

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Vol. 4. Issue.4., 2017 (Oct-Dec)



INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER  
INDIA

2395-2628(Print):2349-9451(online)

## THE IMPACT OF DONGOLESE LANGUAGE IN LEARNING ENGLISH

ABAZAR MOHAMMED NUGD ALLAH

Mohammed

University of Bahri

Khartoum- Sudan



### ABSTRACT

The present research aims at investigating the Impact of Dongolese Language in Learning English, the purpose is to investigate how learning English have been affected by Dongolese learners. The method used in the study is the error analysis (EA) and contrastive Analysis (CA) approaches. The subject of the study consist of Dongolese students in North Sudan, the researcher used the questionnaire for gathering data. It has been found that, most of Dongolese learners tested have been affected by colloquial Arabic rather than Dongolese while learning English.

### 1.0. Context of the research

In Sudan Arabic and English languages for Dongolese learners are used as an instructional language and foreign language at educational institutions. Pedagogically, learning EFL confronts different aspects of interlanguage, intralanguage, mother tongue constrains, fossilization and language conflict. Hence, deviation from English language's convention and norms among Dongolese learners is inevitable. Furthermore, it can help teachers, educators and syllabus designer comprehend the major sources of errors among Dongolese learners aiming at finding out the appropriate pedagogic and linguistics remedies.

Teaching can also benefit from the results of this study by providing learners with word lists of problematic lexical items and the lexical errors that affect them. Doing exercises will help reduce the number of lexical errors, and thus improve the quality of students' written tasks, in addition, Lexical errors are considered to be very damaging to communication, because they affect the meaning of the message.

Although several researches have been conducted in discussing the various errors committed and language use by learners of English in Sudan, there has been little discussion in the area of language use among local Sudanese language.

### 1.1. Statement of the problem

This research will attempt to investigate language use by Dongolese EFL in Sudan in order of facilitate the process of teaching and learning English among Dongolese communities and to give Dongolese learners an insight about their problematic areas while learning English, in addition the researcher would like to contribute to his community by facilitating learning English among Dongolese learners.

### 1.2 .Questions of the research

The researcher raises a number of important questions whose answers, hopefully, provide a valuable insight into the language use by Dongolese learners while learning English

1. To what extent does the Dongolese language in Sudan affect learning English?
2. What kinds of language use experienced by Dongolese learners while learning English?

### 1.3. Research objectives

1. To find out the kinds of errors committed by Dongolese learners while learning English.
2. To determine the aspect of language that has been affected by these errors.

### 1.4. Hypothesis of the research

The researcher hypothesizes that:

1. Dongolese learners of English affected by different types of lexical errors in language use while learning English.
2. These errors are due to mother tongue interference as a major cause of difficulty, and other factors besides.

### 1.5. Significance of the study

This research is hopefully expected to be a significant contribution to English language teaching and learning of Nile Nubian groups in NS in general, and Dongolese groups in particular. The study will provide new insights into Dongolese lexical errors and language use while learning English, so the coming researcher can benefit from it, when they conduct studies relevant to error of Dongolese in English. From the finding of this research Dongolese learners of English will have an insight about their problematic areas in English. Teachers who teach in Dongolese communities will have an idea about their students' errors in English language. Syllabus designers might modify the syllabus to meet the needs of these local languages not only Nile Nubian groups but also local languages in Sudan in general.

### 1.6. Limitation of the study

This research is limited to students (third class secondary schools) who lived in Dongla city and the rural areas around it. It focuses on language use and errors experienced by Dongolese.

### 1.7. Definition of some important terms

The following terms will be used throughout the study and have therefore defined procedurally as follows:

**Dongolese language:** Is one of Nubian languages family and it is the language spoken in the NS by Dongolese groups.

**Colloquial Arabic:** A language used in conversation, but not in the formal speaking or writing in almost all parts of Sudan.

**Standard Arabic:** Ancient in its form and no longer used in spoken form, it is used in formal speech or writing (Oxford Advanced learners dictionary, 2002).

**Lexical errors:** Is a deviation in form and /or meaning of a target language lexical word. In other words it is the incorrect choice of lexical item.

**Inter lingual:** It refers to errors that are caused by the learner's mother tongue.

**Intra lingual:** It refers to errors that are not caused by the learner's mother tongue.

## 2.0. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Frame work

#### 2.2. Language Acquisition and Learning

Corder (1967) distinguished between learning and Acquiring, learning native language is inevitable, while learning second language is not. Learning mother tongue is part and parcel of the maturation process of the child, while learning second language, begins after the completion of maturation process. Krashen (1981) also differentiate between Acquiring and learning, the former refers to the subconscious process of picking up a language through exposure and the latter to the conscious process of studying it.

In the case of first language, learners have an unlimited number of hypotheses concerning the language she\ he is learning where as in the case of second language, learners have only one hypothesis she\ he needs to test:

"Are the systems of the new language the same or different from those of the language I know? And if different, what is their nature?"

One of the hypothesis states that a human infant is born with an innate predisposition to acquire language; the child is to be in touch with the language for the process of a acquisition to begin. The child has an internal mechanism which enables him\her to form a grammar of a particular language. Miller (1964) has pointed out that if the researcher want to create an independent method to replicate a child's performance, the way they test different aspects of grammar can only be decided after a clear investigation of the

successive stages of language a acquired by human children. This can only be done only through a longitudinal study of a child's language throughout the course of its development (Mc Neill 1966). However, Palmer (1992) maintained, that human being are all endowed by nature with the capacity for assimilating language and that this capacity remained available to them in a latent state after the acquisition of initial stages of language. The adult is seen as child acquiring a foreign language.

It is obviously observed that human being learns a second language if he \she has been exposed to the language environment , and that from attitudinal point of view, motivation and intelligence appear to be two essential factors enhancing second language learning.

Corder (1971) argues that the processes of first and second language acquisition are fundamentally the same. If the utterances of the first and second language learners are different, the differences might be in the following: maturational development, motivation for learning and the circumstances of learning. In spite of these differences, both first and second language learners build up their own grammar and gradually proceed towards the grammar of the language they are learning.

In the past, the focus of attention in L2 writing research has been mainly on the similarities between L1 and L2 writing processes despite the "salient and important differences" between them (Silva, 1993). Wang and Wen (2002: 225) state that:

"One important difference between L1 and L2 writing processes is that L2 writers have more than one language at their disposal. They may use both L1 and L2 for cognitive operations when they are composing in the L2. This difference has received limited attention from second language acquisition researchers, resulting in little understanding of the unique features of L2 writing and a lack of a coherent, comprehensive L2 writing theory".

## 2.4 The Scope of Contrastive Analysis

Lado (1957) (quoted in Ellis 1985) maintains that contrastive analysis is the "*systematic comparison of specific linguistic characteristics of two or more languages*". According to him, contrastive analysis is very important if one wants to teach a foreign or second language in the most efficient way. Lado (1957) quoted in Richard (1974) argued that:

"Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture, both productively when attempting to speak the language ... and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language".

James (1998:178) identified three main diagnosis-based categories of errors:

**2.4.1 Inter lingual:** It refers to errors that caused by the learner's mother tongue. For example Sudanese learners sometimes might produce *the electricity was cut*; 'Cut' is an interference from Arabic language (gtaat).

**2. 4.2. Intra lingual:** It refers to errors that are not caused by the learner's mother tongue; they may be caused by inadequate learning, difficulties inherent in the TL itself, faulty teaching, confused thinking or lack of contrast of both languages

### 2.4.3. Learning strategy –based errors

**1. False analogy:** Here the learner falsely assume that the new item say B behaves like say A. He/she knows that girl A has its plural girls and assumes that child B behaves like wise, so pluralizes to \* *Childs*.

**2. Misanalysis:** Here the learners have formulated a hypothesis regarding L2 item. For example they are carnivorous plants and \* its name comes from ... the false concept here is that it is the s- pluralized form of it. The learner used the(s) to create a plural of it, it supposed to be there.

**3. Incomplete rule application:** This is the converse of overgeneralization for example: Nobody knew where *was Barbie (Barbie was)*, here the learners have selected a wh element, but have omitted to invert subject and verb.

**4. Overlooking co occurrence restrictions:** An example of this would be *enjoy to learn (learning)* about America, caused by not knowing the fact that the verb enjoy chooses a gerundial complement.

**5. Hyper correction:** This result from the learners over-monitoring their L2 output, one might claim that the learners intentionally suppress of a potential L1 transfer for fear of being wrong. For example the *seventeen years old girl*.

**6. Overgeneralization: or system simplification:** An example is the generalization of the relative pronoun *that* for example.

Bill, *that* had a great sense of unconventional morality...

#### 2.4.4. Communication strategy – based errors:

##### 1. Holistic strategies

Holistic is a term refers to the learners' assumption that if you can say X in the L2, then you must be able to say Y. The most general term for this is approximation. For instance, French learner of English might substitute *credibility* for the intended truth. In addition, one can use a super ordinate term *fruits* for *blackberries*. Another option is to use an antonym, for example '*not happy for sad*'. A fourth option is to coin a word, for instance, *until you are unconscious to lose your sensities (senses)*.

##### 2. Analytic strategies

Circumlocution (expressing the concept indirectly, by allusion rather than by direct reference).

#### 2.4.5. Induced errors

The term 'induced' was first used by Stenson (1983) to refer to learner errors

'that result more from the classroom situation than from either the students' incomplete competence in English grammar (Intralingual errors) or first language interference( interlingual errors)'.

(Stenson 1983:256). They are the reflection of being misled by the ways in which the teachers give definitions, examples, explanations and arrange practice opportunities. Stenson went on to say that the teacher who introduced the verb *worship* as a general word for pray, which the learners already knew. The learners also knew that pray selects the preposition to, which they believed to be applied to *worship*. There are many types of induced errors:

- a- Material induced errors.
- b- Teacher-talk induced errors.
- c- Exercise-based induced errors.
- d- Error induced by pedagogical priorities.

#### 2.5 Previous Studies

Dongolese language(language under study)a member of the Nile-Saharan family. They belongs to the eastern sudanic branch to which the Nubian group affiliates. The Nubian group includes: Nile Nubian, Hill Nubian and Darfur Nubian, which are distributed, as proposed by Bell, H, and C (1973) .

Samira (2001:227) undertook a comparative study of three Nubian branches (i.e. Nile Nubian, Darfur Nubian and Kordofan Nubian) in order to determine the kind of relationship that holds between them. Dongolese, Midob and Kubur were chosen to represent the three branches respectively.

She tested the genetic relationship by comparing one grammatical aspect (Verbal suffixes). She found out that Dongolese was the closest to the old Nubian in terms of both forms and distribution. She also (2001:112) noted that the use o epenthetic vowel/i/is common in Dongolese.

#### METHODOLOGY

##### 3.0. Introduction

Error Analysis and contrastive analysis method have been used by many researchers to obtain results on language use and subjects under investigation.

##### 3.1. Data Collection

Data have been obtained from students by using questionnaire.

##### 3.1.1. Subjects

The subjects that have been chosen for the present study consists of a group of Sudanese secondary schools, and their ages ranges between 16-18 years. Four schools (boys and girls) were chosen from Dongla city and the villages around it in Northern Sudan. 100 subjects were selected , 50 of the subjects are females and 50 males. All the subjects have studied six years of EFL. Some of them speak Dongolese Language; others speak Arabic as their mother tongue. The Justification for choosing the subjects from Dongla city is that since we are looking for a real native speaker of Dongolese, it is the general belief that in NS the more you go further north the more you find people who stick to their mother tongue.

The researcher chooses the above subjects for the following reasons:

- 1) Dongla city and the village around it is the place of real native speakers of Dongolese groups.
- 2) The researcher chooses third year secondary school because students were all in a Dongolese speaking Language environment.
- 3) The researcher did not choose students from University of Dongla because students are from different parts of Sudan and it is difficult to select Dongolese groups among them.

### 3.1.2. Instruments

Data have been obtained from the students' questionnaire.

### 3.1.3. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was given only to Dongolese groups. Students were given half an hour to finish and they were then collected. The questionnaire has been statistically treated using (SPSS) system of an The questionnaire investigates the use of language among Dongolese groups. The objectives of the questionnaire have been to find out the language spoken when the participants were children, to examine the language (s) participants are speaking now, what are the languages used with participants' families? Recognizing the language (s) used while learning in school and in everyday context like common markets. And the last question is devoted to the learning or acquiring other languages such as Mahas language, Skood language. The questionnaire was given only to Dongolese groups.

## 4.0. Data Analysis Techniques

**4.1. The Questionnaire :** This section presents the analysis and results of the questionnaire used in the study.

**Table 1:**

|                | Question (1) language spoken by children |                  |                   |                    | Question (2) language spoke now a day by the subject |                  |                   |                    | Question (3) Have you ever lived in a lager city or a multirole city like Khartoum ? |
|----------------|--|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--|
|                | Standard Arabic language                 | English language | Colloquial Arabic | Dongolese Language | Standard Arabic language                             | English language | Colloquial Arabic | Dongolese Language |  |
| More           | 43                                       | 0                | 54                | 11                 | 54   | 11               | 59                | 28                 | 47   |
| Less           | 11                                       | 1                | 3                 | 35                 | 3  | 41               | 3                 | 32                 | 53   |
| Not applicable | 46                                       | 99               | 43                | 54                 | 43   | 48               | 38                | 40                 | 0  |
| Percent%       | 100%                                     |                  |                   |                    | 100%   |                  |                   |                    | 100%   |
| Total          | 100                                      |                  |                   |                    | 100  |                  |                   |                    | 100  |

As can be seen from table (1) question( 1) 43% of the subjects speak standard Arabic language more when they were children, and 11% speak it less, where 46% of the subjects standard Arabic is not applicable to them, in another word they did not use standard Arabic while they were children. In the second language (English) Shows that only1% of the subjects speak English less when they were children, while 99% did not speak English while they were children. In the third language (colloquial Arabic) 11% of the subjects speak colloquial more during child hood period 35% of children speak it less, while 54% did not speak Colloquial while they were children. In the fourth language (Dongolese language) 54% of the subjects speak Dongolese more and 3% speak it less, while 43%did not speak Dongolese while they were children. It is clear from this question that most of the subjects speak colloquial Arabic during child hood period which represents 54% of the subjects.

In question (2) 54% of the subjects speak standard Arabic language now a day more, 3% speak it less, while 43% did not use standard Arabic now a day. In the second language (English), 11% of the subjects speak English more now a day and 41% speak it less, while 48% did not use English now a day. In the third language (colloquial Arabic), 59% speak colloquial Arabic more and 3% speak it less, while 38 did not speak colloquial

Arabic now a day. In the fourth language (Dongolese), 28% of the subjects speak it more and 32% speak it less, where 40% did not speak it now a day. In the question what are the language (s) you are speaking now, again, it is clear from the answer, that most of the subjects of the study speak colloquial Arabic now, which represent 59%.

In question (3) 47% of the subjects have lived in a large town in Sudan like Khartoum and 53% have not lived. It is clear from the result that approximately half of the subjects were lived in a large town for some time.

Table 2:

|                | Question (4) language used at home |                  |                   |                    | Question (5) language of the study |                  |                   |                    | Question (6) language used in Every day context |                  |                   |                    |
|----------------|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
|                | Standard Arabic language           | English language | Colloquial Arabic | Dongolese Language | Standard Arabic language           | English language | Colloquial Arabic | Dongolese Language | Standard Arabic language                        | English language | Colloquial Arabic | Dongolese Language |
| More           | 6                                  | 5                | 56                | 25                 | 75                                 | 12               | 29                | 2                  | 36  | 1                | 53                | 16                 |
| Less           | 2                                  | 10               | 42                | 26                 | 16                                 | 36               | 17                | 10                 | 7   | 4                | 8                 | 20                 |
| Not applicable | 92                                 | 85               | 2                 | 49                 | 9                                  | 52               | 54                | 88                 | 57  | 95               | 39                | 64                 |
| Percent %      | 100%                               |                  |                   |                    | 100%                               |                  |                   |                    | 100%  |                  |                   |                    |
| Total          | 100                                |                  |                   |                    | 100                                |                  |                   |                    | 100   |                  |                   |                    |

In table (2) question (4) 6% of the subjects speak classical Arabic language more with their families and 2% speak it less, while 92 did not use it at home .As it is obvious in the second language (English) 5% of the subjects speak English more with their families, and 10% speak it less while 85% did not speak it at home. As it is clear in the third language (colloquial Arabic) 56% of the subjects speak colloquial Arabic language more with their families, and 42% speak it less, while 2% did not speak it at home. In the fourth language (Dongolese) 25% of the subjects speak Dongolese language more and 26% speak it less at home, while 49% did not speak it at home. Concerning language used at home it is obvious from the result that most of the subjects speak colloquial Arabic with their families which represent the highest percent 56%.

In table (2) question (5) 75% of the subjects speak standard Arabic during their study more, 16% speak it less, while 9% did not speak standard Arabic during their study time. In the second language (English) 12% speak English more during their study and 36% speak it less, while 52 did not speak it in the study time. In the third language (colloquial) 29% of the subjects speak colloquial Arabic more during their study, 17% speak it less, and 54% did not speak it during the school. In the fourth language (Dongolese) 2% of the subjects speak Dongolese language more while they were studying, 10% speak it less, while 88% did not use it during their study. Concerning the language of the study most of the subjects speak classical Arabic during their study, which represent the highest percent 75%.

In table (2) question (6) 36% speak standard Arabic more in ever day context, 7% speak it less, while 57% did not speak it. In the second language (English) 1% of the subjects speak English language more in ever day context , and 4% speak it less while 95% of the subjects did not use it in their every day life. In the third language (colloquial) 53% of the subjects speak colloquial Arabic more in their everyday context, 8% speak it less and 39% did not answer use it. In the fourth language (Dongolese) 16% of the subjects speak Dongolese language more in every day context, 20% speak it less and 64% did not speak it in every day context. In this question about language used in everyday context like the common markets, it is obvious that most of the subjects of the study speak colloquial Arabic in their everyday life which represents 53% of the subjects.



Table (3): Language Fluency

|  | Standard Arabic language |           | English language |           | Colloquial Arabic language |           | Dongolese language |           | Other languages |           |
|--|--------------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
|  | Frequency                | Present % | Frequency        | Present % | Frequency                  | Present % | Frequency          | Present % | Frequency       | Present % |
| I don't understand or speak                    | 1                        | 1         | 25               | 25        | 1                          | 1         | 17                 | 17        | 14              | 14        |
| I have a little knowledge but I don't speak it | 5                        | 5         | 30               | 30        | 4                          | 4         | 32                 | 32        | 30              | 30        |
| Good knowledge and speaking                    | 27                       | 27        | 20               | 20        | 93                         | 93        | 48                 | 48        | 5               | 5         |
| Use it in writing and speaking                 | 64                       | 64        | 22               | 22        | 2                          | 2         | -                  | -         | 5               | 5         |
| Not applicable total                           | 3                        | 3         | 3                | 3         | -                          | -         | 3                  | 3         | 46              | 46        |
| Total  | 100                      | 100       | 100              | 100       | 100                        | 100       | 100                | 100       | 100             | 100       |

From table (3) 1% of the subjects did not understand or speak standard Arabic language 93% have a well knowledge of it , 4% read and write with it, 2% did not use it. In the second language(English) 25% of the subjects did not understand or speak English language 30% have a little knowledge but they don't speak it , 20% have a well knowledge and speaking, 22% read and write with it, while 3% did not use it. In the third language (colloquial) 1% of the subjects did not understand or speak colloquial, 4% have a little knowledge but they don't speak it, 93% have a well knowledge and speaking, 2% read and write with it, while 0% did not use it. In the fourth language (Dongolese)17% of the subjects did not understand or speak Dongolese language, 32% have a little knowledge but they did not speak it, 48% have a well knowledge and speaking of it, 3% did not speak it. In the question of other languages ( such as Mahas or Halfawa)14% of the subjects did not understand or speak other language, 30% have a little knowledge but they don't speak it , 5% have a well knowledge and speaking, 5% read and write with it, while 46% did not use it. This question is intended to know whether the subjects know other language or not. Concerning the question of the language fluency, most of the subjects understand and speak colloquial Arabic very well and it represents 93% (table 3). To sum up this section, it is obvious from the result obtained that most of the subjects have tendency towards colloquial Arabic more than standard, English and Dongolese language. This will help when analyzing errors.

### 3.1.9. Recommendations

The following are the recommendations the researcher has made:

- (i) Syllabus designer should bear in their minds the nature of local languages in Sudan when designing the syllabus.
- (ii) Dongolese language should be taught optionally especially at basic level.
- (iii) Students should be encouraged in whatever situations to use their mother tongue language.

### Bibliography

Ambroo, S (2000), "Descripcion de los Errors Lexicos de los ispanohablantes:

Analisis de la Production Escrita de it ,el Certificado eCompetencia eneral" en Italiano como L2. in E.de Miguel. Fernandez Lagunila and F. Cartoni eds) Sorbe el lenguaji: miradas plurale sy Singulares(pp 53-72). Madrid: Arrescife.

Bell, H. (1973) "An Extinct Nubian Language in Kordofan", Sudan notes & Records 24, pp. 73-80.

- Celaya, M. L. and Torras, M. R. (2001). "L1 Influence and EFL Vocabulary: Do Children Rely more on L1 than Adult Learners? Proceedings of the 25th AEDEAN Meeting, University of Granada, 13 –15 December (pp.1– 14).
- Corder, S.P. (1974): 'The Significance of Learners' Errors'. In Richards, J.C.(ed): Error Analysis. Longman, U.S.A. PP 19 - 27.
- Dulay, H, Burt, M. and Krashen, eds. (1982). *Language Two*. Newburg House, Rowley.
- Hemchua, S. and Schmitt, N. (2006), "An Analysis of Lexical Errors in the English Composition of Thai learners". Prospect 21(3) pp, 3- 25.
- Miller, G.A." Language and Psychology" in E.H. Lingberry(ed) New directions in the study of language, Boston. pp 88-95.
- James, C. (1988). *Errors in language learning and Use: Exploring error analysis*. Harlow Addison Wesley Longman.
- Klassen, J. (1991): "Using Student Errors for Teaching", In English Teaching Forum. Washington. Vol. 29, No 1, PP 10 -15.
- Samira, A.M. (2000) A comparative Study of Verbal suffixes in Nubain Language. Focus: Dongolese, Kudur and Midob. PhD thesis, Faculty of Arts. University of Khartoum
- Richard, J. and Psampson, G.(1974) *the study of learner English*.
- Palmer, H.E.(1922) *The principles of language study*. London. Jack, R.(1971) 'A non- Contrastive Approach to Error Analysis'. English language Teaching, pp. 204 – 19
- Wang, W. and Wen, Q.(2002) L1 use in the L2 composing process: An explanatory study of 16 Chinese EFL writers. Journal of Second Language Writing 11:pp.225-246.