

## RESEARCH PROPOSAL

### **Title**

The Impact of External Factors on Producing the English Vocabulary, Syntax and Morphology in the Language of Adult Arabic Speakers.

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## Introduction

The acquisition and learning processes are affected by different external factors including affective factors, such as empathy, motivation, attitude, anxiety, and self-esteem, or external factors, such as noise, lack of sleep, and being exhausted. Also, these factors influence the production and perceiving process of speakers who have a good competence in English language and have the knowledge about English before. The study of the influence of these factors on producing English Language by such speakers has received little attention. In most studies, the focus was mainly on the influence of external factors on the acquisition or learning process of children or adults who speaks English as a 1L and, also, the acquisition or learning process of children or adults who speaks English as 2L or FL inside classrooms. In such researches, researchers study the competence of speakers based on their performance. However, Performance is an imperfect reflection of competence (Radford, 2009), which indicates that there are ,simultaneously, other factors that affect performance even though speakers have competence; in other words, performance errors and slips of the tongue or ear are not always slips of the brain.

In this study, we will measure the influence of external factors on the language of Arabic speakers who have already been tested and shown a really good competence in some English grammatical features and have already acquire them in order to see whether the three variables (noise, lack of sleep, and being exhausted) have an influence on the speaking process. So, we will follow error analysis approach( Lightbown and Spade, 2013) in this research by discovering what the participants knew about the language. When there is a significant change in the performance, recent researches about language acquisition should consider these external factors in order to know about speakers' knowledge of the language.

It is very important to decide whether the error made by the speaker is a result of a lack of knowledge or as a result of external factors. We can summarize why do we need to do so in these points:

1. to get precise results for learning outcomes.
2. to help in the process of language teaching and evaluation techniques.
3. The results can be generalized to all researches which study the acquisition or learning processes of different languages around the world.

The central question that this study asks is: *Does external factors influence the production of speech even though the speaker has a good competence of it?* Questions that are consequently asked are:

- i. Does these factors affects all the speakers in the same way?
- ii. Does the gender plays a role to resist the influence of these factors or not?
- iii. How each external variable used in this research influence the speech of the speaker?

### **Literature review**

Looking through studies about language acquisition and learning, a few number of researches carried out to study the influence of external factors on English language production. One of the studies is (Risfayanti, L., Sofian, H., & Husin, S., 2015) which investigates the dominant external factors that influence students' English learning achievements. The sample consists of a number of eleventh grade students. The researchers found out that the teacher and classroom interaction have significant influence towards English language learning achievement. The main concern of this study and others like it is students' achievements inside classroom. The English language produced by a normal speaker in any place, not a student in a classroom environment, is not investigated and seeing whether it is affected by real external factors, not a teacher or classroom is not carried out as well. This normal environment would be essential for all language acquisition researches. Since English is the language that it is used widely in different situations and not restricted to be used in classrooms.

So, there is a need for a research that studies the influence of some normal external factors on the English language produced by speakers as their 2L or FL and to prove that these factors have an influence on their speech.

Another research is (Mahmoudi, S., & Mahmoudi, A., 2015) which studies the influence of external factors on the language produced by non-native speakers. In most researches, the focus was on the language used inside the classroom.

## **Method**

The study is based on collecting quantitative data from a sample consisting of a number of adult Arabic speakers who speak English as a foreign language to focus on their way of speaking before and after the experiment. The participants are randomly picked up from different institutions in Saudi Arabia . They were a total of 20 participants, males and females, whose age range is from 25 to 50. Participants will be made aware of what the research is about and the data collected would be used only for the purpose of the research.

Methods to be used for collecting the data is first by giving a pre-test to check their English competence. Three grammatical features will be checked in this test: subject-verb agreement, the correct usage of verb forms, and irregular plural forms. The test consists of two parts: the first part is oral; the speaker will be asked a number of questions; s\he will answer them spontaneously; and the oral test will be recorded. In this part, all the three grammatical features will be checked and the ability of the speaker to produce them correctly or not is written down on a timetable that is prepared before. The second part of the pre-test is written in which all the participants will be given an objective test with limited options and all the grammatical features will be checked again as it has been done in the first part. The participants who show that they do not have a good competence will be excluded from the research, and we will continue the journey with those who have a good competence.

## Data collection

The table used to check the competence for the three grammatical features [timetable1]

		Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant x
Oral test	Subject-verb agreement				
	correct verb forms				
	irregular plural forms				
Written test	Subject-verb agreement				
	correct verb forms				
	irregular plural forms				

### Sample for pre-test questions<sup>1</sup>:

1. oral pre-test. ( the test consists of Maximum 10 questions in the form of discussion)

How many brothers do you have?

Do you like your job?

Describe your home town.

What did you enjoy doing as a teenager?

2. written pre-test. ( the test consists of Maximum 25 Multiple choice questions)

She \_\_\_\_\_ football yesterday. ( plays - play - played - playing)

Sara has \_\_\_\_\_ last week. ( disappeared - disappears - disappear -disappearing)

He \_\_\_\_\_- writing a letter now. ( is - was - are - were)

After minimizing the sample based on their grammatical competence, we start by measuring the influence of three external factors ( noise, lack of sleeping, and being exhausted ) on the speaking of each participant. The examination will pass by three stages:

First stage:

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<sup>1</sup> The questions written here are just a sample and are subject to change after starting the research.

We create an environment of noise in the place where we test the participants a post-test1: an objective written test with limited options in which all the three grammatical features will be checked. All the results are recorded in a timetable to be analyzed later.

Second stage:

The participants were asked to sleep few hours for at least 2 days before answering a second test (post-test2): another written test with different questions. Also, all the results are recorded in the same timetable.

Third stage:

The participants will be given a third test ( post-test3) immediately after finishing their working hours at their work places which implies that they are exhausted.

All the three stages should be repeated 2 times and the three post-tests should test the three grammatical features. One of the drawback of this research is the limited number of FL speakers in Saudi Arabia to be tested in order to provide accurate data.

**The table used to check all the three grammatical features after each post-test [timetable2}**

			Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant x
<b>1st stage: noise</b>	<b>Post-test1</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				
	<b>Post-test2</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				
	<b>Post-test3</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				

<b>2nd stage: lack of sleep</b>	<b>Post- test1</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				
	<b>Post- test2</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				
	<b>Post- test3</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				
<b>3rd stage: being exhausted</b>	<b>Post- test1</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				
	<b>Post- test2</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				
	<b>Post- test1</b>	<b>Subject-verb agreement</b>				
		<b>correct verb forms</b>				
		<b>irregular plural forms</b>				

## Conclusion

After passing through all the three stages, we compare timetable 1 with timetable 2. When there is a significant change for the participants between the two timetables and there are errors in their answers after applying the three conditions for each stage, then these external factors should be considered in each research that investigates language acquisition or learning.



The research aims to shed light on the errors resulted from other factors which hinder the good competence of the speakers of English as a foreign language which in its turn causes false results in language. Moreover, it aims to build a knowledge about that there are external factors that would result in inaccurate results of researches about language acquisition and learning.

## Timeline

Period	Activities
1st year	In-depth reading about the topic Start writing
2nd year	Data collection
3rd year	Data analysis and conclusion Finish writing the final draft

## References

Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How Languages Are Learned* 4th Edition. Oxford university press.

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