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Analysis of Grammatical Errors in Arabic Students' Spanish Writing Skills

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Abstract

Objectives: The present study seeks to examine Arabic-speaking learners' grammatical errors in Spanish writing tasks. It aims at identifying the most common error types and their linguistic sources and exploring pedagogical solutions that may help instructors teach the Spanish language to non-native speakers.

Methods: The research adopted a mixed-methods approach that combines analysis of written essays, structured questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. Data were collected from 50 Spanish-language teachers who evaluated samples of learners' writing. A frequency-based error analysis was used to classify and interpret the errors in light of linguistic interference.

Results: The results showed that the most frequently identified errors were incorrect noun–article concord, gender/number disagreement, and possessive adjectives. Verb mistakes, for instance, missing linking verbs and tense miscalculations recorded the second category of frequency. Prepositional errors, considerably ascribed to differences between the two languages (Spanish and Arabic), ranked third. The study demonstrated that native language interference remains the main source of grammatical difficulties.

Conclusions: The results of the research underscore the pressing need for making use of contrastive teaching approaches, specialized grammar practice and instruction, and authentic academic courses adapted mainly for Arabic-speaking learners of Spanish. They suggest evidence-based recommendations for planning and designing curricula that handle specific learner needs, thus contributing to the improvement of teaching/learning Spanish as a foreign language.

Keywords: Arabic-speaking learners, Spanish writing, noun agreement, verb tense, prepositional errors, grammatical interference.

تحليل الأخطاء القواعدية في مهارة الكتابة باللغة الاسبانية للطلبة العرب

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ملخّص

الأهداف: تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل الأخطاء النحوية التي يقع فيها المتعلمون الناطقون بالعربية عند الكتابة باللغة الإسبانية، وذلك بهدف تحديد أكثر الأخطاء شيوعًا، والتعرف على مصادرها اللغوية، واقتراح حلول تربوية تساعد المعلمين في تدريس اللغة الإسبانية كلغة أجنبية.

المنهجية: اعتمد البحث على منهج مختلط يجمع بين تحليل المقالات الكتابية، والاستبيانات المنظمة، والمقابلات شبه المقننة. تم جمع البيانات من 50 معلمًا للغة الإسبانية قاموا بتقييم عينات من كتابات المتعلمين. استخدم تحليل تكراري للأخطاء لتصنيفها وتفسيرها في ضوء التداخل اللغوي.

النتائج: أظهرت النتائج أن أكثر الأخطاء شيوعًا تتعلق بعدم توافق الاسم مع أداة التعريف، وأخطاء في الصفات الملكية، ومشكلات التذكير والتأنيث والعدد. كما برزت أخطاء متصلة بالأفعال مثل سوء استخدام الأزمنة وحذف أفعال الربط في المرتبة الثانية. أما المرتبة الثالثة فكانت لأخطاء حروف الجر الناتجة عن الاختلافات التركيبية بين العربية والإسبانية. وأكدت الدراسة أن التداخل اللغوي من اللغة الأم يعد المصدر الرئيس لهذه الصعوبات.

الخلاصة: تشير النتائج إلى الحاجة الملحّة لتعليم نحوي متخصص، وتوظيف استراتيجيات تدريس تقابلية، واستخدام مواد أكاديمية أصيلة ومصممة خصيصًا للمتعلمين العرب. تسهم هذه التوصيات في تحسين مناهج تعليم اللغة الإسبانية كلغة أجنبية، بما يتلاءم مع احتياجات المتعلمين.

الكلمات الدالة: المتعلمون الناطقون بالعربية، الكتابة بالإسبانية، توافق الاسم وأداة التعريف، أخطاء الأزمنة، سوء استخدام حروف الجر، التداخل النحوي.

I. INTRODUCTIO

Learning a foreign language provides learners with access to various socio-cultural backgrounds, historical knowledge, and new perspectives, thus, boosting cultural awareness of international diversity. In the modern world, multilingual competence is growingly important for successful communication, reciprocal respect, and tolerance worldwide (Byram, 1997; Kramsch, 1998). Spanish, which is used by around 500 million people globally, count both significant regional variation and a rich historical heritage (Instituto Cervantes, 2023). This create both opportunities as well as challenges for students, especially when their first languages differ largely from Spanish (Albir,2010).

Castilian Spanish maintains its position as the world's second most widespread language together with its position as an official language at the United Nations and European Union along with other organizations. Spanish language speakers reside throughout Europe, South America, the Caribbean islands, additional population groups in Africa and the United States. Spanish possesses numerous dialects across its vast geographic areas because of its extensive cultural spread which creates multiple complications for educational teaching. Spanish language learning presents exceptional difficulties to Arabic speaking students because they struggle significantly with Spanish vocabulary and grammar.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Second language acquisition brings frequent grammatical mistakes to students who speak languages with substantial distinctions from their target language. Different geographic areas together with social backgrounds and cultural milieus give rise to dialects which develop through historical and cultural forces and communal traditions. Learning Spanish as a foreign language by speakers of Arabic causes particular grammatical mistakes due to different language structures in Arabic and Spanish which affect verb conjugation and noun-adjective concordance and prepositional use. The grammatical barriers between these languages appear because Arabic belongs to the Semitic group and Spanish belongs to the Romance family which produces complications in word arrangement and gender-based nouns.

Selinker's (1972) interlanguage theory and Ringbom's (1987) research on language transfer demonstrate that structural features of a learner's native language strongly influence the types of errors that occur in second language production, with negative transfer often leading to inaccuracies in morphology, syntax, and agreement. The following research in SLA (second language acquisition) emphasized that handling such difficulties needs to have a balanced approach of instruction: explicit teaching enables learners to be aware of complex grammatical rules, whereas communicative practice along with implicit exposure enable to language learners to internalize such rules more in a natural way. Effective pedagogy, according to these results, needs to incorporate actual language use with targeted grammar instruction to help minimize typical errors and get more accurate development of the second language.

1. Grammatical Errors in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

In SLA, grammatical errors are seen as a natural part of the process of learning. They often indicate the differences between the source language (learner's native language) and the target language (L2). One of the main sources of errors is first language interference, where elements of the first language (L1) influence the way a learner learns L2. Arabic-speaking learners of Spanish language face unique challenges because of the structural and grammatical differences between Spanish and Arabic.

2. Verb Conjugation Errors

Arabic- speaking learners encounter significant problems with verb conjugation through language learning process. Both Spanish and Arabic share the same rule of subject-verb agreement but they are largely different in their conjugation systems. The Arabic language uses verb patterns and roots for conjugation while the verb endings of Spanish need to match the pronoun subject with mood and tense requirements and keeps track of unique personal subjects (Jouili, 2012). The Spanish language becomes more difficult for learners because it contains irregular verbs which are absent from Arabic linguistic structures.

The research findings demonstrate that Arabic learners of Spanish tend to commit frequent mistakes with verb tense and aspect forms. Al-Ashwal (2019) demonstrated that Arabic-speaking learners frequently experience difficulties using Spanish preterite and imperfect forms because they mistakenly apply Arabic simple past and present categories. The

grammatical distinction between preterite and imperfect in Arabic differs from Spanish which causes Spanish learners to overuse one form of tense (Al-Ashwal, 2019).

The learning obstacle that increases when studying Spanish subjunctive moods and conditional verbs stems from how these language elements do not exist in similar forms within Arabic. Arabic speakers face difficulties in using the correct subjunctive mood forms in Spanish writing because the jussive structure differs conceptually from the Spanish subjunctive construction (Al-Haik, 2016). A frequent problem among language learners includes verbal conjugation transfer mistakes which develop from trying to match language features between Arabic and Spanish (Jarvis &Pavlenko, 2008).

3. Gender Agreement

Spanish language learning for Arabic-speaking students faces an additional complex hurdle from the requirement to agree nouns and adjectives regarding gender. In Arabic gender, classifications extend to living things as well as nonliving things and use only two gender categories known as masculine and feminine. The gender agreement rules in Arabic differ from Spanish by requiring a limited amount of noun-adjective agreement flexibility because Arabic operates with fewer gender constraints. Spanish adjectives need to match both gender and number of the modified noun yet Arabic speakers often do not strictly adhere to this requirement as observed by Gordón (2018).

The evaluation by Chavez (2014) established Arabic-speaking Spanish learners frequently misidentify Spanish nouns' gender until they cause problems when placing adjectives correctly in addition to conjugating verbs. The gender-specific rules in Spanish noun semantics differ from Arabic noun associations which causes Spanish-learning Arabic speakers to struggle with gender agreements. Spanish nouns use "el sol" with masculine articles but Arabic-speaking uses feminine articles with "sol" thus causing students mistakes in gender usage (Chavez, 2014).

Arabic language interference causes Arabic students to incorrectly implement native language rules by applying masculine gender to all nouns unless marked for femininity. The students will make this mistake when they incorrectly state "el mesa" rather than "la mesa" to mean "the table" (Benson, 2015).

5. Mother-Tongue Interference and Transfer Errors

Spanish learning errors made by Arabic-speaking students originate mainly from their native language affecting their speech. Students use their L1 knowledge to shape their L2 during learning. Positive transfer benefits language use because it operates through the shared features of L1 and L2 according to Odlin (2003). However, the opposite effect occurs when L1 and L2 show differences resulting in learning mistakes.

The Spanish learning process of Arabic speakers becomes complicated because their native Arabic emphatic consonants interfere with correct production of Spanish phonetics (Mahmoud & Ali, 2018). The deficiency of articles in the Arabic language results in Spanish writing errors because Arabic speakers frequently eliminate these markers during their composition (Benson, 2015).

6. Teaching Strategies for Arabic Speakers

The development of efficient instructional approaches for Spanish grammar instruction among Arabic-speaking students needs to address their regular errors. Studies demonstrate that direct instruction about verb conjugation along with gender agreement instruction followed by sentence structure training helps Arabic students tackle their learning difficulties. Arabic and Spanish grammar comparisons from contrastive analysis facilitate self-correction in addition to raising student perception about grammatical transfer problems (Hussain & Ali, 2019). Task-based learning sets a valuable framework for students through authentic resources that help them practice grammar rules effectively (Williams, 2017).The most successful language learning methods combine error correction with opportunities for learners to test new language forms while providing praise according to Celce-Murcia (2015). Students who learn languages need open spaces to experiment with new language forms so correction should foster development rather than discourage them.

III. Research objectives

study aims to analyze the grammatical errors made by Arabic-speaking students in their Spanish writing. Particularly, it intends to:

1. Identify the frequent types of grammatical errors produced by Arabic-speaking learners of Spanish writing.

2. Examine causes of these errors, concentrating on the influence of Arabic on learning Spanish language.
3. Suggest strategies or techniques in order to improve grammar instruction of Spanish to address the challenges and enhance learners' writing skills.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What grammatical errors are commonly produced by Arabic-speaking learners of Spanish writing?
2. To what extent does Arabic grammar of native language lead to these errors?
3. What instructional strategies can help the learners of Spanish to handle the potential grammatical challenges?

V. METHODOLOGY

The current paper is designed to draw on both quantitative as well as qualitative methods to address the errors committed by the learners of Spanish writing. It also incorporates systematic analysis of errors and qualitative analysis that collect both student experiences as well as teacher perspectives. This helps provide insights into learners' language challenges and complete knowledge linked to teaching methods that specifically handle the potential difficulties in the process of learning.

1. Data Collection

a. **Written Essays**

To investigate grammatical error types that Arabic-speaking learners commit in Spanish writing, a sample of essays written in Spanish by Arabic-speaking learners was compiled. These essays were taken from different educational institutions and different proficiency levels. These essays were chosen to reflect a wide range of students' abilities, which allow for a more comprehensive analysis of frequent errors across various competence levels. The essays were mainly analyzed with a special attention on **grammatical errors** frequently observed in Arabic-speaking learners' Spanish writing**.** These errors included, but were not limited to, the following:

Errors related to nouns:

Errors in gender and number agreement between nouns and adjectives .Agreement between the noun and **definite articles, demonstrative pronouns**, **numbers, possessive adjectives**, and **adjectives**.

- **Errors related to verbs:**

Mistakes in tense, aspect, and mood. Choosing the appropriate **tense, form**, and **structure**, as well as omitting the auxiliary verb *"كان"* and its equivalents (*ser* and *estar*) in the present tense.

- **Errors related to prepositions:**

  Incorrect usage of prepositions, which is a common difficulty due to differences in the use of prepositions in Arabic and Spanish. Incorrect use of the preposition or **omission** of the preposition.

Each error type was categorized based on its nature and the linguistic area it affected. Frequency counts were performed to determine the most common errors across the sample.

b. **Questionnaire**

To gain insights into the instructional challenges and strategies employed by Spanish language teachers working with Arabic-speaking learners, a structured questionnaire was developed and distributed to a purposive sample of 20 Spanish language teachers. The employment of this instrument was to have quantitative data on teachers' perceptions, training, and experiences about potential grammatical difficulties encountered by learners of Spanish writing.

As given in **Appendix A**, the questionnaire has **25 statements**, which is classified into three major parts: (a) Perceived Grammatical Challenges, (b) Teacher Training and Professional Needs, (c) Teaching Strategies. Participants of the study were kindly requested to write their agreement level with each one of the presented statements, based on a **five-point Likert scale** (1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree).

Part A is designed to deal with the grammatical difficulties faced by the learners (e.g., prepositions errors).

Part B is mainly concerned with the pedagogical methods, which teachers use to address these challenges, for example, contrastive analysis and feedback techniques.

Part C focuses on the professional backgrounds of the instructors, such as their perceived need for further institutional

support and their specific preparation for working with Arabic language speakers.

The questionnaire facilitated the process of obtaining analyzable and consistent data, highlighting main trends in professional development and teaching practice. The responses were mainly organized and prepared to a statistical analysis in order to find the prevalent patterns and correlations between the employed instructional strategies and student difficulties. The whole design of the questionnaire is intended to allow for a nuanced comprehending of the relation between pedagogical responses and linguistic challenges, thus adding to the improvement and development of Spanish language teaching to Arabic-speaking learners.

2. Data Analysis

a. Error Analysis

The error analysis of the students' written essays followed a structured and systematic approach. The collected data were reviewed to identify and categorize grammatical mistakes frequently made by Arabic-speaking learners of Spanish. Errors were classified into (three) primary grammatical categories, each associated with common linguistic challenges resulting from the structural differences between Arabic and Spanish.

1. Noun-Adjective Agreement Errors

Errors related to nouns focused on the agreement between the noun and its determiners (such as definite and indefinite articles, possessive pronouns, and numbers), as well as adjectives, for example:

1-**Noun – definite and indefinite articles** *(los artículos determinados e indeterminados: el, la, los, las, un, una, unos, unas).*

→ *The articles: definite and indefinite.*

Example:

Incorrect: *La jardín es grande.*

Correct: *El jardín es grande .(the garden is big*)

Example:

Incorrect: *Ayer compré una reloj .,*

Correct: *Ayer compré un reloj .(Yesterday I bought a watch)*

2-The noun – los adjetivos posesivos (possessive adjectives).

The error here lies in using a possessive adjective that does not agree with the noun in terms of **gender** and **number.**

Example:

Incorrect: *Mis amigo están en Madrid.*(My friend are in Madrid)

Correct: *Mis amigos están en Madrid* .(My friends are in Madrid)

The possessive adjective **mis**, which is in the plural form, did not agree with the possessed noun **amigo**, which is in the singular form.

Example:

Incorrect: *Nuestra coche es verde compré una reloj .*

Correct: *Nuestro coche es verde .(Our car is green)*

Coche does not agree with the possessive adjective **nuestra** in this example; the possessive is in the singular **feminine** form, while the noun is **singular masculine**.

1- (los adjetivos numerales // the numeral adjectives

The errors that appeared in the students' writing involved using the **counted noun** in the **singular form** in sentences where the noun should have been **in the plural form.**

Example:

Incorrect: *Mi padre tiene ochenta año. (My father is eighty year old.)*

Correct: *Mi padre tiene ochenta años .(My father is eighty years old.*)

We notice that the counted word **"سنة"** appeared in the **singular form** and did not agree with the number, which indicates the **plural**.

(los adjetivos calificativos // qualifying adjectives)

The adjective follows the noun in **number** (singular, plural) and **gender** (masculine, feminine). Therefore, identifying the gender of the noun is very important to ensure agreement with its adjective.

Example:

Incorrect: *El silla es blanco.*

Correct: *La silla es blanca .(The chair is white.)*

We notice that the noun **silla**, which is **feminine** in Spanish, did not agree with the adjective **blanco**, which is in the **masculine** form.

Example:

Incorrect: *Carmen tiene dos problemas complicadas.*

Correct: *Carmen tiene dos problemas complicados. (Carmen has two complicated problems)*

We notice that the word problemas is masculine plural in Spanish, but the adjective complicadas used with it is feminine, resulting in a mismatch.

2. Prepositional Errors

The use of prepositions presents a complex challenge due to the non-equivalence of many Spanish and Arabic prepositional systems. Arabic tend to express concepts such as direction, purpose, and cause by using verb forms or prepositional phrases that do not correspond directly to Spanish equivalents.

The correct use of prepositions by learners is considered as a strong indicator of their proficiency, given that the use of prepositions has varied meanings and sometimes alternate with one another. The complexity of prepositions is related to the fact that they serve as connectors, playing a key role in delivering accurate meaning. It was observed that preposition errors are similar to those frequently committed by any foreign language learners. These errors can be categorized as follows:

1- **Incorrect use of prepositions**, as observed in the following examples:

Example:

Incorrect: *Gracias por venir por ayudarme.*(Thanks for coming for helping me.)

Correct: *Gracias por venir a ayudarme.* (Thanks for coming to help me.)

In this case, the preposition *por* is incorrectly repeated instead of using *a* to indicate purpose or intention. This type of confusion is common, particularly between *por* and *para*, which have nuanced distinctions in Spanish that Arabic does not parallel.

We also observe the use of the preposition *en* instead of *a* when referring to time, as illustrated in the following example:

Example:

Incorrect: *Me ducho en las ocho.*(.)

Correct: *Me ducho a las ocho.* (I shower at eight.)

1- **Omission of the preposition**, as seen in the following example

Example:

Incorrect: *Ayer vimos Carlos.*

Correct: *Ayer vimos a Carlos.* (Yesterday we saw Carlos)

In this example, the preposition *a* was omitted before the direct object *Carlo*, despite the rule that requires the use of *a* before a direct object when it refers to a person, an animal, a personified object, or with verbs that typically take a human object.

Additionally, the preposition *de* is often omitted, particularly in possessive constructions, as illustrated in the following example:

Example:

Incorrect: *Yo estudio en la universidad Damasco.*(I study at the University Damascus.)

Correct: *Yoestudioen la universidad de Damasco* . (I study at the University of Damascus)

The The errors were identified, classified, and analyzed based on their frequency. The frequency analysis revealed that noun-related errors were the most common, followed by, verb-related errors and then prepositional errors came in third place.

This frequency reveals clearly in what areas or aspects the learners of the present study encounter the difficulty- it can be ascribed to incomplete learning of the grammatical rules of Spanish, in addition to negative language transfer. The need for teaching materials and targeted instructional strategies that explicitly and specifically handle the repeated grammatical challenges are underscored by the present findings.

3. Verb Tense Errors

One of the most common categories was the misuse of verb tense, mainly the incorrect use of past and present tenses. The system of verbs in Arabic differs from that of Spanish, particularly in the expression of time and aspect. The grammatical errors of verbs were primarily focused on the following:

1- Failure to distinguish between the simple past tense (el pretérito perfecto simple) and the present perfect tense (el pretérito perfecto compuesto).

Example:

Incorrect: *Hoy fui al mercado.*(Today I went to the market.)

Correct: *Hoy he ido al mercado.* (.)

Incorrect: *Ayer he viajado a España.* (Yesterday I have traveled to Spain.)

Correct: *Ayer viajé a España.* (.)

Example:

Incorrect: *Esta mañana desayuné con mis amigos* ("This morning I ate breakfast with my friends")

Correct: *Esta mañana he desayunado con mis amigos* ("This morning I have eaten breakfast with my friends"),

Incorrect: *El año pasado he estudiado en Madrid* ("Last year I have studied in Madrid")

Correct: *El año pasado estudié en Madrid* ("Last year I studied in Madrid").

Although both forms are grammatically correct in Spanish, their use depends on context and regional variation, with the preterite typically marking completed past events and the present perfect indicating present relevance. This confusion arises because Modern Standard Arabic lacks a comparable aspectual distinction, generally expressing past actions with a single verb form, which leads students to transfer native language patterns into their Spanish writing.

1-Omission of the verbs *ser* **and** *estar* in present-tense nominal sentences that lack a verb (such as "كان" and its sisters in Arabic), and that consist of a singular subject and a singular predicate or a prepositional phrase.

Example:

Incorrect: *Ellos en la facultad.*(They in college)

Correct: *Ellos están en la facultad.*(They are in college.)

Incorrect: *Nosotros altos.* (We tall)

Correct: *Nosotros somos altos.*(We are tall)

We also observe the omission of the verb when forming comparative sentences in Spanish, due to the influence of Arabic, where such sentences in the present tense do not include the verb *kana* or its derivatives. This can be seen in the following example:

Example:

Incorrect: *Carlos más alto que Pedro .(Carlos taller than Pedro)*

Correct: Carlos es más alto que Pedro.(Carlos is taller than Pedro)

b. Teacher Interviews

To complement the findings from the written essays and questionnaires, **semi-structured interviews** were conducted

with 15 experienced Spanish language teachers. The purpose of the interviews was to gather qualitative data on how teachers address the grammatical errors observed in Arabic-speaking students' Spanish writing and to explore the effectiveness of their teaching strategies.

The interview questions focused on:

- **Teachers' experiences**: Insights into their experiences with teaching Arabic-speaking students and the specific grammatical errors they have encountered in their students' writing.
- **Instructional strategies**: Exploration of the methods and techniques teachers use to help students overcome grammatical errors, such as the use of explicit grammar instruction, error correction methods, or task-based language learning.
- **Challenges in teaching**: The major challenges that the instructors found when dealing with grammatical mistakes were explained and discussed by the instructors**.**
- **Recommendations**: Teachers were provide recommendations as to how to improve and develop teaching Spanish to Arabic-speaking learners.

Researchers employed thematic analysis to process the interview data that they transcribed. They focused their analysis on identifying main obstacles that influence teaching Spanish grammar to learners whose mother tongue is Arabic. The interviews provided practical information regarding teaching strategies that offered context to statistical data taken from questionnaires as well as error analysis. The research implements quantitative as well qualitative methods to get a full understanding of grammar difficulties faced by Arabic-speaking learners during learning Spanish language. The current study employs written essays along with teacher interviews and questionnaire responses in order to have precise insights concerning learner errors types and their sources and effective remediation methods. The combination of these research methods creates an opportunity to comprehend the overall patterns of learning errors and provides detailed educational practices that reduce these errors.

The phase of research data collection will result into the identification of patterns to develop effective instructional method/approaches together with certain recommendations for improving grammar of Spanish writing**.**

VI. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The current paper seeks to describe and analyze grammatical errors that the learners of Spanish writing often make in their tasks. According to the results driven mainly from the teacher interviews as well as the error analysis, various major patterns of learners' errors were found in the data. The findings emphasize the areas, where the learners of Spanish writing encounter commonly challenges, as well as the causes and suitable solutions proposed by the instructors.

Results of the teachers' questionnaire

This section provides a detailed examination of the study's key findings derived from the teacher questionnaire. The analysis centers on Spanish language teachers' perceptions of the grammatical challenges faced by Arabic-speaking learners, their instructional strategies, and their preparedness and support needs. The quantitative data are supported by statistical measures including mean scores and standard deviations, which reflect the degree of consensus among teachers and the significance of the identified trends.

A. Perceived Grammatical Challenges

Survey results revealed that verb conjugation, gender agreement are the most frequently observed issues among Arabic-speaking learners. Teachers rated the severity of these challenges with the following scores:

The questionnaire results revealed that **errors related to nouns, prepositions, and verbs**—in that specific order—are the most common challenges faced by learners, as reflected in the following scores:

Table: Frequency, Mean Scores, and Standard Deviations of Grammatical Error Types

Rank	Category	Specific Error Types	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1	**Noun-Related Errors**	Article-noun agreement, possessive adjective agreement, numeral agreement, adjective-noun agreement	4.18	0.92
2	**Verb-Related Errors**	Tense misuse, omission of *ser/estar* in nominal and comparative sentences	4.04	0.98
3	**Prepositional Errors**	Incorrect use of prepositions, omission of required prepositions (*a*, *de*, etc.)	4.02	0.91

There is a high level of consensus among teachers regarding the most frequent grammatical errors made by Arabic-speaking students learning Spanish. The standard deviation values, which ranges from 0.91 to 0.98, show a strong agreement among participants. The results showed that noun errors were the most prevalent challenge (with a mean score of 4.18). They comprise article-noun agreement, numeral agreement, possessive-adjective agreement, and adjective-noun agreement (where structural differences between Spanish and Arabic considerably affect learners' performance. Verb-related errors ranked the second most common, (with a mean score of 4.04), including tense misuse as well as the deletion of 'ser' and 'estar' in both comparative and nominal structures. Teachers observed that Arabic-speaking learners lack aspect systems and comparable verb tense and struggle to distinguish between the Spanish preterite and the present perfect tenses. Prepositional errors ranked third in terms of frequency, with consistent challenges in the misuse or deletion of prepositions, for example, 'a' and 'de'. Though the mean score was not obviously mentioned in this summary, previous findings place it behind verb-related issues.

B. Instructional Strategies

Teachers informed utilizing clear teaching as well as contrastive analysis together in order to handle the challenges of grammar.

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Use of Explicit Grammar Instruction	4.30	0.75
Application of Contrastive Analysis	3.74	1.02
Integration of Authentic Materials	3.66	1.09
Use of Visual Aids	3.48	1.12
Peer Collaboration and Feedback Techniques	3.54	0.98
Student Reflection on Errors	3.32	1.15

While 'explicit grammar instruction' remains the most common strategy, the employment of 'contrastive analysis' (despite perceived as valuable) achieved a moderate mean (3.74), which shows a limited implementation in practice. This could indicate a shortage of available resources, incorporating contrastive approaches/methods or inadequate training of teachers. Additionally, visual items and authentic materials were found to be moderately used tools.

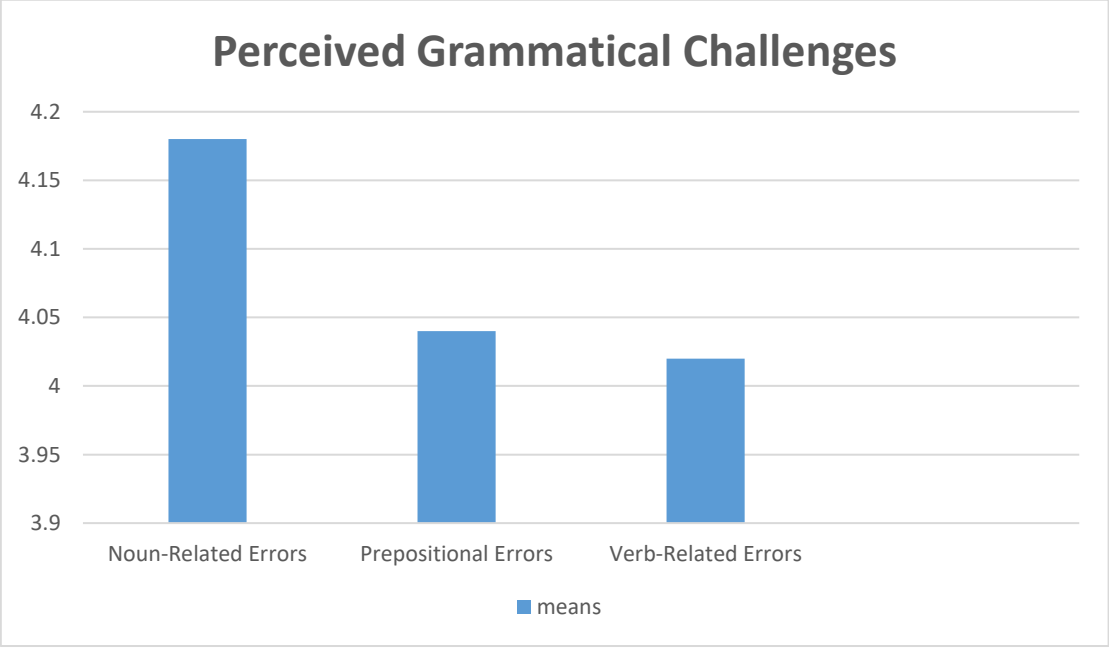
C. Teacher Training and Professional Needs

The finding also illuminate the importance of teachers' professional background and the institutional support for teaching the learners. They also showed a high demand for more focused training:

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Received Formal Training in Second Language Instruction	3.90	0.87
Received Specific Training for Arabic-Speaking Learners	2.78	1.10
Confidence in Addressing Learners' Grammatical Needs	3.60	0.95
Need for Additional Professional Development	4.22	0.88
Interest in Specialized Teaching Materials	4.30	0.79
Need for Institutional Support and Collaboration Opportunities	4.10	0.84

The findings revealed that the average rating of learner-specific training is 2.78, thus, reflecting substantial gaps in the professional development. The instructors demonstrated high levels of general training and admitted they lacked sufficient preparation to deal with grammatical characteristics that emerge from Spanish and Arabic structural differences. The desire among Spanish teachers for specially created instructional materials (4.30) and group collaborative activities (4.10) highlights the necessity for institutional support in creating educational resources. The statistical findings showed that teachers recognize the problems of grammatical learning faced by Arabic-speaking learners in acquiring Spanish language. Educators demonstrate great interest in error correction strategies but simultaneously voice their discontent concerning insufficient learning materials and training programs for the learners of Spanish.

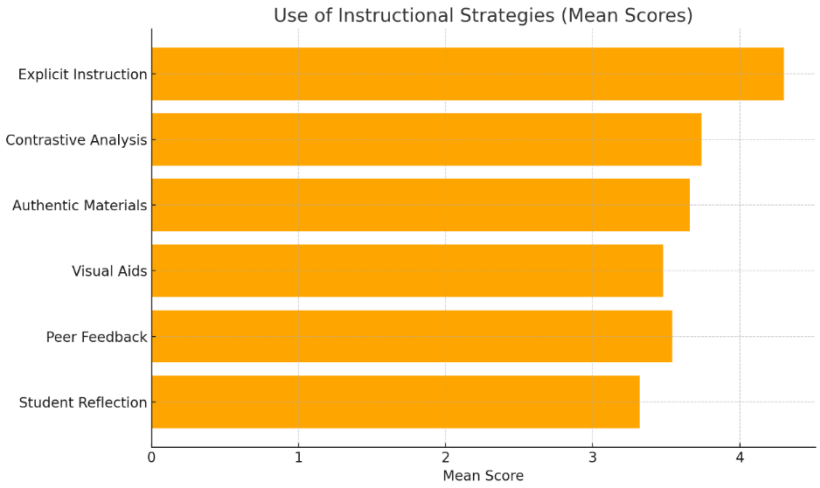
Educational institutions should build and employ professional development programs, which focus on grammar instruction of Spanish for Arabic-speaking learners due to the urgent situation. Also, Institutions of education should assign funds to develop learning materials, which combine contrastive linguistic analysis and cross-linguistic awareness. Communication skills of students and their and overall language proficiency will be restricted by untended grammatical errors that continue after language acquisition.



Graph 1: Perceived Grammatical Challenges

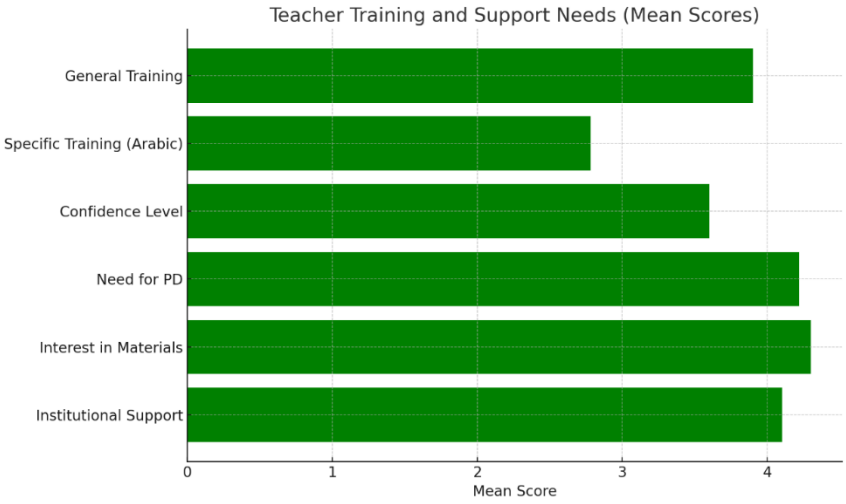
The graph indicates the grammatical challenges faced by Arabic-speaking learners in Spanish learning, as rated by instructors. Noun errors appeared as the most common (with a mean score of 4.18), mirroring consistent issues regarding article usage, numeral agreement, possessive adjective agreement, and adjective-noun agreement—areas highly influenced by differences between Spanish and Arabic grammar. With a mean score of 4.02, prepositional

errors followed as learners often omit or misuse main prepositions, for example, 'a' and 'de' because of the lack of Arabic direct equivalents. Verb errors came third (with a mean of 4.04); while verb conjugation scored a high 4.26, where its grouping with tense errors and omissions of 'ser' and 'estar' slightly reduced the overall category ranking. Compared with core structural issues, the subjunctive mood received a low score (3.82), showing it is less problematic, despite being recognized as challenging. The results reflect the crucial influence of the interference of Arabic as a native language. They also highlight the present need for more instruction on the following: prepositional accuracy, noun agreement, and verb usage.



Graph 2: Instructional Strategies Used by Teachers

Graph (2) indicate the frequency as well as the effectiveness of instructional strategies employed to handle grammatical difficulties. Moreover, the graph shows that '**explicit grammar** instruction' recorded the highest average score **(4.30)**, indicating its instrumental role in classroom practice. **Contrastive analysis** demonstrates moderate use **(3.74)**, showing an awareness among instructors of the benefits of comparing Spanish and Arabic grammatical systems. **Peer feedback and Authentic materials** achieved the same average scores **(3.66 and 3.54)**, underscoring a balanced usage of both communicative and structured approaches. **Student reflection techniques (3.32)** and **visual aids (3.48)** were deployed less commonly, showing potential areas for pedagogical development.



Graph 3: Teacher Training and Support Needs

As seen Graph (3), the perceptions teachers of their professional development needs and training backgrounds were indicated. The majority underwent general **training** in teaching Spanish as a L2 **(mean = 3.90)**, while very few had **specific training** for Arabic-speaking students **(mean = 2.78)**, which seems to present a significant gap. The issue of **specialized teaching materials (mean = 4.30**) and **additional professional development (mean = 4.22)** is obviously stated, underscoring systemic gaps in dealing with the needs of leaners. Teachers furthermore voiced substantial **support for institutional backing as well as collaborative opportunities (mean = 4.10)**, asserting the significance of resources and support for educators of different linguistic backgrounds.

1- Results of analysis of students' essays

1. Noun related errors

The majority of errors stemmed from issues related to gender agreement between nouns and adjectives, as well as with articles, numbers, and possessive pronouns. Spanish applies gender marking to all nouns, but its system functions differently from that of Arabic. Both languages have grammatical gender categories for nouns yet Arabic lacks the Spanish requirement for exact agreement between adjectives and their modified nouns. The grammatical requirement for adjectives to match both the gender and number of their modified nouns applies exactly the same way in written and spoken Spanish. The irregular application of agreement principles between nouns and adjectives throughout the Arabic language prevents Arabic-speaking learners from effectively implementing gender rules in Spanish. As a result, Arabic speakers frequently mistake the correct matching of adjectives to their associated nouns regarding their gender characteristics. Arabic-speaking students often make gender mistakes when using Spanish such as the combination of "rojo" with masculine "coche" or failing to agree the proper endings in noun-adjective use (" roja" with "coche" instead of " rojo" " and incorrect pluralization according to Gordón (2018). The teachers conducting interviews observed how Arabic-speaking students have persistent challenges with gender rules when using articles like *el* and *la* while also struggling with gender-based terms like *blanco* and *blanca*.

In the Arabic language, the use of the definite article "ال" with a noun—whether masculine or feminine, singular or plural—is one way to make it definite. However, in Spanish, the definite articles used to indicate gender and number are four: *el*, *la*, *los*, and *las*. This often leads students to project rules from their native language onto Spanish, resulting in the incorrect use of articles, such as: *la árbol*, *el radio*, *el calle*, *la lavabo*.

Concerning possessive pronouns, the form of the possessed noun in Arabic does not change irrespective of whether it is plural or singular, feminine or masculine. In contrast, possessive pronouns, in Spanish, associated with the grammatical subjects (including yo, él, ella, tú, usted, ellas, ellos, and ustedes) vary based on whether the possessed noun is plural or plural, and whether it is feminine or masculine. Likewise, with the pronouns 'nosotros', 'nosotras', 'vosotros', and 'vosotras', each one has different possessive forms depending on the number and gender of the possessed item—one form for singular masculine, another for singular feminine, and separate forms for plural masculine and plural feminine.

This is a main reason for learners;' errors: Arabic differs considerably from Spanish as a target language. The greater the differences between the learned language and the native language, the more challenging the process of learning becomes, resulting into more frequent errors. The same applies to countable nouns. Though Spanish countable forms are easier in general, learners tend to employ Arabic numeral rules to Spanish, which leads to further mistakes.

The interviewed students produced frequent errors involving both overgeneralization mistakes and incorrect gender rule implementation.

2. Preposition related Errors

Statements about prepositional elements often presented themselves as errors amongst the student population. Spanish language prepositions *por* and *para* have no match in Arabic which leads to Arabic speakers making preposition mistakes in Spanish. The usage of prepositions especially *para* and *por* by Arabic-speaking students leads to identification problems or absent prepositions in their Spanish writings. The sentence "Voy a la tienda para comprar pan" (I am going to the store to buy bread) results in errors from Arabic-speaking students who either drop *para* or use it instead of *por*.

In addition to that, errors have been observed concerning the omission of the preposition *de* in cases of possession, as

possession in Arabic does not require a preposition. As a result, students often overlook this and omit the necessary preposition in Spanish. Similarly, students tend to omit the preposition *a* before the direct object when it refers to a person, animal, or personified object, or when used with verbs that typically take a human object. This happens because, the direct object, in the Arabic linguistics, receives the verb action without a preposition before it.

Another frequent error includes the misuse of the preposition 'en', particularly, when it refers to time. Instead of using 'a', which is used in Spanish to indicate a specific time, learners incorrectly use 'en', which is influenced by the native language structure.

2.Verb Conjugation Errors

The prevalent error category in student essays involved verb conjugation which particularly affected the usage of irregular verbs together with verb tenses. Simple Verbs in Spanish require specific modifications which depend on the subject type together with tense and mood conditions. Arabic Students who learn Spanish face difficulties mastering Spanish verbalization since the grammatical structures of these languages stand in opposition to one another.

The conjugation system in Arabic remains easy to use, although it distinguishes past from present and future tense yet, it lacks Spanish-level complexity in tense and aspect distinctions. The two past tense systems of Spanish known as preterite and imperfect operate separately when describing different types of past events. The Arabic language uses the past tense to express any occurrence that took place in past time regardless of its completion status or repetition. Academic low fluency when learning Spanish leads Arabic language speakers to make mistakes when they try to differentiate between preterite and imperfect verbalization. Student mistakes occur when they select the preterite tense repeatedly even though imperfect tense would be the better choice in those situations.

The process of changing irregular Spanish verbs causes students major difficulty. The extensive number of irregular verbs in Spanish clashes with Arabic terminology which leads Arabic students to either stick with standard verb patterns or produce wrong forms when they attempt irregular verb combinations. Arabic learners frequently make errors when using irregular verbs like *ser* and *ir* since these verbs show extensive inconsistencies in their conjugation (Jarvis &Pavlenko, 2008).

A frequent error among learners is the omission of the verbs *ser* and *estar* in present-tense nominal sentences. In Arabic, such sentences—composed of a singular subject and a singular predicate, a prepositional phrase, or a comparative expression—typically do not contain an explicit linking verb like "كان" or its derivatives in the present tense. As a result, students often carry over this structure to Spanish and exclude the necessary verb *ser* or *estar*, not recognizing that in Spanish, the use of a copulative verb is essential even in present-tense nominal constructions.

4. Results of Teacher Interviews

Supplemental information about error sources became available through teacher interviews. Teachers stressed that mother-tongue language interference creates the main source of grammatical mistakes Arabic-speaking students make. The syntactic and morphological structures of Arabic interfere with Spanish acquisition through error-produced mistakes in verb conjugation and gender agreement among Arabic-speaking learners. These students commonly struggle to understand Spanish grammar concepts because they do not exist in Arabic so they fail to master these elements.

The teachers identified direct instruction of grammar knowledge as a strategy to face the mentioned issues. The researcher suggested teaching verb conjugation systematically with special attention to irregular verbs along with substantial practice that focused on gender agreement in Spanish. The teachers emphasized authentic materials in grammar exercises must link concepts with relevant content like videos or articles or audio recordings so learners develop correct grammatical usage. Teachers proposed two error correction approaches namely task-based learning and peer review for enabling real-time correction of mistakes alongside active student participation.

5. Recommendations for Instruction

Based on the findings, the study suggests several instructional strategies to improve Spanish grammar instruction for Arabic-speaking students:

- **Focused practice of verb conjugation:** Providing explicit and repeated practice with tense differentiation and irregular verbs (‘preterite’ vs. ‘imperfect’).
- **Gender agreement drills**: to visual resources or aids, colored exercises, and illustrative examples on number and gender agreement between adjectives and nouns.
- **Sentence structure exercises**: to formulate tasks on the usage of preposition by holding comparisons between Spanish and Arabic as for sentence structure.
- **Authentic materials**: to make use of authentic texts (e.g. media) and conversational practice, thus, helping students practice grammatical rules in actual contexts.

DISCUSSION

Data from this research confirms that foreign-language interference from Arabic stands as the essential element affecting students' difficulties with Spanish grammar. The statistical data shows noun-based errors constitute the majority of mistakes made by Arabic-speaking students when they learn Spanish through such errors targeting article use in nouns and possessive adjective combinations and numerals and gender agreements with nouns and adjectives. Students encounter these errors due to basic structural contrasts between their native Arabic and foreign Spanish language which affect their handling of gender-based rules and agreement systems. Spanish presents a major difficulty to Arabic learners because it demands exact agreement between elements including gender and number through numerous parts of a sentence whereas Arabic follows a simpler system. Too many errors occurred with verbs when students failed to use the correct verb tense along with the necessary linking verbs *ser* or *estar* in present-tense formation. The use of such copulative verbs in present-tense statements does not exist in Arabic because present-tense statements do not include such verbal construction. The frequent prepositional mistakes emerged as the following most common error type since students showed difficulties using both prepositions *a* and *de* correctly because Arabic lacks equivalent direct prepositions and structural alignment. The observed issues demonstrate why direct instruction of noun agreement and article usage must become an immediate focus for teaching Spanish to Arabic speakers. Instructional practices for language learning should feature specific grammar education which combines visual presentation methods with Arabic-Spanish lexical comparison as well as authentic language application work. The correction of verb and preposition mistakes must stand as a main priority by teachers through activities which focus on sentence structure development as well as authentic real-world application of language usage. The research disclosed essential training requirements for tailor-made educational resources and Arabic-speaking learner-specific skills development which teachers strongly demanded. Both educational and instructional approaches need to understand linguistic interference effects on learners' cognitive abilities to use this understanding for building their grammatical proficiency.

CONCLUSION

This research provides important details about grammatical mistakes made by Arabic-speaking students writing in Spanish together with the elements influencing their mistakes. Educational strategies that specifically meet Arabic-speaking students' learning requirements can be developed through better comprehension of their academic challenges. The authors suggest an integrative method involving direct grammar lessons with natural language practice using genuine materials to boost Spanish grammatical proficiency among learners.

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Appendix A: The Teacher's Questionnaire

Please rate your agreement with the following statements using the scale below:1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
A. Perceived Grammatical Challenges					
1. Arabic-speaking students frequently make errors in article-noun agreement (definite/indefinite articles).					
2. Adjective-noun agreement (in gender and number) is a recurring problem in students' writing.					
3. Students struggle with matching possessive adjectives with the correct gender and number of the noun.					
4. Numeral agreement (singular/plural noun after numbers) is often incorrect in students' writing.					
5. Arabic-speaking students struggle with Spanish verb conjugation across different tenses.					
6. Students have difficulty distinguishing between preterite and present perfect tenses.					
7. The subjunctive mood presents a significant challenge for Arabic-speaking learners.					
8. Linking verbs (*ser/estar*) are often omitted in present-tense nominal or comparative sentences.					
9. Spanish prepositions are difficult for Arabic-speaking learners to master due to lack of direct equivalents.					
10. Prepositions (e.g., *a*, *de*) are frequently omitted or misused in students' writing.					
B. Teaching Strategies					
11. I use explicit grammar instruction to address frequent grammatical errors.					
12. I employ contrastive analysis to highlight differences between Arabic and Spanish.					
13. I design specific exercises targeting the most common error types made by Arabic-speaking students.					
14. I incorporate authentic materials to contextualize grammar use.					
15. I use visual aids to support understanding of abstract grammatical rules.					
16. Peer correction and group activities are part of my error correction strategy.					
17. I provide feedback focused on form as well as meaning when correcting errors.					
18. I encourage students to reflect on their own errors as part of the learning process.					
C. Teacher training					
19. I have received formal training in teaching Spanish as a second language.					
20. I have received specific training related to the linguistic background of Arabic-speaking learners.					
21. I feel well-equipped to address the grammatical needs of Arabic-speaking students.					
22. I would benefit from more training or professional development focused on teaching Spanish to Arabic speakers.					
23. I am interested in having access to teaching materials specifically designed for Arabic-speaking students.					
24. I believe collaboration with other teachers working with Arabic-speaking students would enhance my instructional practices.					
25. Institutional support (e.g., resources, training) is essential for effectively teaching Spanish to Arabic-speaking learners.					

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