EFL Arab Learners' Misselection of English Prepositions: Analysis of Interlingual Errors in Voice Messages at Chat Groups

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Abstract

This study examines interlingual prepositional errors that EFL Arab learners wrongly substitute (misuse) during their verbal interactions (on social media). It aims to investigate the most frequent prepositions that EFL Arabic learners misuse in their conversations. The focus was on selected prepositions: 'in', 'from', 'to', 'for', and 'by'. The data was gathered by analysing audio recordings of participants' responses within a WhatsApp chat group. It showed that EFL Arab learners make incorrect substitutions with any collection of prepositions (typically two or three) that correspond to one equivalent preposition in their mother tongue. The participants frequently substitute prepositions 'in, on, and at' as equivalents for Arabic preposition 'fi', 'for' and 'to' as equivalents for Arabic preposition 'ila', and 'from and of' as equivalents for Arabic preposition 'min'. Therefore, the participants incorrectly employ 'in' instead of 'on and at', 'for' instead of 'to' and vice versa, and 'from' instead of 'of and since'. The collections of English prepositions that have only one Arabic counterpart are a cause of confusion, as evidenced by the incorrect substitutions that EFL Arab learners made. Based on findings, the area of the prepositions of multi-uses and semantically complex requires contextualized teaching strategies that contrastively present prepositions in bundles or phrases.

Keywords: preposition, substitution, incorrect, wrongly, equivalents

1. Introduction

Learning prepositions is crucial towards developing effective communication. Even though prepositions don't always have separate meanings of their own, proficient English speakers may find it difficult to express their ideas in a clear and cohesive way if they lack a solid understanding of prepositions. Due to cross-linguistic differences in English and Arabic prepositional systems, EFL learners have always struggled to use prepositions properly (Shakir & Yaseen, 2015). They noted that differences in preposition numbers and a lack of one-to-one mapping between the languages are the root causes of EFL learners' difficulties. As a result, EFL learners struggle to decide which prepositions to employ. Prepositions' difficulty is not always stable, but students may face much more difficulties in using some English prepositions than others (Alayesh, 2012). Multi-functional nature of prepositions and lack of a direct corresponding preposition cause confusion and uncertainty to Arab learners, who incorrectly substitute prepositions even at an advanced level of learning (Hanaqtah et al., 2023). Many prepositions have several different functions that can carry different meanings and usages; some of these prepositions have meanings that are difficult to infer when compared to their Arabic equivalents. The essential English prepositions that EFL Arab learners struggle with misusing include 'in', 'on', 'at', 'from', 'into', 'onto', 'to', and 'for'. For example, EFL Arab learners think that some prepositions must come after or before particular words, such as 'from' must be after 'afraid', 'by' after 'compare', 'in' before 'days', ... etc. Thus, the main issue in this study is that not every English preposition has an exact equivalent in Arabic, and vice versa. It focuses on EFL Arab learners' incorrect substitution for prepositions due to language interference. Results of the current study will promote the acquisition of English language skills and communication in EFL, especially in using prepositions properly. Determining the most prepositions that students incorrectly substitute will help EFL instructors devise creative and innovative teaching materials and instructional techniques that promote students' competence in using prepositions. Thus, this study intends to answer the following questions: What are the most frequent prepositions that EFL Arab learners incorrectly substitute? And what is the major reason behind those EFL Arab learners incorrectly substituting these prepositions?.

2. Literature Review

Several studies investigated the challenges that Arabic learners have when learning English prepositions. Most of these studies attempted to compare certain English prepositions to their Arabic counterparts. This section will go over key definitions, the most important common prepositions, and a summary of several related studies. Richards and Schmidt (2002) defined the two key definitions, they define prepositions as function words that relate noun entities to one another or to any parts of speech in an utterance, indicating location, direction, possession, and so on. They also defined interlingual error as an error produced by language transfer from the learner's native language. According to Al-Khawalda and Alhaisoni (2012), first language (L1) transfer is the process of generalizing or applying a

learner's knowledge of their L1 language to help them use and grasp the target/second language. Learners transfer linguistic elements and structures from their native languages to the target language, particularly in the early stages of learning the second language. Language interference concerns the extent to which learners can use their intuitive knowledge of their mother tongue in L2, as well as the transferability of speech acts from L1 to L2 (Azzouz, 2013). For instance, since the preposition 'at' does not exist in Arabic, EFL Arabic learners are more likely to use 'in' rather than 'at'. Consequently, during speech acts in a second language, learners make numerous errors because expressing knowledge requires altering its form, moving beyond simple literal translation. (Al Alawi, 2016; Ali & Al- Rushaidi, 2016). The students still had difficulty employing the appropriate prepositions, due to a lack of comprehension of the distinctions between them and the influence of their mother tongue. According to the data obtained by Wairimu & Ngugi (2021), Hameed (2019), and Alaina (2019), they found that selection/substitution errors were the most common. Substitution is defined by Corder (1973) as the selection of an incorrect element. In the Iraqi EFL context, Ahmed (2023) highlighted negative transfer as a major contributor to prepositional misuse, noting that limited exposure to varied linguistic contexts and intralingual overgeneralization also play significant roles. Similarly, Fareh and Saeed (2009) observed that Arab EFL learners often substitute English prepositions due to the influence of their native Arabic, resulting in incorrect choices, some prepositions being more frequently misused than others. This pattern of substitution underscores how deeply negative transfer can affect learners' grammatical accuracy in English.

2.1 Prepositions in English vs. Arabic

Preposition errors in English can arise in several ways: by omitting a necessary preposition, inserting an unnecessary one, or substituting an incorrect preposition for the correct choice. However, research shows that the most common cause of these errors among EFL learners is improper preposition selection influenced by language transfer. For example, mistakes like "Jane gets up *in 6:00 a.m." and "They don't work *in Friday" reflect direct interference from the learner's native language. This issue is especially persistent and often fossilized in learners whose first language is Arabic, largely due to negative transfer effects (Albelihi & Al-Ahdal, 2025). One contributing factor is that the English preposition "in" is often confused with the Arabic preposition "fi" (/fiː/), despite differences in usage between the two languages (Mohammad & Shwater, 2018). Despite the many similarities between Arabic and English languages, the use of prepositions distinguishes them and makes it difficult for EFL learners to comply. In both languages, they ('in' and its equivalent 'fi') are used to express time or/and space, or/and an in-depth abstract association. Shakir and Yaseen (2015) pointed out that the Arabic preposition 'fi' is used as (in, into, at, on, and inside, etc.). They explained that, as a result, 'fi' has great semantic ability in both formal and informal language usage. It is the filer through which all these English prepositional counterparts must pass. Thus, the Arabic preposition 'fi' is used to refer to time and place in a variety of situationsFor example, EFL Arab young learners are likely to incorrectly substitute several prepositions when comparing the meanings of English prepositions to their Arabic equivalents, shown in the examples below. Because the preposition 'at' does not exist in Arabic, students normally expect them to replace it with the preposition 'in', as in the following: 'They got up *in 06:00 a.m.', 'they didn't argue *in home', 'they were working *in a Chinese firm', and 'they were particularly good *in painting'. Because the preposition 'at' does not exist in Arabic, EFL Arab learners normally expect them to replace it with the preposition 'in' in different situations, as in: 'They got up *in six a.m.', 'they didn't argue *in home', 'they were working *in a Chinese firm', and 'they were particularly good *in painting'. In this regard, because one Arabic preposition, such as 'fi', corresponds to two or more English prepositions (on, at, and in), EFL Arabic students may struggle to distinguish between prepositions with the same function (Mohammad & Shwater, 2018). They illustrate that learners frequently use 'in', which is a directly translation of the Arabic 'fi', while ignoring 'at' and 'on'. It is evident that EFL Arabic learners form a one-to-one correlation between English and Arabic prepositions, which causes them to wrongly select prepositions from the English structure when equivalents do not exist in Arabic.

The preposition 'to' is equivalent to Arabic 'ila' = /ɪlə/, the preposition 'by' is equivalent to Arabic 'bi' = /bɪ/, the preposition 'from' is equivalent to Arabic 'min' = /mɪn/, and the preposition 'in' is equivalent to Arabic 'fi' =/fiː/, according to Shakir and Yaseen (2015). The preposition 'to' in English and 'ila' in Arabic are used to show movement of an item towards a point, and the preposition 'for' is also used to express movement. As a result, EFL Arabic learners again assign one Arabic preposition 'ila' with two English prepositions 'to' and 'for' (Shakir and Yaseen, 2015). Thus, both 'to' and 'for' correspond to the Arabic preposition 'ila'. The preposition 'by' is equivalent to the Arabic preposition 'bi', which refers to the way or manner of using or accomplishing something. For EFL Arabic learners who translate the following sentence literally, the meaning of the preposition 'by' seems meaningful and equivalent in the sentence 'He wrote the book *by a pen'. In certain situations, the English preposition 'by' and the preposition 'with' may have similar meanings. But in Arabic, the preposition 'with' generally has a different meaning that indicates two or more people or objects are present in the same place (e.g., I do it with my father).

The prepositions 'from' and 'of' are different in meaning in English. However, in Arabic, they have the same Arabic translated preposition 'min'= / mɪn /, which confuses the EFL Arabic learners if they try to differentiate between them. For an EFL Arabic learner, the preposition 'from' in the sentence' She's afraid from the dark places' is equivalent to the Arabic preposition 'min' when translated literally. In addition, the meanings of the prepositions 'from' and' since' are equivalent in Arabic when they are used to indicate a point in a period. On the other hand, the preposition "of" could be used to indicate where a group of people came from, such as 'the people of Italy'. It can also be used to specify something general, such as 'University of Tabuk'. To sum up, EFL Arab learners' difficulty with the prepositions' misselection is due to the differences between English prepositions and Arabic that result in one preposition having several meanings, and one meaning can be expressed by more than prepositions. Another problem is that prepositions lack rules, making their use challenging for EFL Arab students (Mohammed, 2011).

2.2 Previous Studies

Several studies used a variety of methodologies to explore EFL Arab learners' difficulty with English prepositions. This section reviews a few of these studies that follow case studies. The analyzed data of these studies revealed the reasons for EFL Arab learners' difficulty in learning prepositions effectively. Shakir and Yaseen's (2015) study on how Iraqi students learn English prepositions revealed that one of the most significant obstacles to correctly learning English prepositions is the strength and influence of their native tongue. Iraqi EFL students force their native language's syntactic and semantic structures and patterns onto English. As a result, the impact of the prepositional system of their mother tongue (Arabic) affects Iraqi EFL learners, leading to errors and a lack of idiomaticity. The study conducted by Fareh and Saeed (2009) attempted to determine the difficulties that Arab EFL learners encounter while using prepositions in both levels of recognition and production. Learning English prepositions proved to be a great challenge for the participants because of their various real difficulties acquiring English prepositions. The variety of meanings that each preposition has, the semantic complexity of prepositions, and the negative transfer from Arabic were identified as the primary sources of difficulty.

According to studies conducted by Terdjat (2012), Sanjaya & Bram (2020), and Al Khotaba (2013), Arab ESL students have various difficulties when it comes to replacing the prepositions 'at', 'in', 'on', and 'to'. Alkhotaba (2013) discovered that in some situations, Arab ESL learners use the preposition 'in' instead of 'on' and 'in' instead of 'at'. Furthermore, Al Yaari and Almaflehi's (2013) study attempts to analyzes Saudi EFL students' difficulty using the prepositions 'on', 'in', and 'at' in both languages Arabic and English. It revealed that the prepositions "in," "on," and "at" are the most challenging in the English language since each can convey several meanings and sometimes even the same meaning. The common conclusions of these studies have shown that prepositional errors resulting from misselection among EFL Arab learners are mostly caused by the grammatical differences between Arabic and English. Thus, the degree of grammatical variances and/or similarities between Arabic and English is the reason why Arabic speakers of English struggle to master good grammar usage.

Unlike the earlier reviewed studies, the current study looks at the most often substituted prepositions in verbal exchanges that Arab EFL learners make errors with. This study seeks to explain why most EFL Arab learners incorrectly choose to use some prepositions over others. While the previous studies, such as Shakir and Yaseen (2015), Fareh and Saeed (2009), and Terdjat (2012), sought to study EFL learners' challenges with prepositions through written composition. The emphasis was on the learners' inability to differentiate between the basic English prepositions 'in', 'on', 'at', 'to', and 'for'.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative approach to explore the errors made by EFL learners in their verbal interaction. The qualitative approach enables the researcher to analyze data in depth, particularly since this study involved spoken text (audio recording) as a primary source of data.

3.2 Participants

The sample of this study is pre-intermediate Sudanese undergraduates who have just completed their first year at Al-Fager University College, Sudan, in the academic year 2022. The participants' age range is between 20 and 22 years old. The systematic sampling method was employed to select participants based on their level of English ability. Eighty-seven students attempted the Quick Oxford Placement Test (QOPT) to ensure homogeneity in EFL proficiency. As a result, only fifty-six homogeneous EFL pre-intermediate learners were considered. The participants (selected students) were from different majors (computer science, science, business administration, information technology, and accounting). They had been learning English as a foreign language as a university requirement course. The common language spoken at home and school is their own mother tongue, which is 'Arabic'. They live in an exclusively Arabic-speaking community where colloquial Arabic is their medium of instruction, and the only way to learn and speak English is through formal instruction at college. They receive an equal amount of experience in English at the college, that is, five lectures of English per week, with each lecture being 90 minutes.

3.3 Data collection Procedure

The data was gathered through the analysis of audio recordings of participants' spoken responses in chat groups. A chat group on WhatsApp consists of the 56 selected pre-intermediate of EFL Arab participants, was created for engaging in an open-ended discussion as an assignment of reading classes. All reading lessons stages implemented at in-person classes except the last production stage that intend to be implemented on the chat group as an assignment. The participants were only allowed to interact via voice messages on the WhatsApp's chat groups. The discussion in the groups mainly depends on the selected reading topics of a variety of language structures and functions from the fourth edition of new Pre-intermediate Headway. Grammar and vocabulary were taught under language knowledge syllabuses. There were sixteen reading topics used as the main source of discussion that is done through the following seven reading lesson stages' method that was recommended by the BBC-British Council (2011) as follows:

a. Lead-in: to generate interest in the topic through contextualizing the lesson.

b. Pre-teach vocabulary: To clarify vocabulary that may prevent learners from completing the tasks.

c. Pre-text discussion: To orientate the learners to the text and activate their prior knowledge.

d. Gist task: To give learners a preliminary understanding of the text.

e. Specific information task: To give learners a better understanding of the text.

f. Detailed comprehension task: To give learners a deeper understanding of the text.

g. post-text discussion: To allow learners to comment on the text and respond to it in a personal way.

As it has been mentioned above here, all reading stages are applied in in-person reading classes, except the last stage (post-text discussion), which used to be applied in the chat group. In this chat group, the participants engage in various discussion tasks that arise from the reading lessons that are delivered in the in-person classes. All post-text discussion's activities were required to be implemented verbally in the chat groups. These activities were carefully designed to meet EFL learners' verbal interaction because post-text discussion's tasks were mainly used to focus on extending conversation through personalizing the text's topic and widening its context. To capture a wide range of different errors, these tasks were designed to elicit a variety of language structures and functions. Thus, the data was collected from the last stage of the reading lesson (post-text discussion) that was implemented verbally via WhatsApp's chat groups. Post-text discussion is a spoken activity that is good for extending the conversation in chat groups since it focuses mostly on personalizing the text's topic and broadening its context.

3.4 Task Design and Instructional Framework

The tasks in this study were carefully designed to encourage verbal interactions that reveal interlingual prepositional errors among pre-intermediate Sudanese EFL learners. They are integrated into the post-text discussion phase of reading lessons and implemented through WhatsApp voice messages, providing a naturalistic and accessible medium for authentic spoken data. Each task is thoughtfully tailored and contextually meaningful, inviting learners to engage in discussions that extend beyond the text while actively applying the target vocabulary and grammatical structures.

The instructional framework combines communicative and task-based language teaching principles, by prioritising meaningful interaction and the use of language in real-life contexts. Tasks feature open-ended questions, opportunities for opinion sharing, and text-based elaboration, all strategically designed to prompt the use of diverse prepositions and sentence structures. This approach promotes authentic communicative engagement and offers a natural context in which interlingual errors emerge, allowing for their systematic identification, classification, and analysis.

3.5 Data Analysis

The analysis in the present study focused exclusively on interlingual errors; therefore, only errors that participants were unable to self-correct were examined. The analytical procedure consisted of three stages. First, all detected errors were reviewed by an Arabic-speaking EFL specialist to determine which prepositional errors were likely attributable to interlingual transfer from Arabic. Second, the validated interlingual errors were classified according to Corder's (1973) surface strategy taxonomy, which categorises errors into four types: (a) omission of required elements, (b) addition of unnecessary or incorrect elements, (c) selection of an incorrect element, and (d) misordering of elements. This study specifically focused on prepositional substitution errors, which fall under the "selection of an incorrect element" category, and each instance was classified and counted to determine its frequency. Third, the frequency of each error type was calculated, including repeated occurrences of the same error for each preposition. Through these steps, all errors were confirmed as instances of language interference, systematically categorised, and quantified in terms of raw counts and percentage frequencies. A total of 120 prepositional errors were detected in students' written productions, as presented in the tables below.

4. Findings

The analysis of the present study showed that the most frequent errors made by Arabic participants in their conversations were the incorrect substitution of the prepositions 'in', 'to', 'for', 'by', and 'from'. The participants' selection of these English prepositions depended on their use in context, and the errors were identified based on their inability to self-correct.

4.1 Wrong Use for 'to', 'for', 'from', and 'by'

Table 1 presents the frequency and percentage of substitution errors involving directional prepositions. The errors included substituting *by* for *of* or *with*, *from* for or *since*, *to* for *for*, and *for* for *to*. The highest frequency of errors occurred in the substitution of *for* and *to*, followed by substitutions involving *from*. Errors involving *by* occurred with the lowest frequency.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Directional Preposition Substitution Errors

| Error type	Use	Frequency	Percentage	Sample of error
'by' instead 'of' 'with'	Various use	6	15%	e.g. It is much easier compared *by the last time.
'from' instead of 'of'	Various use	9	22.5%	e.g. Children are afraid *from dogs. e.g. The committee consists *from ten members.
'from' instead of 'since'	Various use	4	10%	e.g. It has been snowing *from Monday.
'to' instead of 'for'	Various use	10	25%	e.g. I was a book *to children.
'for' instead of 'to'	Various use	11	27.5%	e.g. It was her first visit *for Africa.
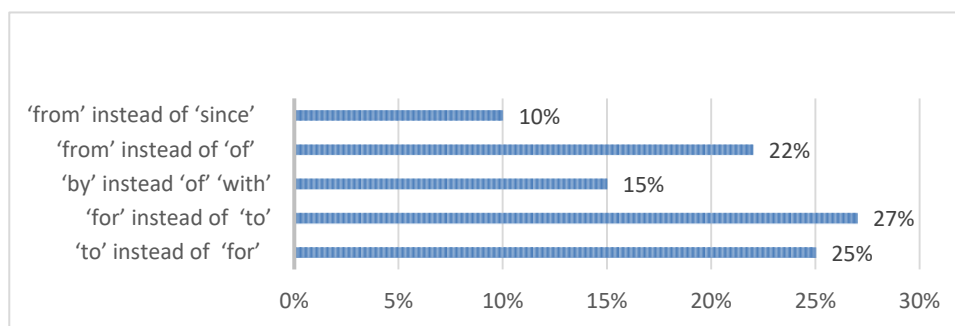
Figure 1. Wrong Substitution for 'from', 'by', 'to', and 'for'

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, participants commonly substitute prepositions incorrectly. The highest frequency errors were for 'to' and 'for', followed by substitutions involving 'from' and 'by'.

4.2 Wrong Use for 'in'

Table 2 displays the frequency and percentage of substitution errors involving the preposition in. The errors included using in instead of at or on across contexts involving time, place, and other uses.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage of Substitution Errors Involving the Preposition '*in*'

| Error type	Use	Frequency	Percentage	Sample of error
'in' instead of 'at'	Referring to time	7	8.75%	e.g. Jane gets up *in six a.m..
	Referring to place	11	13.75%	e.g. They didn`t argue *in home
'in' instead of 'on'	Referring to time	14	17.5%	e.g. They don`t work *in Friday
	Referring to place	19	23.75%	e.g. There is a large library *in the second floor.
'in' instead 'of' 'at'	Various use	9	11.25%	e.g. She is not really good *in painting. e.g. She was working *in Chinese schools. e.g. She only has a snack *in lunch time.
'in' instead of 'on'	Various use	20	25%	e.g. By then the teacher was not going to work because he was *in leave. e.g. The cat was sleeping *in the sofa. e.g. She was listening to the music *in the way to work. e.g. She sent me a card *in my birthday. e.g. *In Christmas Day, she often sends her close friends greeting cards. e.g. She told her that she would find all kinds of information *in the internet.
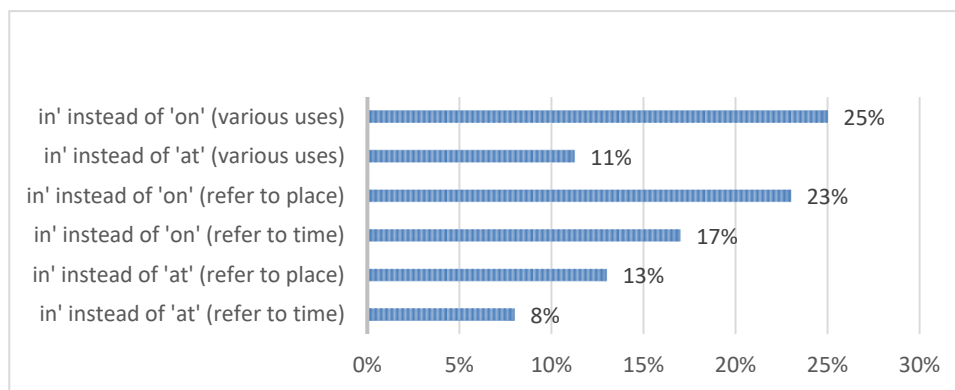
Figure 2. Wrong Substitution for 'in'

Table 2 and Figure 2 show that the participants frequently substituted 'in' for 'on' (65%) and 'in' for 'at' (35%). These errors were distributed across references to time, place, and other contexts, as summarized in the table above.

5. Discussion

The findings of the present study indicate that Arabic-speaking EFL learners frequently commit prepositional errors, particularly involving 'in', 'to', 'for', 'by', and 'from'. These errors are consistent with the influence of L1 interference, as participants often rely on literal translations from Arabic when selecting English prepositions. Specifically, the study shows that errors such as substituting 'in' for 'on' or 'at', 'for' for 'to' (and vice versa), and 'from' for 'since' or 'of' are common, confirming that the choice of prepositions is highly context-dependent and prone to negative transfer.

This pattern aligns with previous research highlighting the persistent difficulties EFL Arab learners face in mastering English prepositions. For instance, Mohammed (2011) emphasizes that prepositions are inherently challenging due to their abstract rules, and learners tend to default to literal translations from Arabic. Similarly, Mohammad and Shwater (2018) observed that the Arabic preposition 'fi' corresponds to multiple English prepositions ('in', 'on', 'at'), leading to frequent substitution errors. The current findings also corroborate the results of studies conducted in other Arabic-speaking contexts (Ali & Badawi, 2021; Ahmed, 2018; Douida, 2017; Al Yaari & Almaflehi, 2013; Alshammari, 2017; Terdjat, 2012; Al Khotaba, 2013; Arjan, et al. 2013, and Alayesh, 2012), which report similar patterns of prepositional confusion among learners.

The errors identified in this study are further explained by the one-to-many correspondence between Arabic and English prepositions, which exacerbates confusion. For example, a single Arabic preposition may map to multiple English equivalents, leading learners to choose incorrectly in verbal communication. In addition, limited exposure to authentic English input and entrenched L1 habits contribute to the persistence of these errors (Albelihi & Al-Ahdal, 2025). Collectively, these factors indicate that the difficulties EFL Arab learners face with prepositions are deeply rooted, context-dependent, and reflective of broader challenges in L2 acquisition.

In sum, the study provides empirical evidence that prepositional errors among Arabic-speaking EFL learners are systematic rather than random. The high frequency of substitutions involving 'in', 'for', 'to', and 'from' highlights the need for targeted instructional strategies that address L1 transfer, contextual usage, and the abstract nature of prepositions in English. These insights are critical for designing teaching interventions that reduce reliance on literal translation and improve learners' pragmatic and grammatical competence in English.

6. Conclusion

Using correct prepositions is a difficult task for EFL Arab learners who correspond the target language's prepositions to their mother tongues. Since the students' first language lacks a direct equivalent, prepositions can be challenging to understand (Koffi, 2010). This study investigates EFL Arab learners' interlingual prepositional errors that result from negative transfer. It aims at finding out the most frequent prepositions that EFL Arab learners wrongly substitute. Example for the most errors that the participants incorrectly substitute are 'in' instead of 'on' and 'at', 'for' instead of 'to' and vice versa, 'from' instead of 'of' and 'since'. The prepositions 'in, on, and 'at' are used as equivalents for Arabic preposition 'fi', prepositions 'for' and 'to' are equivalents of Arabic preposition 'ila', and prepositions 'from' and 'of' are used as equivalents for Arabic preposition 'min'. It concluded that the most frequent errors that EFL Arab learners wrongly substitute are formed in terms of groups of prepositions made of two or more prepositions; these prepositions correspond to one only equivalent preposition in learners' native language. Thus, two or more English propositions that have only one and the same equivalent in the EFL Arab learners' tongues represent a source of confusion that results in the wrong substitution for the preposition of the target language in verbal interaction.

7. Limitations and Implications

The investigation was limited to analysing audio recordings of participants' responses within a WhatsApp chat group; further research can be done on participants' interactions that are taken in-person forums and other different virtual platforms. In addition, the study's treatment covered a limited number of prepositions applied to a small number of participants. One of the most significant implications of this study is that when two or more English propositions have just one counterpart in the EFL Arab learners' tongues, they cause confusion, resulting in the incorrect substitution of the target language's preposition in verbal engagement. As a result, EFL Arab learners' challenges with prepositions due to their semantic complexity and multi-use necessitate interactive teaching procedures that offer prepositions as bundles or phrases. Thus, the prepositions of multi-uses and semantically complex require contextualised teaching procedures that contrastively present prepositions in bundles or phrases. It concludes that EFL teachers should be aware that EFL Arab learners often rely on their L1 knowledge in understanding English prepositions. Therefore, EFL Arab learners' difficulties due to prepositions' semantic complexity and prepositions of multi-uses require interactive teaching strategies presenting prepositions in bundles or phrases. Based on findings, the area of the prepositions of multi-uses and semantically complex requires contextualized teaching strategies that contrastively present prepositions in bundles or phrases.

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Authors' contributions

Dr. Amir Abdalla Minalla was solely responsible for all aspects of this study, including the study design, data collection, analysis, and the drafting and revision of the manuscript. He is the sole author and contributor to the work, and all statements and interpretations presented are his own.

Competing interests

The author declares that he has no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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