prior L1 knowledge to his L2. Dulay & Burt (1974b) and Odlin (1989) argue that transfer has less to do with the explanation of errors made by learners of L2, unless some similarities between forms in L1 and L2 are at work. But if the forms of L1 and L2 are not similar, learners negatively transfer structures of L1, which are not applicable to their L2; this is a type of negative transfer, as Arabski (2006) refers to it. The classification of transfer into two main types is also discussed by Ratner & Gleason (1998). According to them, positive transfer results in grammatical structures in L2, if forms and structures of L1 and L2 are similar. If, on the other hand, these forms are different, negative transfer results in incorrect L2 forms. The question now is: are the aspectual forms and structures in L1Arabic and L2English similar or different? In other words, what type of transfer can be

expected in the process of acquiring English by the participants of the study?

(1) Looking at the structures given by year two students to describe their daily activities, it is found out that some of them (e.g. student 1) tend to express their activities and daily routine by using 'used to + infinitive' as in example 1 *'I used to go to my work everyday at 9 A.M, then it finishes at 8 P.M'*. The Student is aware that the adverbial phrase 'everyday' refers to daily activities; however, incorrect form of 'used to' is produced. The imperfective 'used to', which normally refers to a past habit is incorrectly employed here to denote a present state. When the learner needs to express a habit, he looks for an English equivalent to this word in his L1 (e.g., عادة) and then translates it into 'اعتدت على', so 'used to' is accordingly selected.

(2) Students of this group show excessive use of the gerund (verb with progressive –*ing* marking) after adverbs such as *after* and *before* (e.g., examples 8, 31). Similar structures are also possible in Arabic. I assume here that this is a type of positive transfer from L1 Arabic, which allows for the following two structures:

a. المصدر الصريح   'أحبُ قراءة' (I love reading) - 'بعد قراءة' (after reading)

b. المصدر المؤول   ' أحبُ أن أقرأ ' (I love to read) -'بعد أن أقرأ' (after I read)

Though the two structures in (a) and (b) are both available in English, only the one in (a) is more frequently used by year two students (see examples 9, 12, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 36, 38). Structures similar to that in (b) is used by a year four student (see Example 137).

(3) In English the *ing*-marking is attached to verbs to form the verbal nouns or (present participle). Such forms of verbs are available also in Arabic. In the two languages, verbal nouns

retain the grammatical manifestations of nouns: they can be used as subjects, objects of verbs/ prepositions.

a. كتابة القصص هوايتي المفضلة (writing stories is my favourite hobby)

b. هذا الوقت مخصص لكتابة القصص (this time is dedicated to writing stories)

c. أحبُ قراءة القصص (I love reading Stories)

To account for the tendency towards the use of structures such as (I love reading المصدر الصريح) in both English and Arabic, I assume that learners here are following the same developmental processes in acquiring their L1 and L2 (as assumed by Odlin, 1989 and Schmid, 1990) where it is easier for them to use a verbal noun (e.g., I love reading أحبُ قراءة) than to form a sentence with the main verb followed by *to* plus the *infinitive* (I love to read أحبُ أن أقرأ).

(4) Some of the interesting examples given by students from this group are repeated as (a) and (b) below:

a. By this time, I'm having no thing to do at home, so I start searching for novels to read or movies.

b. When I have an exam, always like every student, I'm being worried for some howe.

What these examples imply is that L2 learners supply progressive – *ing* marking more frequently for stative verbs (have and be), though these verbs are non-dynamic. In examples (13-16), on the other hand, the participant here used different structures and was not consistent in forming imperfective (e.g., I'm study, I'm pray, I'm doing sports, I'm spend, I'm using internet and go with my friends). Students here are not able to differentiate between habitual and progressive tense- aspect. The progressive –*ing* marking is supplied only for the verbs (do *'accomplishment verb'* and use *'activity verb'*). So, students of this group use progressive marking with activity verbs (e.g., I'm doing, I'm using) then they incorrectly extend this marking to stative verbs (e.g., I'm having, I'm being). This is exactly what children do during the process of acquiring L1

English (as proposed by Anderson & Shirai, (1996) Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis). I assume here that certain similarity does exist between children acquiring English as their L1 and Egyptian learners acquiring English as their L2. The only difference is that errors made by children are expected to be avoided at a later stage of their acquisition of English, whereas Egyptian learners are committing these errors due to the negative impact of transfer from their L1 (Arabic) to their L2 (English); a type of error referred to as 'interlingual error'.

      a. Though students are aware of the adverbs used with imperfective to express habits and daily routines; they still supply incorrect verb forms as in '***Often*** *I'd have finished washing up from the workout of the GYM'* and '***always*** *like every student, I'm being worried for some howe'.*

A possible explanation of these errors is that learners are not frequently using adverbs in L1, since the imperfective (present simple and present progressive) are the same in Arabic. In this case, transfer takes place at a later stage after the learner selects the appropriate adverb.

One of the strategies normally used by learners of L2 is to translate structures from their L1 and look for their equivalents in L2. As argued before, if differences between L1 and L2 outweigh similarities, erroneous structures are produced, with negative transfer being the main reason of these errors. To clarify this idea, the incorrect English structure (ex. 26 written by a group two student) is written under its correct Arabic counterpart:

a.   All this activities I practice it in my home in a free time.

b.   كل هذه الأنشطة أمارسها في منزلي في وقت فراغ

The misuse of *it* in example (a) highlights the impact of transfer. As for the writing task 1b (*how you revised for your last exam*), students differ in the way they comprehend the topic. Some students took it as requesting information about:

(1) their future plan regarding getting ready for an exam. They provided these sentences:

Ex.72. Next week, I'll be very busy, I have a lot to do, and I don't know if I
will finish on time.

Ex. 73. I'll search for some information on the internet and read some notes
on my books.

(2) Their usual routine when revising for an exam:

Ex.56. If I have more time I do answering more exams.

Ex.57. I chat with my friends and start revising the subject with each other.

(3) How they prepared for a past exam:

Ex.67.Yesterday, I **had** a science exam, I **tried** hard to study well for this
exam because it **was** very important , the students who **would** pass
that exam **would** be able to participate at the challenge which the
school **had arranged**.

Ex. 58. In the last exam, I **studied** hard and **revised** my lesson well.

Ex. 59. I **made** my self relaxable, so I **was** ready for the exam.

This discrepancy among students of this group, regarding the way they comprehended the writing task, highlights the inadequacy of instructions presented to them (at this level of education) on forms, structures and uses of the past tense. In other words, distinction between the use of habitual/ progressive tense-aspect has not

appropriately figured in their teaching syllabuses, structural exercises, or pedagogical grammars. That is why another writing task that required the use of the past tense was given to year three students. The results are discussed in the following section.

To sum up, in this section, the erroneous structures produced by students of group two were analyzed based on the major claims of SLA, with transfer being the main reasons for these interlingual errors.

6.2 Group Two (Year Three Students)

Year three students were given the following writing task:

Writing Task 2
Write an essay (approximately 350 words) on the following topic

your last visit to a summer resort, where you went, how you went, how you spent your time there

---

Examining the written texts submitted by year three students, the following errors are found to be common among those participants:

(1) The random use of past tenses:

Ex. 91. Visiting to North coast **was** a beautiful holiday I **had spent**. We **had**
done many things.

Ex. 96. Summer! I had been waiting for it to come.

Ex. 109. Next week We **went** to DAHAB and I swear it's the most precious
great place I **have ever went**.

Ex. 119. We **fell** asleep because the way **is** very long and after all we *waked*

up very early.

The first observation about this writing task is that students of this group used their prior knowledge of their L1 (Arabic), which allows only one form of the past tense. Students applied this fact, and felt free to pick up any past form from their knowledge of English believing that, like Arabic, any form can refer to a past event; accordingly, simple, progressive, perfect, perfect progressive are randomly used as indicated by the following examples:

Ex. 91 This vacation made me very happy. We had done many things.

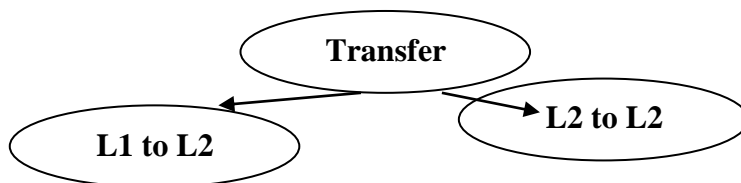Ex. 96. Summer! I had been waiting for it to come

Ex. 98. Oneday I wish I could going to a summer resort and when I was sitting

think that I will be happy If that happen.

Ex. 107. When I left the beach, I would go to the castle and watched the sea

from the Castle.

Ex. 109. Next week We went to DAHAB and I swear it's the most precious

great place I have ever **went**.

The incorrect form of the past tense in example 109 suggests that such error is due to transfer from the participant's previous knowledge of English. The use of the suffix *–ed* to form past tense is incorrectly applied. This participant is mistakenly applying knowledge from one system (L2) to the same system (a type of negative transfer referred to by Ratner & Gleason (1998) and Köhlmyr (2001), among others, as intralingual error or

overgeneralization) This finding is in line with the claim made by Schacter (1983), where transfer is assumed to include any previous knowledge that L2 learners have in addition to their imperfect knowledge of their L2. The errors encountered in example 119 can be due to the impact of developmental errors. Analyzing the written texts produced by students of this group, I conclude that the errors here are a result of negative transfer, and these errors are classified into interlingual errors (influence from Arabic on English), and intralingual errors, which are based on L2, and occur when a rule in L2 has been acquired, but used where it should not be used. I postulate the following representation to account for the errors occurring in the writings of group two students:

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │   Transfer   │
                    └──────────────┘
          ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
          │   L1 to L2   │    │  L2 to L2    │
          └──────────────┘    └──────────────┘
```

It is worth mentioning here that small percentage of students of this group showed better performance (than participants of group one) in differentiating between imperfective and perfective events. They produced target-like structures. This result is indicated by the following three error-free examples from students' written texts:

Ex.79. One of the best parts of the whole trip **was** the time we **spent** in the car
with each other. We **kept** singing along the songs on the radio while the
wind **was playing** with our hijabs.

Ex. 84. In the third day, we **went** to the beach in the very morning to enjoy it to
the max. Then we **ordered** pizza and some ice-cream. After three days

of great joy we **returned** home with some positive vibes.

Ex.85. Every Holiday I **usually go** to visit any places as I **love** visiting every
places all over the world. My last visit **was** to a resort in Hurghada. I
went there with my family and my relatives. We **stayed** there for one
week. We **went** there in the mid year vacations.

Students here also performed better, with respect to the use of 'used to', and correctly employed it to refer to past actions though the event is imperfective, as in the following example:

Ex. 90. My uncle used to visit us every year, but this year he couldn't come
to visit he was ill

6.3 Group Three (year four students)

Year four students were given the following writing task:

Writing Task 3
Write an essay (approximately 400 words) on the following topic   *Some people think that family meals are important. Others think that*   *having meals together does not matter for the family nowadays*

(1) Learners of this group are able to produce some error free structures, compared to some erroneous ones.

Regarding the structures which are carefully produced by the learners, I argue here that there is a large gap between aspect systems in English and Arabic. This significantly affects their competence and performance with respect to aspectual manifestations. L2 learners are indeed able to distinguish between the two structures after they have been learning English for a certain period of time, as indicated by the difference between example122 in appendix C , written by a year four student, and example 3 in appendix A, written by a year two student.

Ex 122: We **are not used to** that traditional habits.
 Ex 3: I **used to** go to my work everyday at 9 A.M, then it finishes at 8 P.M,
         after that I take my rest to go to the gym

Though students of this group are all in year four, it is surprising that some of them are still unable to differentiate between a verbal noun and the main verb. They tend to use them interchangeably, especially after the conjunctions and/or, as seen by the following examples:
Ex. 122. It's important to have lunch or dinner with friends and **going** out.

Ex. 124 they tend to be alone or they **suffering** about some kind of problems
        with the family so they **preferring** to stay away as possible as they
        can.

Ex: 131. Finally, this important element, which **having** meals with family in

Egypt is important one than anyother country

Looking at the types of errors highlighted in the above examples from the third group, it is noticed that they all tend to excessively use the progressive marking –*ing* which should be used with durative (stative 'suffering and preferring', activity and accomplishment 'going out, having meals) verbs. Learners here are extensively using the progressive –*ing* marker though it does not exist in Arabic; this implies that L2 learners are not able to distinguish between L1 aspect and that of L2. The overuse of progressive form in L2 structures, though it is absent in Arabic, suggests that a child is able to create his system of L1, but as he grows up, the ability to create L2 system is weakened due to the influence of L1 aspect system. Consequently, I claim here that transfer from L1 results in overuse of progressive marking –*ing*. There is no contradiction between *Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis* (POA) which is viewed (e.g. by Smith 1980) as a cognitive deficit and the theory of *transfer* that highlights the effect of L1 on the acquisition of L2.

In section 6.2, some errors committed by year three students were analyzed as resulted from transfer from L1. I hold the view that transfer is a big problem for the three groups and for all learners of L2; consider the following examples:

Ex. 152. The **agreeing** party believe that family meals can **help in** stabilizing

relations between family members.

Ex. 153. When it comes to health, the **agreeing** party proved that family meals

help with giving more time for a person to much and digest their

food as the don't have to rush the meal, which improves digestion
and overall health.

Ex. 155. Some people think faimly meals are important, some think not. But I
agree it is important **to having** it togther.

In examples 152 and 153, the student is using his knowledge of his L1 where the verb help 'يساعد' in Arabic can be followed by two possible prepositions: 'يساعد في'and 'يساعد ب'. Applying this previous knowledge resulted in two incorrect target constructions: 'help in stabilizing' and 'help with giving'. In example 155, the Arabic structure 'من المهم تناولها معا' is incorrectly presented as 'it is important to having it together'.

Forming the past tense is also problematic for this group of students who are supposed to produce error free structure during their final year of higher education. It is noticed that they use the past tense with achievement (punctual events which
have no duration as in example 173) and accomplishment verbs (telic events which have inherent endpoints as in example 169).

Ex.173. In general, there are many traditions changed.

Ex. 169. We simply eat at home because our mother cooked this food with
a lot of love and effort and we really really appricate that

7. Findings and Conclusion

After analyzing sample structures from the written texts submitted by the three groups, it is observed that large number of L2 participants across the three groups tend to use the structure 'be + verb + -ing marking' to refer to a habitual or a daily routine; but

how can we account for this observation? The answer to this conundrum is once again that the L2 learners' knowledge is drawn from experience. They are familiar with the use of verb 'be يكون '; and copy the word order and tense-aspect from their L1 (as they know it is accepted) to form L2 sentences.

- past tense = present tense + كان: كنت أحبها = I loved her
- He sat up in bed in amazement when I recounted the incident: كان يجلس في الفراش دهشاً أثناء روايتي لما حدث

Looking at the errors committed by participants in the three groups, the influence of Arabic on the acquisition of tense-aspect by learners of L2 cannot be ignored. In some instances, learner's knowledge of L2 negatively influences their attempts to produce target constructions. L1 transfer is a significant overruling influence that explains errors presented in L2 written texts. It explains learners' overextension of progressive –*ing* marking. Universal factors such as the property of the mind and learner's experience of the target language interact with learners'L1, and this affects their L2 development.

Psycholinguistics offers answers for the processes of first and second language acquisition. Many linguists attempted to examine errors which occur in the writings of L2 learners and account for these errors in terms of two phenomena that reflect the positive and/ or negative influences of L1 on L2 (e.g. interference and transfer). The term transfer soon replaced interference, and is now taken to be the most crucial reasons for the errors and the difficulties which learners of L2 encounter. The two main approaches that handle learners' errors are Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis. This study aimed at investigating the transfer phenomenon in relation to the acquisition of tense-aspect by Egyptian students at three university levels at the Department of English in Mansoura University: 16 students in level two, 22 students in level three and 31 students in level four. Data collected was based on their

linguistic productions of written composition submitted by 69 pre-degree students.

The study limited its scope to the acquisition of tense-aspect as a grammatical and lexical category. To provide a comprehensive analysis of the way L2 learners acquire tense-aspect, the topics that had to be incorporated were: first/second language acquisition, error analysis, transfer and Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis. Students' errors were referred to as interlanguage errors which normally result from L1 transfer (Fauziati, 2014). The study summarized main tents of Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis, where it was argued that during L1 acquisition, children are influenced by the tense-aspect inherent in the verb. So, they tend to attach progressive endings with activity verbs, past inflections with accomplishment verbs and present inflections with stative verbs. This tendency towards L1 acquisition is also prevalent in L2 acquisition. The study concludes that though transfer is a big problem for Egyptian learners of L2, some errors are caused by the influence of Arabic on English, and of English on English. Interlanguage and transfer refer to the same condition where a learner attempts to produce target language that contains elements of both his/her native language and the target language.

Based on the theoretical insights of Error Analysis, the study hypothesized that, for the Egyptian learners, acquiring a language such as English, which is different from - and unrelated to their L1, gives rise to numerous difficulties. Negative transfer from Arabic, where L1 negatively influences the acquisition of L2 and results in ungrammaticality, is assumed to be the main reason of such difficulties. Being in direct contact with learners' written texts provides additional motivation for the current study.

8. Limitations of the study

One limitation of the study is that it was applied to a sample of university students in only one educational institution in Egypt (Mansours University); this can be less representative of the whole system followed in teaching English as L2. The study recommends a further research on error analysis of oral production, in addition to that of written texts. This can help in formulating a more comprehensible image of the types of errors in the production of utterances which have aspect as a grammatical and lexical category. The findings of the study recommend further research on a larger number of population. The study also recommends a reconsideration of the methods of teaching employed by school teachers in preparatory and high school levels, as wrong application of these methods definitely induces interference-based learning difficulties. More focus on semantic comprehension of tense-aspect in L2 production is also recommended.

9. Recommendations for future research

To investigate the difficulties faced by university L2 learners when acquiring aspect, it is crucial to look at these difficulties from a pedagogical perspectives beside the psycholinguistic one. So, the way pre-university education enhance students' acquisition of English as L2, in general, and English aspect, in particular, has to be investigated pedagogically along with the teaching methods employed by the teachers. So, the study recommends a closer examination of the pedagogical factors in the process of analyzing the errors of L2 learners in writing. Instructions on how to use the imperfective (e.g., the present tense) to express facts, habits or daily routines should be implemented in school curriculum with reference to their equivalents in Arabic.

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Appendices
Appendix A
Writing task (1)

Year Two Students (approximately 300 words):

1a. Write about your daily activities.

1b. Write about how you revised for your last exam

Table1: Sample Answers to writing task (1a)

Student no.	Examples
1	1. everyone in his own life has a different activity to do or used to do. 2. we must differ our doings or what we used to do. 3. I used to go to my work everyday at 9 A.M, then it finishes at 8 P.M, after that I take my rest to go to the gym.
2	4. Everyday I wake up, go to see my mother then we have breakfast together. 5. I come back home and start my favourite part of the day.
3	6. So I like doing it. 7. I usually doing it every day. 8. I do more activities at my home before going to the university. 9. I enjoy doing activities and now I search about a good gym.
4	10. Every day, I haven't many activities to do. 11. I sleeps late. 12. By this time, I'm having no thing to do at home, so I start searching for novels to read or movies.
5	13. I'm study in Fuclity of art, evry day in my live I'm pray For my God I love him so much. 14. I'm doing sports you can say is my life. 15. I'm spend more time you can say my lonely nights. 16. But I'm using internet and go with my friends.
6	17. my day isn't boring it fulls of works and activities. 18. I enjoy watching tv and watching filmes or reading novels.
7	19. every one should spend his time doing some things useful. 20. The most important thing I love is reading newspaper every day. 21. Finally, some people spend their time sleeping and don't do any thing useful and waste their time so, they should wake up and spend their time in a good way.
8	22. I start getting ready to hit the GYM. 23. Most of the time I would slack and go with what I am wearing at the moment. 24. Often I'd have finished washing up from the workout of the GYM and gotten my self ready to sleep.

9	25. This activities opened your mind, maks you have many knowledgeable and make you intelligent. 26. All this activities I practice it in my home in a free time.
10	27. It's very important to prepare a list hasing my tasks that I wants to do. 28. Afternoon I help my mother at cooking. 29. at the evening I read a good book then I go to bed at 11 pm. And thinking and preparing a new list for a new day.
11	30. Every day I have daily activities which may be could like adaily routine for me. 31. After returning home, I change my uniform then having lunch with the family. 32. These were my activities at the day, there are many details which may change from one day to another.
12	33. every one have a daily activities that he do even he stay at home or doing sports or visit some one or traviling. 34. in the school day, I get up at 7o'clock then I backed my school things then I have my breakfast then I go to university at 8 o'clock. 35. I start my lecture at 8 pm after my lecture I go to eating some thing with my friends.
13	36. All of us as usual have a free time, some spend it reading his new book, painting, cooking or may be playing. 37. I really love drawing, so I spend maybe 2 hours or more daily drowing and painting. 38. I also love reading, and I read a lot.
14	39. These are my daily activities in holidays. 40. I really enjoy my time by learning in English course in holiday. 41. After studying day, I go to home and sleep for one hour.
15	42. I like to read in a book that het me very hape and reading very emportant in our life.
16	43. I can't spend my day without practicing them. 44. I have a lot of activities in my day like, "Washing dishes, cooking, working out at gym, reading english books and chating with native speakers to English. 45. After break, I go working out at gym.

Table2: Sample Answers to writing task (1b)

Student no.	Examples
1	46. I got showered then I made my coffee. 47. I started to read. 48. I revised. 49. I was ready.
2	50. before the final exam, I start to revice my subjects. 51. Then I move to the sheets that I have solved before.
3	52. So I like do. 53. I study after returning home about 3 hours. 54. I know that was tiring but at the end when I knew my degrees I feel that I don't tire because I succeded.
4	55. When I have an exam, always like every student, I'm being worried for some howe. 56. If I have more time I do answering more exams. 57. I chat with my friends and start revising the subject with each other.
5	*The student did not submit an answer to this writing task*
6	*The student did not submit an answer to this writing task*
7	58. In the last exam, I studied hard and revised my lesson well. 59. I made my self relaxable, so I was ready for the exam.
8	60. I started asking myself weither I am going to study today or not. 61. On the next day I kept slacking till my father came and found out I didn't study yet. 62. At least I went and finished memorizing the tips.
9	63. In the few days they studed hard; they closed the door about himself, opened the books to revised and find their mistakes which made it before. 64. They get out from his room and watch tv until didn't become tention and stress.
10	65. All students are confused and worried, and this worry can affected on negatively on the students. 66. I should discuss the lesson in a loud voice to store it and save it well in my mind.
11	67. Yesterday, I had a science exam, I tried hard to study well for this exam because it was very important , the students who would pass that exam would be able to participate at the challenge which the school had arranged.

	68. After finishing all that I started at the third part and as usual answered the the questions which belong to this part.
12	69. I was very afraid from the exam. 70. I revised for my exam before it 3 day. 71. First I read the lesson as well I didn't take it before then I revised for the morning well then I answer all the question.
13	72. Next week, I'll be very busy, I have a lot to do, and I don't know if I will finish on time. 73. I'll search for some information on the internet and read some notes on my books.
14	*The student did not submit an answer to this writing task*
15	74. In my last exam I was very strained. 75. I spend month in my home to stude hard. 76. when exame start I wrote me information and in the end of exam I read my paper agen that about my last exam.
16	77. The last exam is too important So I revised well to pass it. 78. The exam was the subjects that I should be revise are "poetry, phonetics, Novel and Drama.

Appendix B
Writing task (2)
Year Three Students (approximately 350 words):
Write about your last visit to a summer resort, where you went, how you went, how you spent your time there
Table3: Sample Answers to writing task (2)

Student no.	Examples
17	79. One of the best parts of the whole trip was the time we spent in the car with each other. We kept singing along the songs on the radio while the wind was playing with our hijabs. 80. After we got settled and organized ourselves, I kniew what I was going to do and, of course, that was reading! Most of my time was spent reading a novel while I played with the sand with my feet.
18	81.At the lates time me and my family start spend Summer restore at the country where we could have peace of mind and have a fresh air. 82. We went to grand-mother house, we played with animals, see cows, donkey and chicken, and so on. 83. people or farmers who worked hard; they were sweting a lot.
19	*84. In the third day, we went to the beach in the very morning to enjoy it to the max. Then we ordered pizza and some ice-cream. After three days of great joy we returned home with some positive vibes.*
20	85. Every Holiday I usually go to visit any places as I love visiting every places all over the world. My last visit was to a resort in Hurghada. I went there with my family and my relatives. We stayed there for one week. We went there in the mid year vacations. 86. Each day from the week we spend in Hurghada was amazing. 87. We hired a boat and sailed in the sea at night and that was the most wonderful thing in that vacation as we could saw the starts in the sky.
21	88. This holiday, I really enjoyed my time with my family and friends. 89. We went there by bus and travelling by bus is very interesting. 90. My uncle used to visit us every year, but this year he couldn't come to visit he was ill, So, we had our ordered pizza and spent nice time together.
22	91. Visiting to North coast was a beautiful holiday I had spent. We had done many things. This vacation made me very happy 92. It was a beautiful place I had seen. 93. This holiday was a great one I had.
23	94. We went with our car.

	95. I spent the most of my time on the beach with my brother because we like beaches more than our family.
24	96. Summer! I had been waiting for it to come.
	97. It was alittle bit not a good one but it was okay.
25	98. Oneday I wish I could going to a summer resort and when I was sitting think that I will be happy If that happen.
	99. This day make me feel the meaning of freedom and interesting and this make me happy.
26	100. We went by our car and my uncle and his daughters in their car and We took long distance and spent long time on the road.
27	101. We went to many places and enjoy by that time. Played Games, Football and so on.
	102. We went to resterant and eat puizza, oh it was very delicious, then went to the sea to see it for the last time then back to home to prepare our bags to go.
28	103. We stayed there for four days. We have decided that, we will repeat this again and take a vacation like that.
29	104. In the first place, we went to Alex.
	105. I went to Alexandria with my friends.
	106. We have seen a lot of places and it was a beautiful feeling to see all of this amazing places in Alex.
30	107. When I left the beach, I would go to the castle and watched the sea from the castle.
	108. I ate chicken and went to the hotel to prepare second day.
31	109. Next week We went to DAHA and I swear it's the most precious great place I have ever went.
32	110. First of all, me and my friends suggest the idea of travelling without our family. Consequently, we choose the place, and it was Elein Elsokhna.
33	111. I was happy because I like this place so much and I like my family also so, that was enjoyable.
	112. Alex is a beautiful place.
34	113. My college made a journy to this beautiful place, my friends told me to go with them and I accept.
35	114. I visited a lot of places. I went to the sea with my friends.
	115. I went to parks and played with my friends.
	116. I went to gym.
	117. I went to trestaurant.
	118. I went to zoo and I saw animals.
36	119. We fell asleep because the way is very long and after all we *waked* up very early.
37	120. but we had aproblem there my youngest couson was lost and we spend a whole day looking for him we was worried and cried so much till we found him and get to our normal holiday.

Appendix C
Writing task (3)

Year Four Students (approximately 400 words):

- *Some people think that family meals are important. Others think that having meals together does not matter for the family nowadays*

Table3: Sample Answers to writing task (3)

Student no.	Examples
38	121. Nowadays having meal with family became not important for the most of the family because of pressures of life and because every member of the family became busy with his job. 122. It's important to have lunch or dinner with friends and going out, We are not used to that traditional habits. 123. From along time ago when my parents were youth, having meals together was a tradition.
39	124. People who thinks that family meals are not important at all that because, they tend to be alone or they suffering about some kind of problems with the family so they preferring to stay away as possible as they can. 125. For those who thinks that family meals play a huge role to make the whole family as a one person, I'd agree with them. 126. Setting family meals with the whole members of the family and talking, cheering, smiling, and enjoying with time with there lovely family is a completely the most reletif thing in the whole world.
40	127. There are many traditional habits that we have been lost lately , such as having meals together. 128. Secondly, for me it gives me the feeling of safety. It brings me back to the year which my grandma is speaking about. 129. Meals creat a relation that we can't see, but it ties us together.
41	130. I find that there are other people donot love to make meals with family. 131. Finally, this important element, which having meals with

	family in Egypt is important one than anyother country.
42	132. The family union around one table is not just about sharing food. The real value of this union is sharing experiences, problems and searching for solution together.
43	133. When all the members of the family are busy studying or working, the meal always bring them together around one table.
44	134. In the past, every family contact with each other most of the time eating together, speaking together, and playing together too. 135. But now it became very different from the past.
45	136. First of all, meals gathering are seeking to maintain love and respect within the family members which is the most domineering and controlling factor in all relationships of all types.
46	137. One of the most common habits in our society, which I love so much, is to have our meals with each other in my family. 138. In addition, when we are having our meals, we could discuss everything together. 139. From my point of you, having meals together is something useful to us.
47	140. One of the things that makes the individuals of the family gathers together is, having meals with each other. 141. Some families find that having meals with each other is an impossible task. 142. On the other hand, others think that having meals with family does not matter nowadays.
48	143. In fact having a meal with family is very important it increases the relationships between the family's members. 144. To conclude, having a meal with the family is very important, wonderful activity to strength the sense of love. 145. That is the matter which the society should care of it.
49	146. People think that family meals are important. 147. The family that like share eating with the member of the family. 148. Finally, In my opinion, people think that family meals are important are good. 149. I pefere meeting with my family in one table to have a meals.
50	150. Concerning to the first point which is talk about the advantages of family meals. 151. Concerning to the second point which is talk about disadvantages of the meals we get from resturants.
51	152. The agreeing party believe that family meals can help in

	stabilizing relations between family members. 153. When it comes to health, the agreeing party proved that family meals help with giving more time for a person to much and digest their food as the don't have to rush the meal, which improves digestion and overall health.
52	154. While Dads and Moms have meals with their childrens that strengthen the relationship.
53	155. Some people think faimly meals are important, some think not. But I agree it is important to having it togther. 156. They will tell each other about what happing with them. They can caught up news.
54	155. Some people support the idea of communication through having lunch or dinner together as a family, or for instance, hanging out together.
55	156. Firstly, I think that we should have meals everyday. 157. No doubt that family meals are healthy for us. 158. When we are meeting together in a table to have our meal, that is very important thing for communication.
56	159. Having meals together is an argument with each person. 160. Living in a group of family required to have their meals together. 161. Some people thought that having meals together doesn't matter for the family.
57	162. Through meals people exchange conversations together. 163. They laugh on everything and nothing. 164. They found it as the time to tell each other jokes.
58	165. First, no doubt that anything made in group is better than to be alone. 166. I myself can't imagine to eat this day without my father and my mother. 167. We becomes very happy and have fun after family meal.
59	168. I think eating with family is very nice and important thing. 169. We simply eat at home because our mother cooked this food with a lot of love and effort and we really really appricate that.
60	170. But, now adays, the new generation not having meals together most of the time, they out of the home so they having meals with friends or when they return to home they eat alone but this make them eat a small meal.
61	171. People who support having meals together (with the family members) have their own reasons.

	172. They don't like others to share them eating.
62	173. In general, there are many traditions changed. 174. In my opinion having meals together makes us cooperate and create love.
63	175. Having meals together, I think, is a very important family matter for it strengthens the familial spirits and relation between the family members.
64	176. Meals considers a necessity in our daily lives. 177. Although there're people who enjoy having meals with their families, others think the opposite for some reasons.
65	178. Making people eat together reflects happiness and makes everyone satisfied.
66	179. That will help them to make a strong family bonds. 180. Today, not all families doing that or ask their children to that, because we are now in the age of spead everyone is busy in his work or his Life.
67	181. There is no strong connection between the family. 182. People think that there is no problem in this.
68	183. Family meals are more healthy and rather than fast food. 184. I see that family meals are better and more safety on our health, because fast food causes many diseases.