



Tomader Alfraikh  
University of Leeds / King Saud University  
Supervised by  
Dr. Clare Wright & Dr. May Abumelhah

Contact at: mltha@leeds.ac.uk

### Aim of Study

- Investigated the impact on acquisition of the differences between English and Saudi-Arabic in relation to tense and aspect by tracking the development of the English simple past *-ed* and present perfect *have-en*.
- To explore whether form-meaning mappings which are different in L1 grammar are acquirable by Saudi-Arabic learners of English.
- Looked at different levels of proficiency & at verb types (lexical aspect).
- Used Focus on Form instead of traditional teaching approach.
- Tested learners' working memory

### Tense & Aspect in English Snape et al. (2019)

#### Past *-ed*

Last year, Jill wanted to get married.

#### Present Perfect *have-en*

For months now, Jill has wanted to get married.

In English, the past *-ed* locates the time reference in the past to refer to completed actions, while the present perfect locates the time reference to past to refer to ongoing actions.

### Tense & Aspect in Arabic Alruwaili (2014)

#### (Past *-ed* OR Present Perfect *-en*)

- a. Kitab Ahmad Darsa-h  
Write.prf Ahmad lesson.his  
'Ahmad wrote/has written his lesson

#### Past *-ed*

- b. Kitab Ahmad Darsa-h ams  
Write.prf Ahmad lesson.his yesterday  
'Ahmad wrote his lesson yesterday

#### Present Perfect *-en*

- c. Ahmad tuuh kitab Darsa-h  
Ahmad just write.prf lesson.his  
'Ahmad has just written his lesson

### Some SLA Accounts

- Table 1 below is adopted from Snape et al. (2019), to investigate Saudi-Arabic learners' feature reassembly process in the acquisition of English past *-ed* and present perfect *have-en*.
- Table 1 shows that similar to Thai, Saudi-Arabic uses temporal adverbs, such as *last week*, *yesterday*, etc. but they also use the same affix to refer to either past *-ed* or the present perfect *have-en*, which is close to the Japanese language.
- Saudi-Arabic learners might encounter different problems, which will hinder their acquisition process.
- L2 Saudi-Arabic learners might rely on finding temporal adverbials in L2 at the discourse level to differentiate between the past *-ed* and present perfect *have-en*.

Table.1 Summary of tense-aspect morphology (Snape et al. 2019)

		English	Japanese	Thai	Saudi-Arabic
Tense	Non-past	-Ø / -s	-(r)u	-Ø	ya-
	Past	-ed		-Ø	
Grammatical Aspect	Perfective	have + en	-ta*	léɛw	/i/ ə /, or /a/ + adverbs
	Imperfective	be + ing	-te-i-ru	yüu	ya- / ga'ad (adverb) + ya-

\*Due to the transitional nature of Japanese -ta, there are disagreements on whether -ta is an aspect marker or a tense marker (e.g., Takahashi, 1976; Ando, 1986).

- Similar to L2 Japanese learners, L2 Saudi-Arabic learners will face more acquisition difficulties because they need to reassemble features then select the correct feature on each of the two grammatical forms (see Table 2 below)

Table.2 Tense & aspect mappings in English and Saudi-Arabic

	English		Saudi-Arabic	
	Morpheme	Features	Morpheme	Features
Non-past	-Ø / -s	[pres]	ya-	[pres]
Past	-ed	[past]	/i/ ə /, or /a/	[past]+[perf]
Perfective	have + en	[pres] + [perf]	/i/ ə /, or /a/	[pres]+[perf]
Imperfective	be + ing	[pres] + [prog]	ya- / ga'ad +	[pres] + [ga'aad]
		[past] + [prog]	ya-	[past, ka'an] + [ga'aad]

### Research Questions

RQ Will L1 Saudi-Arabic learners of English show short and long-term improvement in the (*comprehension*) and (*production*) of the English past tense and present perfect after receiving classroom intervention using focus on form FoF?

- (a) Will there be an effect of language proficiency on the comprehension of production?
- (b) Will there be an effect of working memory on the comprehension of production?
- (c) Will there be an effect of verb type (accomplishment, achievement, activity, & stative) on the comprehension of production?

### Methodology

- 3 classes were used to collect data for the main study as a quasi-experimental approach based on teaching approach.
- 2 classes were introduced to the English past *-ed* and present perfect *have-en* using FoF, for a planned total of 10 hours over 14 weeks of the usual teaching term.
- The 3rd class was the control group and was taught in the traditional way, by following the rules and examples found in their course book.
- All 3 classes were given a pre-test and a proficiency test before the start of the intervention, then a post-test, and a delayed post-test (after 3 more weeks). Results of all groups were compared and analysed.
- Two offline tasks were used. Both tasks focused on how temporal adverbs, such as *yesterday*, *last night*, *since*, *for*, and etc. in a context determine the needed grammatical form. Also this study used a working memory task (WM).

- a) Gap-Filling Task adopted from Alruwaili (2014). This task contained 30 tokens, which were divided into 4 lexical types. Example with fronted temporal adverb:

Yesterday, I ..... (play) with my sister.

- b) Acceptability Judgment Task, which was adopted from Snape et al (2019). Examples of Tense/Aspect with fronted temporal adverb:

Three days ago, Tom missed the bus to the main station.

Strongly-disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly-agree

Three days ago, Tom has missed the bus to the main station.

Strongly-disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly-agree

- c) The 3<sup>rd</sup> instrument is Digits Back (Wechsler 1997) and used to test the working memory of both control and experimental groups.

### Results

- Explicit instruction that was presented to learners after attention to meaning of authentic texts that were reinforced with the target structures was beneficial.
- Explicit instruction with controlled contexts using FoF method in a communicative environment was more effective than following the assigned textbook.
- Results indicate that learners realized- to a certain degree- after the explicit instruction: a) how to re-assemble the target features b) L1 syntactic restriction was not required in the L2.
- The mixed results of the past *-ed* and perfect *have-en* may signal that the amount of instruction should increase for learners to develop the concepts.
- The context that was most affected by the instruction was the perfect *have-en*.
- The instruction did not affect the past *-ed* as expected and this could be either related to previous knowledge that the learners have about it. Another reason could be a task-effect reason.

### Summary

This study attempted to contribute to the field of GenSLA by proving that linguistic theories could inform classroom instruction. This was done by shedding light on: Theories on the acquisition process, the role of L1, and form-meaning mappings provided the detailed analysis of the difficulties facing L2 Saudi-Arabic learners of English (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996; Slabakova, 2008; Lardiere, 2008; 2009). Accordingly, three problematic properties of the English past *-ed* and perfect *have-en* facing L1 Arabic speakers were targeted in this study defined as feature re-assembly difficulties.

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