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Investigating Language Transfer Effect of Arabic and Spanish on English Using Toefl Corpus

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ABSTRACT

The first language, or also known as a mother tongue, can influence second language acquisition (SLA). Contrastive analysis theory state that mother tongue can either facilitate or hinder second language acquisition. The similarities between first language and second language facilitate the learning process while the differences between L1 and L2 could sometimes hinder the learning process and cause a negative transfer. Thus, to comprehend the impact of L1 on L2, it is necessary to analyze the language performance of EFL learners. The objective of this study was to investigate the negative transfer effect of Arabic and Spanish as a first language (L1) on learning English as a foreign language (L2). The data was collected using TOEFL corpus. The researcher used a qualitative method. The errors were collected and analyzed based on rubric. The findings showed that Arabic and Spanish had a negative transfer effect on English as a second language. Arabic language had more negative transfer effect on English than Spanish language.

Keywords: TOEFL corpus, Language transfer effect, L1, L2