

# Mother Tongue Acquisition Versus Foreign Language Learning

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## Abstract:

This study was conducted in Elobied town, North Kordofan State, Sudan in the year 2022 on English language teachers and final-ist learners at the University of Kordofan. The study dealt with Mother Tongue Acquisition Versus Foreign Language Learning. It considered Arabic as mother-tongue and English as a foreign language. The study aimed to find out factors that affected mother tongue acquisition to apply them on English language learning. The study followed the descriptive analytical approach. Data were collected by structured questionnaire. It included 40 respondents who were randomly selected from 140 English language learners who constituted the study population. Data were analyzed descriptively by the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences. Results showed that all the respondents agreed that pair work and group work were the best interaction patterns for English language learning while 92% of the respondents indicated that English words containing silent letters need more practice. The results also revealed that 60% of the respondents indicated that factors which help in mother-tongue acquisition, helping environment, motivation, needs, interests, ease, enough time and avoiding anxiety also help in foreign language learning particularly in the common and shared. The study recommended that enough time should be given for English language learning. It also recommended that motivation, learners' needs, interests and helping environment should be considered in English language learning.

**Key words:** Language Learning - foreign language - acquisition- mother-tongue- environment

## إكتساب لغة الأم مقابل تعلم لغة أجنبية

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### المستخلص:

أُجريت هذه الدراسة في مدينة الأبيض، ولاية شمال كردفان، السودان في العام 2022 على أساتذة اللغة الانجليزية وطلاب السنة الأخيرة بجامعة كردفان. تناولت الدراسة اكتساب لغة الأم مقابل تعلم اللغة الأجنبية. اعتبرت الدراسة اللغة العربية لغة الأم واللغة الانجليزية لغة أجنبية. هدفت الدراسة إلي الكشف عن العوامل المؤثرة على اكتساب لغة الأم لتطبيق ذلك في تعلم اللغة الانجليزية. أتبعَت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي. جُمعت البيانات بواسطة أستبانة تم تصميمها وتوزيعها بطريقة عشوائية لعينة الدراسة 40 مستهدفاً من جملة مجتمع الدراسة 140 معلم ودارس لغة انجليزية. كما تم تحليل البيانات وصفيّاً في برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية. أظهرت النتائج أن كل المستهدفين وافقوا على إن العمل الزوجي وفي مجموعات هو الأفضل لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية. بينما أكد 92% من المستهدفين إن الكلمات الانجليزية التي تحتوي على الحروف غير المنطوقة تحتاج إلي ممارسة أكثر من غيرها. أظهرت النتائج أيضاً أن 60% من المستهدفين أكدوا إن العوامل التي تساعد على اكتساب لغة الأم البيئة المساعدة، التحفيز، الدوافع، الاحتياجات، الاهتمامات، الابتداء بالأسهل، الزمن الكافي، تجنب القلق تساعد أيضاً في تعلم اللغة الأجنبية خاصة في النواحي المعتادة والمشاركة. وعليه أوصت الدراسة انه يجب إعطاء زمن كافي لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية. كما أوصت الدراسة أيضاً إن الدوافع، التحفيز، احتياجات واهتمامات الدارسين والبيئة المساعدة يجب إن تعتبر أثناء تعلم اللغة الانجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تعلم اللغة الأجنبية، لغة الأم، اكتساب، البيئة

### Background:

Acquiring a number of human Languages seem to be something easy. It is a psome extent. Certainly this is because people consider acquiring such additional language to the first acquired one to them, to be the best means of knowing more about the other people of the world. It is seen as the most important thing that make close relationships among the different nations of the universe. However, in this study the main focus will be on acquiring a first language V.S learning a foreign one. It will be a contrastive study between those who have already acquired Arabic as their first or mother tongue and are trying to learn English as a foreign language. They often face problems at the different levels of the

English language learning. Therefore they make various errors. The concentration in this study will be on the English; sound, and structures, which cause problems and difficulties, to English language learners.

### **Statement of the problem:**

The study aims at finding out why first language acquisition differs a lot from foreign language learning. It is also to find out the source of difficulties and errors in FL considering Arabic as L<sub>1</sub> and English as FL. The Study will be conducted by comparing and contrasting both languages and the focus will be on; sounds, pronunciation, spelling, and structures.

### **Objectives**

1. To shed light on problematic areas for speakers of Arabic when learning English Language.
2. To find out to what extent acquiring L<sub>1</sub> differs from Learning L<sub>2</sub> or FL and the reasons behind that.

### **Research questions:**

The research conductor attempts to find out answers to the following questions:

1. Why is acquiring L<sub>1</sub> different from learning a FL?
2. What factors are behind the difficulty in spelling and, pronunciation of English words like door, enough, tortoise, lieutenant?

### **Acquisition vs. learning:**

The question that arises here is: Are learning and acquisition of a language the same or different? How is this?

Oxford learners Advanced Dictionary (2007, p.12) defines acquisition and learning as; “to acquire means to gain something by your own effort, ability or behavior and acquisition is the act of getting something especially knowledge or a skill. To learn, means to gain knowledge or skill by studying from experience, from being taught”.

Fromkin and Rodman (1993, p.422) argue that. “There are alternative theories regarding the acquisition of L<sub>2</sub> Stephen Krash-

en has proposed a distinction between acquisition the process by which children unconsciously acquire their native language and learning which he defines as conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them .A similar view suggests that the principles of universal grammar hold only during the critical period, after which general learning mechanisms, not specific to language acquisition, operate in learning L<sub>2</sub>. A second, theory propose that L<sub>2</sub> is acquired on the same universal innate principles that govern L<sub>1</sub> acquisition which is why one finds the same stages of development even if the complete L<sub>2</sub> Grammar is not acquired due to nonlinguistic factors at work. It is clear that children acquired their first language without explicit explicit learning. A second language is usually learned but to some degree may also be acquired or picked up depending on the environmental setting and the input received by the second language learner.

Fromkin and Rodman(1993,p.425) state that: “He that understand grammar in one language, understands it in another as far as the essential properties of grammar are concerned”. Anyone who has attempted to learn a second language in school, or when visiting a foreign country knows that, it is different from our first, native language”.

Yule G. (1985,p.181)discusses that; The question which always arises is: if first language acquisition was so straightforward, why is learning a second language so difficult. For most people, the ability to use their first language is rarely matched, even after years of study, a comparable ability in the second language. Perhaps the primary difficulty for most people can be captured in terms between acquisition and learning. The terms acquisition when used of language, refers to the gradual development of ability in a language by using it naturally in communicative situations. The term (learning) however applies to a conscious process of accumulating knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of language. (Mathe-

matics for example, is learned, not acquired.) Activities associated with learning have traditionally been used in language teaching in school, and tend when successful, to result in knowledge, about the language studies. Activities associated with acquisition are those experienced by the young child, and analogously, by those who “pick up” another language from long periods spent in social interaction (daily use of language) in another country. Those whose  $L_2$  experience is primarily a learning one tend not to develop the proficiency of those who have had an acquiring experience”.

Concerning second language learning or foreign language learning Al khuli M, (1989,p.177)claims that :” $L_1A$  and FLA appear to be different and most of their aspects are not the same. The difference is due many various factors like; motives situation, beside other factors that have connection with them therefore second language learning is often bound to first language. Anyhow second language learning or foreign language learning is not free to act on its own but dependent on  $L_1A$ . This is obvious when considering several different factors such as fluency, mastery of language etc these factors are noticeable in both  $L_2A$  and FLA”.

### **First language mother tongue Acquisition:**

Fromkin and Rodman (1993, p.430) view that; Human are born with a predisposition to discover the units which serve to express linguistic and that at a genetically specific stage in neural development, the infant will begin to produce these units, sounds or gestures. Depending on the language input the baby received thus they suggest babbling is the earliest stage in language acquisition, in opposition to the earlier view that babbling was paralinguistic and simply neuromuscular in origin. without any doubt the acquisition of language in our life is the greatest intellectual feat that any human being is ever required to perform. children do not wake up one morning with a fully formed grammar in their heads Or with all the rules of social and communicative intercourse. Linguistic knowledge by stages, and it is each suggested, each suc-

cessive stage more closely approximates the grammar of the adult language .Observation of children in different language areas of the world reveals that the stages are similar, possibly universal; Some of the stages last for a short time; others remain longer. Some stages may overlap for short period though the transition between stages is often sudden. Given the universal aspects of all human languages, signed and spoken, it is not surprising that deaf, signing parents parallel the stages of spoken language acquisition in their Sign language ”.

According to many linguists and to various theories, first language acquisition seems to occur into stages from the early weeks after a child’s birth. However linguists don’t consider the baby’s early noises such as; cries, whimpers and cooing as language Also during the earliest periods of their life all the sounds which are produced by children and in all the languages of the world appear to be the same.

Fromkin and Rodman (1993, p.431) discuss that: “The idea of that children are born with blank minds is untrue. It is usualy around the sixth month that infant start to able therefore this stage is known as babbling. After that comes the stage of using one word, followed by the two word stage around the twelfth month. Then from telegraph to infinity in the telegraphic stage the child uses only the main word that carries the message and then the utterances move forward to be sentence like. The universality of the language acquisition process of the stages of development, of the relatively short period in which the child constructs such a complex grammatical system without overt teaching and the limited results of the chimpanzee experiments, suggest that the human species is innately endowed with special language acquisition agilities, that language is biologically and part of the human neurological system. All normal children everywhere learn language. This ability is not dependant on race, social class, geography, or even intelligence (within a normal race ) this ability is uniquely human”.

Yule G.(1985, p.186) believes that ; First language acquisition is remarkable for the speed with which it takes place . BY the time a child enters elementary school ,he or she an extremely sophisticated language user ,operating a communicative system which no other creature or computer comes close to matching the speed of acquisition and the fact that it generally occurs , without overt instruction , for all children regardless of great difference in a range of social and cultural factors, have led to the belief that there is some innate predisposition in the human infant to acquire language , we can think of this as the language faculty of the human with each new born child is endowed By itself ,however this faculty is not enough .Despite the fact the child is still acquiring aspects of his or her native language through the later years of childhood it is normally assumed that, by the age of five, the child has completed the greater part of the basic language acquisition process”.

### **Theories of child language acquisition :**

Fromkin and Rodman (1993, p.431) discuss that children learn by imitation Various theories have been proposed to explain how children manage to acquire the adult language . there ear those who think that children merely imitate what they hear imitation is involved to some extent . of course ,but the sentences produced by children show that children are Not imitating adult speech. From whom children hear (car stand up table) or any of the utterance they produce? - Even when children are deliberately trying to imitate what they hear they are unable to produce sentences that can't be generated by their grammar.2- Do children learn by reinforcement?

Another of language acquisition suggests that children learn to produce correct sentence because they are positively reinforced when they say something right and negatively reinforced when the say something wrong. This view assumes that children are being constantly corrected for using bad grammar and rewarded when they use good grammar. Brown and his colleagues report their

studies that reinforcement occurs, and when it does, it is usually incorrect pronunciation reporting of facts that is corrected.3- Critical Age Hypothesis: "It has been suggested that there is a critical age for language acquisition, or at least for language acquisition without special learning. During this period, language learning proceeds easily, swiftly, and without external intervention. After this period, the acquisition of grammar is difficult and for some individuals never fully achieved. All normal children everywhere learn language. This ability is not dependant on, race, social class, geography or intelligence (within a normal range) this ability is uniquely human".

Yule G, (1985, p.176) states that: "All Normal children, regardless culture, develop language at roughly the same, along much the same schedule. Since we could say the same thing for sitting up, standing, walking, using the hands and many other physical activities, it has been suggested that the language acquisition schedule has the same basic as the biologically determined development of motor skills. This biological schedule, it is claimed, is tied very much to maturation of the infant's brain and the lateralization process. If there is some general biological program underling language acquisition, it is certainly dependent on an interplay with many social factors in the child's environment. We could think of the child as having the biological capacity to cope with Distinguishing certain aspects of linguistic input at different stages during the early years of life. What this acquisition "capacity" then requires is a sufficiently constant input from which that basic of the regularities in the particular language can be worked out. In this view, the child is seen as actively acquiring the language by working out the regularities in what is heard and then applying those regularities in what he or she say".

Al khulim, (1989, p.182) beliefs that: A child acquires his first language ( $L_1$ ) through a variety of mechanisms as different suggest: Acquisition by imitation: some belief that the child ac-

quire  $L_1$  mainly through imitating parents, adults, and around him. He does this imitation both get social approval and to express his own needs. However this theory can not explain how child does and can produce sentences which he has never heard. Acquisition by reinforcement: Some believe that a child acquires  $L_1$  through positive reinforcement; tries correctly and, thus, gets his mother's approval in the form of simile, a kiss, praise or a pat. He also acquires  $L_1$  through negative reinforcement: he tries incorrectly and is thus, corrected usually by his parents especially his mother. Acquisition by innate readiness: some believe that LA takes place because man is created with the innate to acquire language: he is programmed to do so when reaches the proper age provided that he received the essential language input through adequate exposure. Complementary acquisition: the author holds that no one previous theory can fully account for LA. Imitation alone cannot explain LA. Neither reinforcement nor innateness alone can. As a matter of fact, imitation, reinforcement and innateness has a basic role in LA”.

### **Foreign language learning:**

Fromkin and Rodman (1993, p.422) belief that; There are alternative theories regarding the acquisition of  $L_2$  it has been proposed that : “a distinction between acquisition-the process by which children unconsciously acquire their native language and learning which he defines as conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules, being aware of them, and being able to talk about them. A similar view suggest that the principals of universal grammar hold only during the critical period, after which general learning mechanisms not specific to language acquisition, operate in learning language A second theory proposes that  $L_2$  is acquired, on the same universal innate principles that govern  $L_1$  acquisition, which is why one finds the same stages of development even if the compete  $L_2$  grammar is not due to nonlinguistic factors at work. It is clear that children acquire their first language

without explicit learning. A second language is usually learned but to some degree may also be acquired or picked up depending on the environmental setting and the input received by the second language learner. 2-He that understands grammar in one language, understands it in another as far as the essential properties of grammar are concerned. The fact that he can't speak nor comprehend another language is due to the diversity of words and their various forms, but these are the accidental properties of grammar . Anyone who has attempted to learn a second language in school or when visiting a foreign county knows that it is different from our first, native language. Even talented language learners require some instructions, or at least a dictionary and grammar, useful. Some of us are total failure at a second language learning. We may be extremely fluent our native language, we may get all as in composition and write beautiful poetry but still find we are unable to learn another language. The younger you are, the easier it seems to be learn a language is unique in that no, other complex system of knowledge is more easily acquired at the age of two or three that at age of thirteen or twenty. Young children who are exposed to more than one language before of puberty seem to acquire all the language equally well. Many bilingual and multilingual speakers acquire their language early in life. Sometimes one language is the first learned but if the child is exposed to additional language at an early age they will also be learned”.

### **Suitable time for learning a foreign language:**

Yule G. (1985, p.193) argues that; Despite the fact that the child is still acquiring aspects of his or her native language through the later years of childhood, it is normally assumed that, by the age of five, that child has completed the greater part of the basic language acquisition process. According to some, the child is then in a good position to start learning a second (or foreign) language However, most educational systems do not introduce foreign language instruction until much later. The question which always

arises: if first language acquisition was so straight forward, why is learning a second language so difficult. While it is true that many children whose parents speak different language in Circumstances similar to those of first language acquisition the vast majority of people are not expose to second language until much later. Moreover, most people, the ability to use their first language is rarely matched, even after years of study by a comparable ability in the second language. There is something of an enigma here, since there is apparently no other system of knowledge, which one can “learn” better at two or three old than at fifteen or twenty-five. A number of reasons have been put forward to account for this enigma, and a number of proposal have been made which might enable learners to become as proficient in a second language ( $L_2$ ) as they are in their first language( $L_1$ )the critical period. Those whose  $L_2$  experience is primarily a learning one tent not to develop the proficiency of those who have had an acquiring experience “However, even in ideal acquisition situational situations, very few adults seem to reach native-like proficiency in using a second language. There are individuals who can achieve great experience in writing but not in speaking. One example is author JoesephConard, whose novels have become classic of English literature, but whose English speech is reported to have retained the strong polish accent of his first language. This might suggest that some features (e.g vocabulary)of a second language are easier to acquire that others (e.g phonology). Although it continues to a matter of some debate, this type of observation is sometimes taken as evidence that, after the critical period had passed (around puberty), it become very difficult to acquire another language fully. In support of this view, the process of lateralization of the brain is cited as a crucial factor. We might think of this process in terms of the language faculty ,being strongly taken over by the features of li, with a resulting loss of flexibility or openness to receive the features of another language”.

Yule G,(1985, p.195) argues that: Against this view, it has been demonstrated that “students in their early teens are quicker and more effective L<sub>2</sub> learners than, for example seven year olds. It may be, of course, that the acquisition of an L<sub>2</sub> requires a combination of factors. The optimum age may be during the years from ten to sixteen when the flexibility of the language acquisition faculty has not been completely lost, the maturation of cognitive skills allows a more effective “working out” of the regular features of L<sub>2</sub> encountered. This type of emotional reaction, or effect, may even be accessioned by dull textbooks, unpleasant classroom, surroundings or exhausting schedule. The term effective filter is often used to describe a kind of barrier to acquisition that result from negative feelings or experience. Basically, if you are stressed, uncomfortable, self conscious or unmotivated, you unlikely to learn anything. Despite all these barriers, the need for instruction in other language had led to variety of educational approaches and methods which are aimed at fostering L<sub>2</sub> learning.(e,g Grammar translation method) the most traditional approaches is to treat second or foreign language learning on a par with any other academic subject. Long lists of words and set of grammatical rules have to be memorized, and the written language rather than the spoken language is emphasized. This methods lable has actually been applied to the approach by its detractors who have pointed out the its emphasis on learning about the L<sub>2</sub> leaves students quite ignorant of how the language is used. Learners leaving school, having achieved achieved high grades in French class via this method typically find themselves at a loss when confronted the way the French in French actually use their language”.

Al Khuli M, ( 1998, p.185),argues ”second language acquisition L<sub>2</sub> A or foreign language acquisition FLA is certainly different from acquiring the first language L<sub>1</sub> because motive, situations, and factors are obviously different L<sub>2</sub>A or FLA is dependent, with regard to speed and mastery, on several factors; whatever applies

to  $L_2$  here applies to FL, too. Natural linguistic environment, learners role, using concretes language mode feedback (immediate positive feedback), repetition, quantity of exposure, readiness, motivation, (internal or external, permanent or tentative)relaxation, anxiety, self confidence, character, age, transfer (positive transfer or negative transfer) and attitude. Children are better than adults in imitation and adults in the area of general experience, language analysis, comprehension and memory”.

### **First language \Mother: tongue interference:**

Al samawi A, (2000, p.149) claims that “language is behavior that is acquired through association and stimulation, which lead to habit formation. Acquiring a new language means acquiring new habits; but the already formed habits would be in the way of these new habits causing learners to make errors. Such a mental process is called ”language interference it results from transferring rules of previously acquisition language to newly acquired ones. However, only the rules that different from the newly acquired ones would cause interference (negative transfer), while similar rules would facilitate the acquisition of new language of new language (positive transfer). Negative transfer is the main cause of errors”.

Yule G,(1985,p.190)argues that; “ An opposing view claims that: However, on close inspection, the language produced by learners contains a large numbers of “errors” which seem to have no connection to the form of either  $L_1$  or  $L_2$  Evidence of this sort suggests that there is some in between system used in  $L_2$  acquisition which certainly contains aspects of  $L_1$  and  $L_2$ , but which is an inherently variable system with rules of its own. This system is called an inter language and its own considered to be the basic of all  $L_2$  production” some obvious reasons for the problems experienced in  $L_2$  acquisition are related to the fact that most people attempt to learn anther language during their teenage or adult years, in a few hours each week of school time(rather that via the constant interaction experience by a child)with a lot of other occupation(the child has

little else to do) and with an already known language available for most of their daily communicative requirement. Some less likely reasons include the suggestion that adults, tongues “get stiff” from pronouncing one type of language (e.g. French or Japanese). It is a cute idea, but there is no physical evidence to support it”

Al Khuli M, (1989, p.186) suggests: Another view claims, “where  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  are similar,  $L_1$  facilitates  $L_2A$ , and this is called positive transfer, where  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  are different,  $L_1$  hinders  $L_2A$ , and this is called negative transfer. With more and  $L_1$ - $L_2$  similarities,  $L_2A$  is fortunately made easier. There are significant differences between first language acquisition  $L_1A$  i.e. acquiring mother-tongue and foreign language acquisition FLA here are some of these differences motives with  $L_1$ , environment with  $L_1$ , practice with  $L_1$ , Reinforcement with  $L_1$ , ease with  $L_1$ , age with  $L_1$ , interference with  $L_1$  and feeling with  $L_1$ ”.

### **Linguistic interference:**

Al khuli M, (1989, p.187) says that: When an individual learns FL or  $L_2$ , he undergoes interference coming from  $L_1$ . As it interference goes from the more dominant  $L_1$  to the less dominant  $L_2$ . normally  $L_1$  is more dominant and, therefore, interference often moves from  $L_1$  to  $L_2$  or FI. This interference is always negative and therefore, sometimes called negative transfer. Language interference shows itself in different aspects: first it may be a phonetic interference where some  $L_1$  phonemes damage some  $L_2$  phonemes. Example, an Arab learning English may say /i/ instead of /e/ because Arabic does not have /e/. Second it may be morphological interference the learner of  $L_2$  for instance may pluralize may pluralize some  $L_2$  nouns in wrong analogy with some  $L_1$  nouns. Third it may be lexical interference, where  $L_1$  work move into  $L_2$  lexicon with the same or different meaning Fourth it be syntactic interference. For example an Arab may wrongly the verb from the English sentence because Arabic allows such omission in nominal verbless sentences. Fifth, it may be semantic interference, where

$L_1$  meaning are wrongly imposed on  $L_2$  meanings. Sixth. It may be a kinetic interference, where a learner of  $L_2$  uses, with  $L_2$ , body movements that he usually uses with  $L_1$ ”.

Fromkin and Rodman (1993, p.423) believe that: “On the one hand, due to the universal characteristic of human language, already known, much about the underlying structure of every language. This is shown by the stages of second language acquisition. The acquisition of grammatical morphemes (both bound and free) in learning English as a second language proceeds in similar order as in children’s acquisition no matter what the system is in the native language of the learner, However, interference from one’s native phonology, morphology and syntax can create difficulties which persist as a foreign “accent” in phonology and in the use of non-native syntactic structures”.

### **Language and brain:**

Al khuli M, (1998,p.189) argues that “bilingual brain is the brain of a bilingual person i.e, a person who knows two languages. The pertinent question here is this: How does the bilingual brain store and process the two languages? There are two hypotheses with this regard. The first hypothesis is the common storage hypothesis: there is one mental dictionary for both  $L_1$  and  $L_2$ , but this dictionary labels every language component as either  $L_1$  or  $L_2$ , so as to facilitate the processes of retrieval during comprehension and experience. The second hypothesis is the independent storage hypothesis, According to this second theory, there are two mental dictionaries: one for  $L_1$  and the other for  $L_2$ , Each hypothesis has its proponents, and experiment “.

### **Language and lateralization:**

Al khuli M,(1989,p.190) argues that: “Research has shown that right handed monolinguals store language in the left hemisphere. i.e the left side of the brain. In contrast, left handed monolinguals store language in right hemisphere. These facts have been categorically proven by the result of brain surgery. When the right

hemispheres of some monolingual patients were surgically eliminated, their language performance was not damaged. But when the left hemisphere was eliminated, linguistically they could perform nothing. In addition, local anesthesia of brain hemispheres has proven the same conclusions. Concerning bilinguals, psycholinguists have given different answers concerning language lateralization: Some specialists argue that bilinguals use the right hemisphere the brain more than monolinguals. Some theories hold that if  $L_2$  is acquired before +11 years of age, language control is centered in the left hemisphere. If after, this control goes to the right hemisphere. Some research states that at the early stage of  $L_2$  acquisition, the right hemisphere played an active role. Later, when  $L_2$  is mastered, the left hemisphere becomes incomplete control. Other theories argue that if  $L_2$  is acquired naturally, the right hemisphere has a share larger than of the left hemisphere. If artificially, the left hemisphere gets the larger share. Some studies have concluded that 80% of people, whether monolingual or not, have language control in the left hemisphere of the brain”.

Yule G. (1985, p.164) discusses that; having identified these four components, it is tempting, of course, to come to the conclusion that specific aspects of language ability can be accorded specific location in the brain. It has been proposed that the brain activity involved in hearing a word, understanding it, then saying it would follow a definite pattern. The word is heard and comprehended via Wernicke's Area this signal is then transferred via the arcuate fasciculus to Broca's area where preparation is made to produce it. A signal is then sent to motor cortex to physically articulate the word this is unfortunately, a massively oversimplified version of what may actually take place. The problem is essentially that in attempting to view that complex mechanism of the human brain in terms of a set of language “locations” we have neglected to mention the intricate interconnections, via the central nervous system, the complex role of the brain's blood supply, and the externally interdependent nat-

ural of most brain function the localization view is one way of saying brain. However, it is invariably argued by others involved in the study of the brain that there is a lot of evidence which does not support the view. Any damage to one area of the brain appears to have repercussion in other areas. Consequently, we should be rather cautious about assigning highly specific connections between particular aspects of linguistic and sites on the wrinkled grey matter inside the head”.

Fromkin and Rodman( 1993,p.440) believe that; It was not until 1986 that language specifically related to the left side of the brain. At a scientific in paris, paulBroca stated that we speak with the left hemisphere on the basic of his finding that damage to the front part of the left hemisphere(now called Broca’s area) resulted in loss of speech, whereas damage to the tight side did not. Language, then is said to be lateralization, lateralization is the term used to refer to any cognitive function which are primarily localize to one side of brain or the other”. In the early part of the nineteenth century Franz Josep Gall put forth theories of localization. That is, that different human abilities and behaviors were traceable to specific part of brain”.

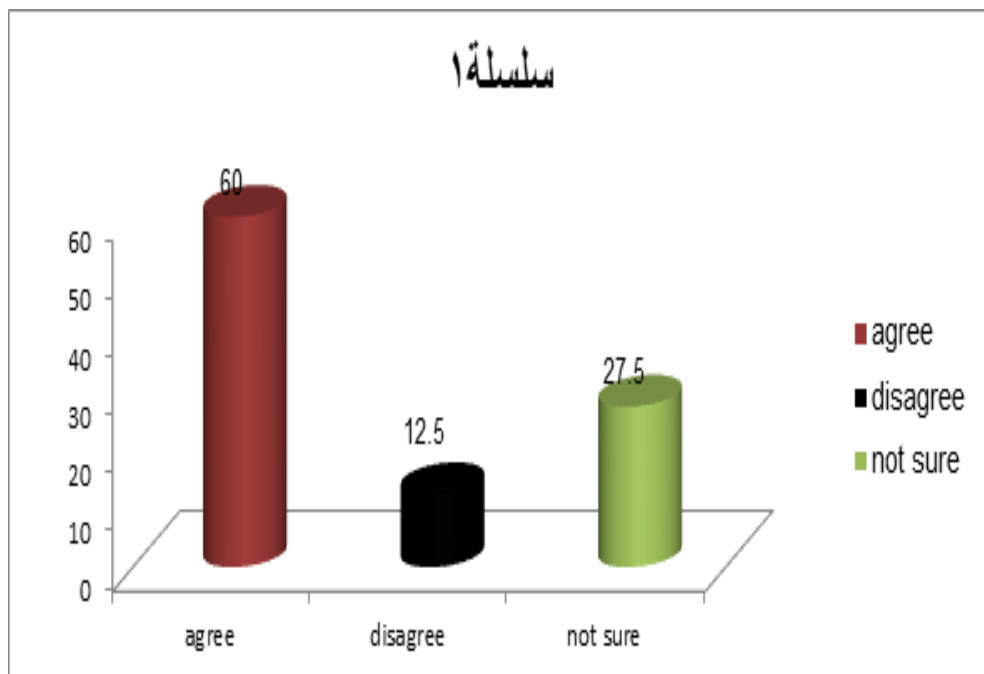
### **Data analysis and dissections**

The data of this study was collected from references and questionnaire.

There are (9) items in the questionnaire which their answers will give the most important factors that help in second /foreign language learning. They are closed items which required a tick ( ) in front of the appropriate option. the symbols of the respondence were 40 teachers of English language in North Kordofan state. The data were analyzed by using (SPSS) to retch the results of the study. Arabic language was used as a mother language for Arabic students who learn English as a second language for the nature of the area of the study. The main items of the questionnaire are:

1- Shared areas between languages facilitate learning a FL Referring to the first language helps in learning foreign language ,especially in the shared areas between L1 and FL

Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	24	60.0
Disagree	5	12.5
not sure	11	27.5
Total	40	100.0

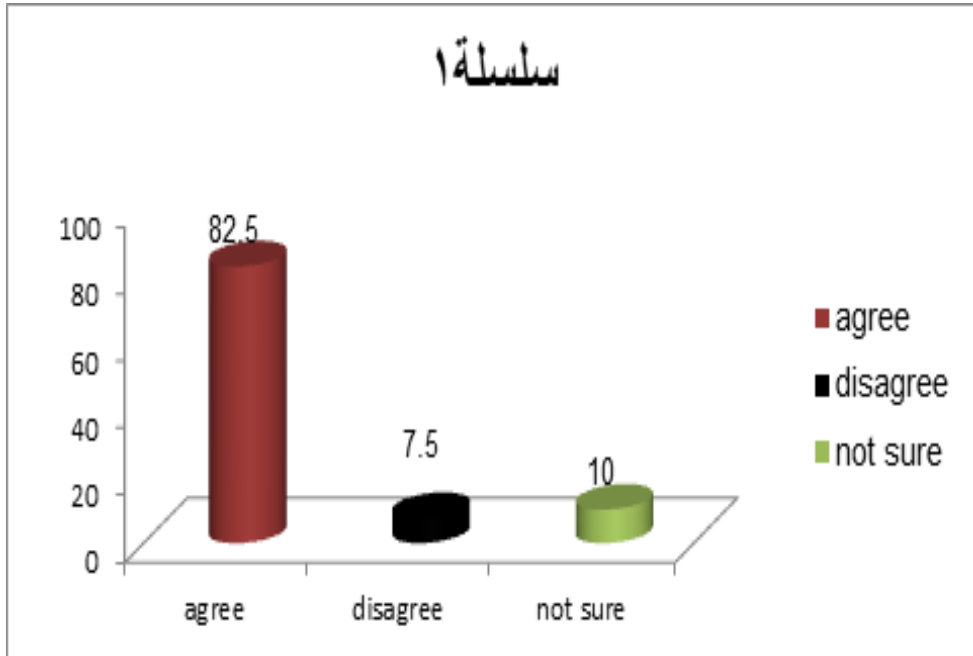


In table and figure above the majority (24)60% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree that “Referring to the first language helps in learning foreign language, especially in the shared areas between L<sub>1</sub> and FL”while the minority (5)12.5%disagreed and a number of (11)27.5% are not sure. Referring to the first language helps in learning foreign language, especially in the shared areas between L<sub>1</sub> and FL.

- Sounds that are found in L<sub>1</sub> but do not exist in FL confuse learners.

Arabic sounds like /ض/ص/ظ/ and do not exist in English therefore they are confused with /t/, /s/ and /d/ so we hear sound as: /wot/dog / and /ص/sun/

Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	33	82.5
Disagree	3	7.5
not sure	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

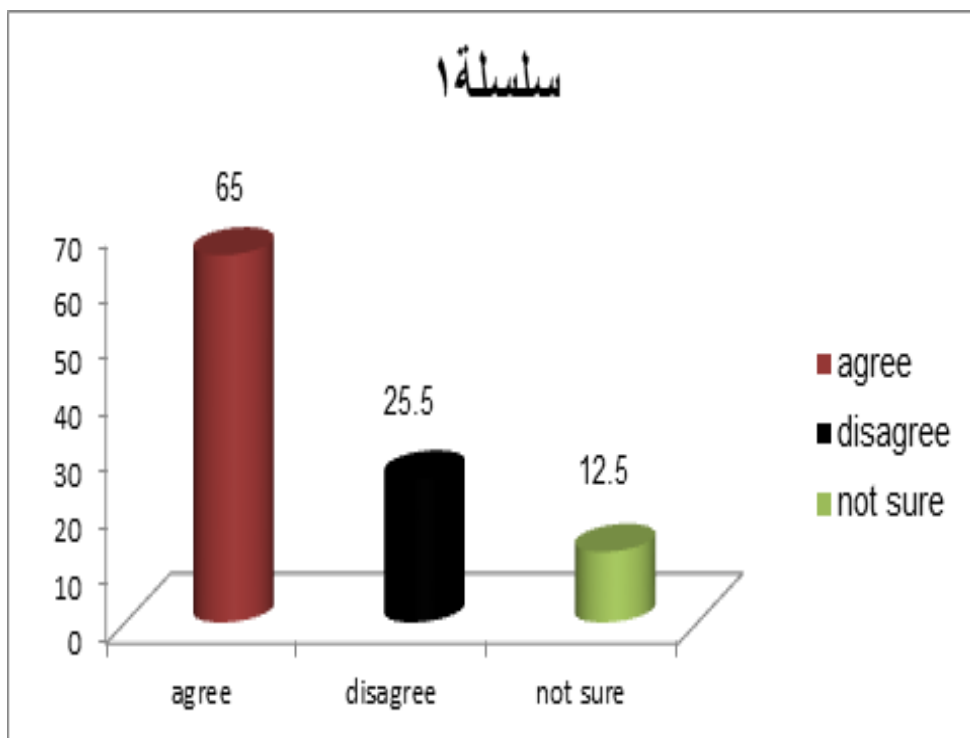


In table and figure (4.7) above the majority (33)82% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree “Arabic sounds like /ض/ص/ظ/ do not exist in English therefore they are confused with /t/, /s/ and /d/ so we hear sound as: /wot/dog / and /ص/sun/” while the minority (3)7.5% disagreed and a number of 10 (4) % are not sure. “Arabic sounds like /ض/ص/ظ/ do not exist in English therefore they are confused with /t/, /s/ and /d/ so we hear sound as: /wot/dog / and /ص/sun/”

### 3- Mother tongue interference some sounds are replaced according to L<sub>1</sub>.

Sound like /p/ and /t/ are sometime replaced by /b/ in pi, pl/ and / in /ti:tfa

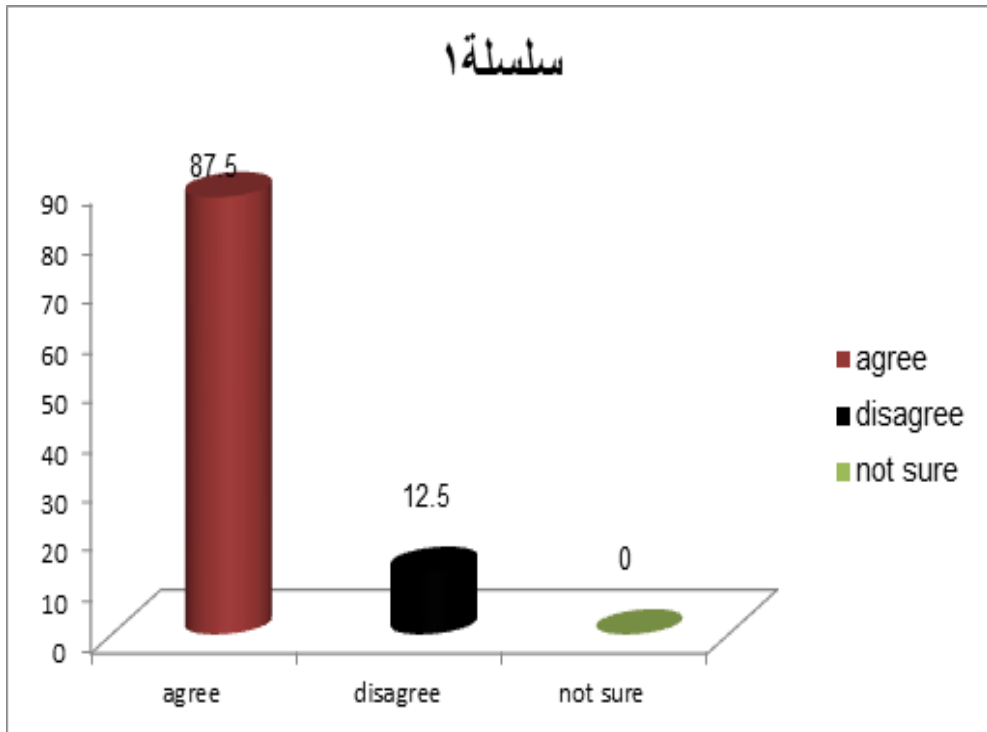
Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	26	65.0
Disagree	9	22.5
not sure	5	12.5
Total	40	100.0



In table and figure above the majority (26)65% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree “Sound like /p/ and /t/ are sometime replaced by /b/ in pi, pl/ and / in /ti:tfa/”while the minority (9)25.5%disagreed and a number of (5) 12% are not sure. Sound like /p/ and /t/ are sometime replaced by /b/ in pi, pl/ and / in /ti:tfa

**4- Using different letters one sound causes problems. Using the letters to represent, C for the sound /s/ and /k/, ph, GH, F for /f/ and /k/, cQU, CH for /k/ confuses learners**

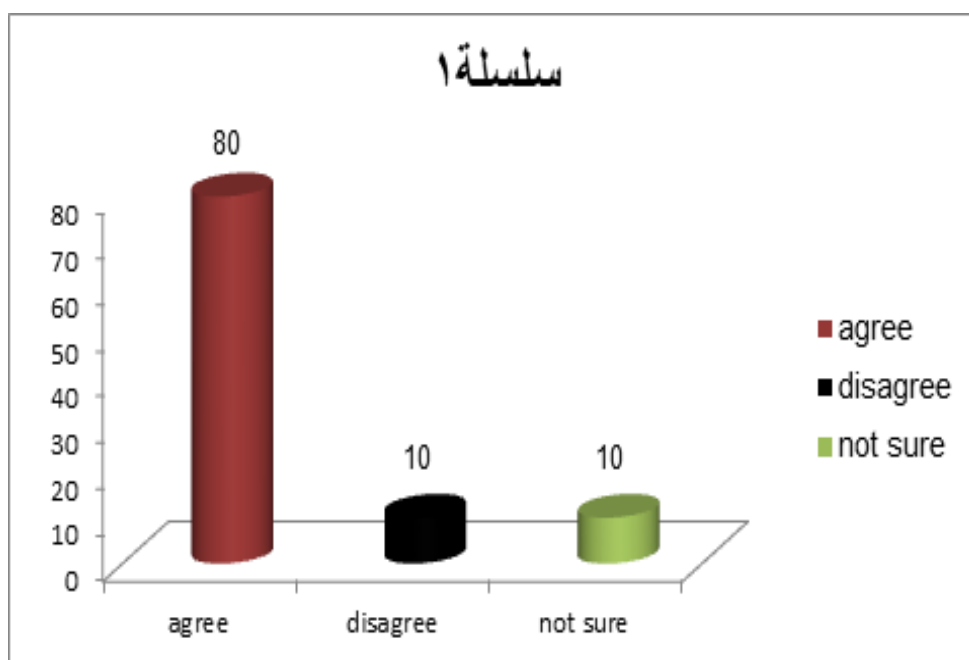
Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	35	87.5
Disagree	5	12.5
Total	40	100.0



In table and figure above the majority (35)87.5% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree that “Using the letters S,C for the sound /s/ and /k/ ,ph, GH,F for /f/ and /k/ ,c QU,CH for /k/ confuses learners” While the minority (5)12.5%disagreed and a number of (0) 0% are not sure. Using the letters S, C for the sound /s/ and /k/, ph, GH,for /f/ and /k/, c QU, CH for /k/ confuses learner.

**5-a letter that has different sounds also confuses FL learners. Table shows A letter that represent different sounds like the letter (a)is used for the sounds /∂/ ,/a/a:/ei/ needs more practice from teachers**

Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	32	80.0
Disagree	4	10.0
not sure	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

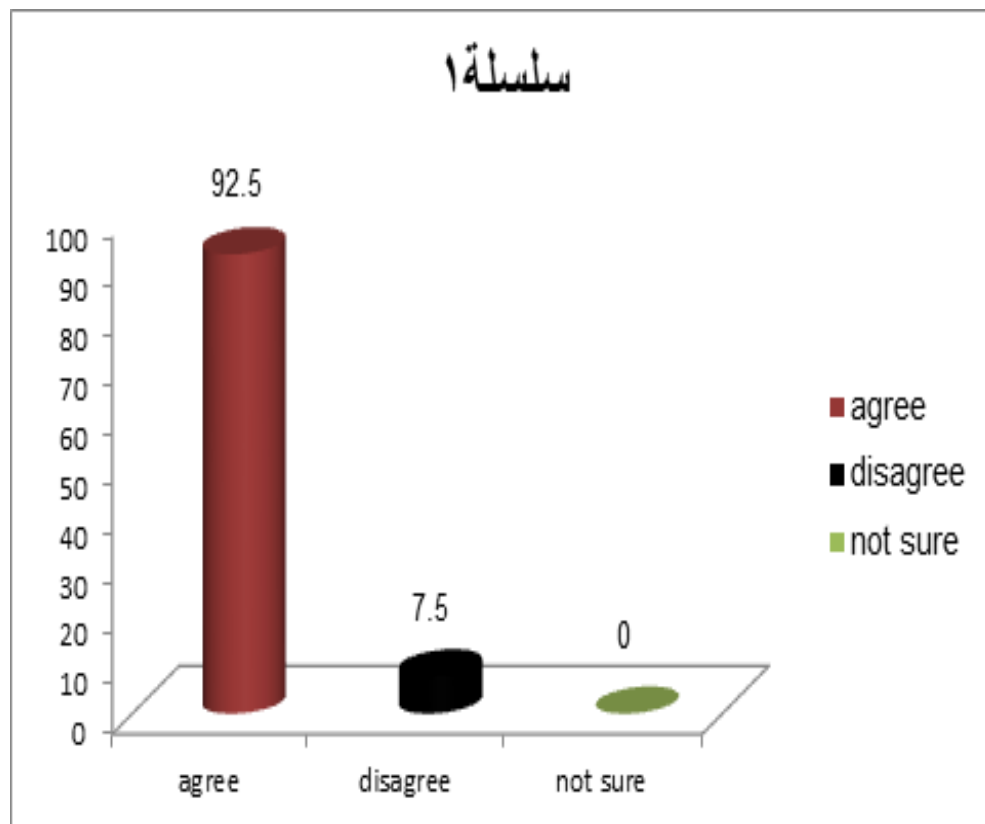


In table and figure (4.10) above the majority (32)80% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree “A letter that represents different sounds like the letter (a) is used for the sounds / ∂/ ,/a/a:/ei/ needs more Practice from teachers” while the minority (4)10%disagreed and a number of (10) 10% are not sure. A letter that represent different sounds like the latter(a)is used for the sounds /∂/ ,/a/a:/ei/ needs more Practice.

## 6- Silent letters are other problematic areas in FL.

Silent letters as in knew ,who, through need more practice because they make problems to the learners

Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	37	92.5
not sure	3	7.5
Total	40	100.0

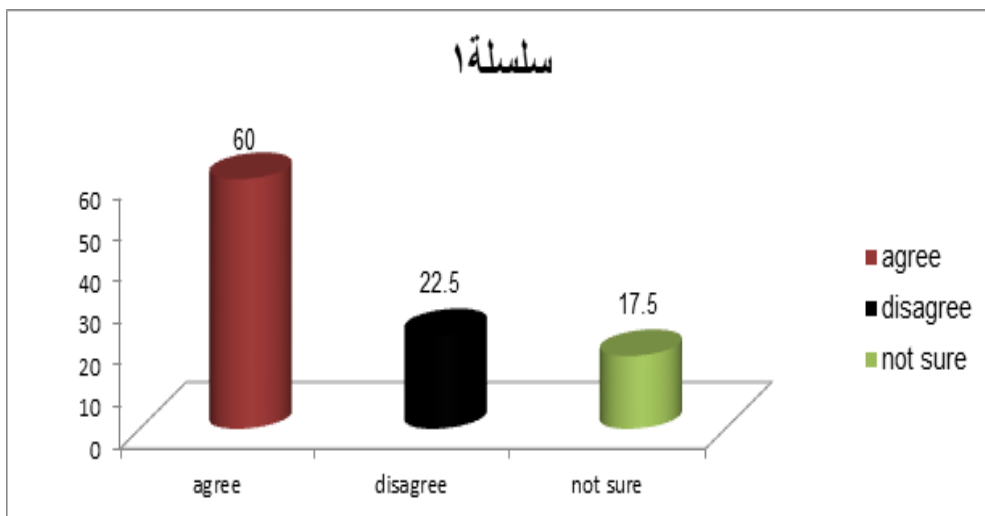


In table and figure above the majority (37)80% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree that, “Silent letters as in knew, who, through need more practice because they make problems to the learners” while the minority (3)7.5%disagreed and a number of (0) 0% are not sure. Silent Letters as in knew, who, through need more practice because they make problems to the learners.

**7- English spelling is often misleading for correct pronunciation.**

**Table Miscorespondance between English spelling and pronunciation as in tortoise , lieutenant,.....etc forms another problem to learners**

Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	24	60.0
Disagree	9	22.5
not sure	7	17.5
Total	40	100.0

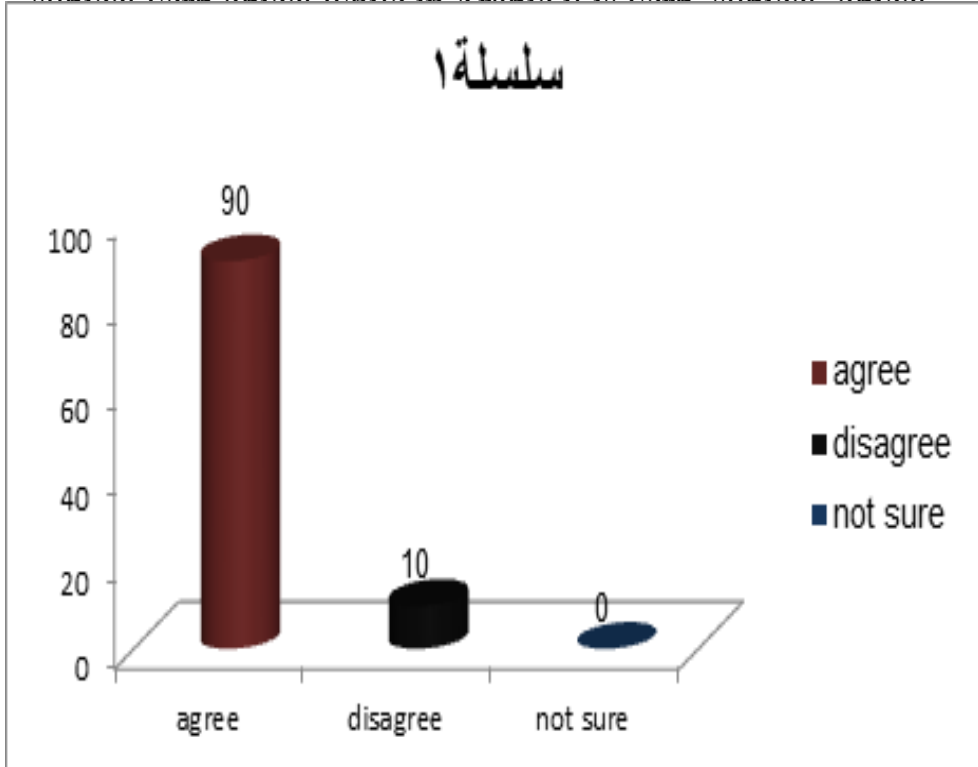


In table and figure above the majority (24)60% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree“Miscorespondance between English spelling and pronunciation as in tortoise,lieutenant forms another problem to learners”While the minority (9)22.5%disagreed and a number of (7) 17.5% are not sure.Miscorespondance between English spelling and pronunciation as in tortoise, lieutenant forms another problem to learners”

**8- Different areas between L<sub>1</sub> and FL hinder learning. Another problem is that the structure in English is mainly subject verb object while in Arabic it is verb ,subject ,object**

Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	36	90.0
Disagree	4	10.0
Total	40	100.0

Figure Another problem is that the structure in English is mainly subject verb object while in Arabic it is verb ,subject ,object



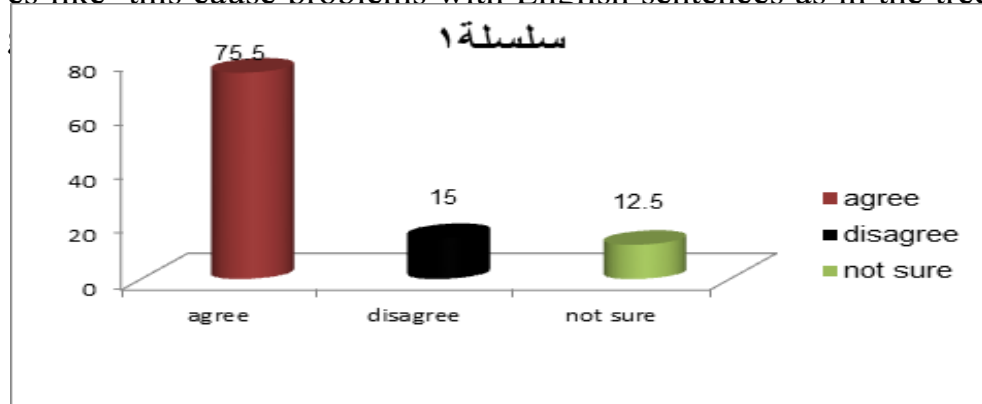
In table and figure above it is noticed that the majority (36)90% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree. Another problem is that the structure in English is mainly subject verb object while in Arabic it is verb ,subject ,object . “while the minority (4)10%disagreed and a number of (0) 0% are not sure. Another problem is that the structure in English is mainly subject verb object while in Arabic it is verb ,subject ,object .

**9- Learners face problems with syntax when they refer to L<sub>1</sub> in ELT.**

Arabic allows nominal or verbless phrases to stand for sentences like **شجرة خضراء** this cause problems with English sentences as in the tree green

Option	Frequency	Percent
Agree	29	72.5
Disagree	6	15.0
not sure	5	12.5
Total	40	100.0

Arabic allows nominal or verb less phrases to stand for sentences like **شجرة خضراء** this cause problems with English sentences as in the tree green



In table and figure above the majority (29)75% of the respondents of the sample of the study agree “Arabic allows nominal or verbless phrases to stand for sentences like **شجرة خضراء** this cause problems with English sentences as in the tree green “while the minority (6)15%disagreed and a number of (5) 12.5% are not sure. Arabic allows nominal or verbless phrases to stand for sentences like **شجرة خضراء** this cause problems with English sentences as in the tree green.

**Summary:**

This study compares and contrasts first language acquisition to second or foreign language learning . It brings about factors

that help first language acquisition . It discusses the possibility of applying these factors in ELT as well . It also tend to find out factors that hinder foreign language acquisition to avoid them in ELT . It compares and contrast Arabic language as first language and English as foreign language at all levels . This includes , sounds , spelling of words , phrases , clauses , and sentences . Descriptive and analytical methods are used . Data is analyzed and results are reached by using S.P.S.S programme . Findings and recommendations are put forward as well.

### Results

1- Referring to the first language helps in learning foreign language, especially in the shared areas between L<sub>1</sub> and FL .

2- Sounds that are found in L<sub>1</sub> but do not exist in FL confuse learners.

3- Mother tongue interference some sounds are replaced according to L<sub>1</sub>.

Sound like /p/ and /t/ are sometime replaced by /b/ in pi, pl/ and /in /ti:tfa

4- Sounds that are found in L<sub>1</sub> but do not exist in FL confuse learners. Arabic sounds like /ض/ /ص/ /ط/ and do not exist in English therefore they are confused with /t/, /s/ and /d/ so we hear sound as: /wot/ dog / and /sun/

5- Using different letters one sound causes problems. Using the letters to, C for the sound /s/ and /k/, ph, GH, F for /f/ and /k/, cQU, CH for /k/ confuses learners.

6--a letter that has different sounds also confuses FL learners. Table shows A letter that represent different sounds like the letter (a) is used for the sounds /ə/ , /a:/ /ei/ needs more practice from teachers

7-- Silent letters are other problematic areas in FL. Silent letters as in knew ,who, through need more practice because they make problems to the learners

8- Learners face problems with syntax when they refer to L<sub>1</sub> in ELT. Arabic allows nominal or verbless phrases to stand for sentences like شجرة خضراء this cause problems with English sentences as in the tree green

9- Different areas between L<sub>1</sub> and FL hinder learning. Another problem is that the structure in English is mainly subject verb object while in Arabic it is verb ,subject ,object .

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- (1) Al khuli, M(1989) English Grammar: Morphology, Dar Alfah .
- (2) Al Samawi, A(2000) ”An Introduction to Research techniques In linguistics and literature”, University of Yemen .
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