English– and Arabic-Medium of Instruction and Second Language Acquisition of English Articles System by ESL Arab Sophomores in Sharjah

البيئة التعليمية (عربية/إنجليزية) وأثرها في اكتساب أدوات التعريف والتنكير في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية من قبل متعلمين عرب غير ناطقين بها على مستوى طلاب الصف الثاني بالمرحلة الثانوية بمدينة الشارقة

By

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

This study investigates the acquisition of the English articles system by Arab sophomores in Sharjah in the UAE, one group being taught through the medium of English and the other through the medium of Arabic. The main focus of the study is the extent to which the medium of instruction affects the acquisition of the articles system. The role of mother tongue transfer in this process is also examined. Initially a quick placement test was applied to exclude low-achievers, and then two instruments were adopted. The first instrument is an English article forced-elicitation task which comprises thirty contexts; eighteen of them are adopted from Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004), but with some modifications, the other twelve are generated by the researcher to meet the objectives of this study. The participants completed this task within a fifty-minute class period. The second instrument is a written argumentative essay, in which the participants are asked to choose one of three assigned topics and to produce a 250-word essay in their own time away classroom constraints. The samples of the study are 158 male Arab sophomores; 104 are from Arab medium of instruction whereas the rest 54 are from English medium of instruction high schools. The findings reveal that the EMI group significantly ($p<0.005$) outperforms their peers in the AMI environment in the acquisition of the EAS. The findings are interpreted in the light of the participants' L1 Arabic influences. The pedagogical implications of the study are discussed in the final part of the dissertation and recommendations are made for further studies.

ملخص الدراسة:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى منح رؤى جديدة في اكتساب أدوات التعريف والتنكير في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية من قبل طلاب عرب بالصف الثاني بالمرحلة الثانوية في بيئتين مختلفتين أحدهما عربية والأخرى إنجليزية بإمارة الشارقة / دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة؛ وذلك لقياس مدى تأثير البيئة التعليمية وكذلك اللغة العربية كلغة أم على هذه العملية؛ ولتحقيق تلك التطلعات قامت الدراسة بإجراء اختبار سريع لتحديد المستوى واستبعاد الطلاب ذوي التحصيل المنخفض، ومن ثم تبنت الدراسة وسيلتين لتحقيق أهدافها؛ **الوسيلة الأولى** تمثلت في إجراء اختبار لأدوات التعريف والتنكير حيث اشتمل الاختبار على ثلاثين سؤالاً (اختيار من متعدد)، من بينهم ثمانية عشر سؤالاً تم اقتباسهم من دراسة (Ionin، Ko و Wexler 2004) مع إجراء بعض التعديلات، واثنا عشر سؤالاً تم وضعهم بمعرفة الباحث لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة، وكان على الطلاب حل هذه الأسئلة في غضون خمسين دقيقة داخل الصف المدرسي . أما **الوسيلة الثانية** فكانت عبارة عن كتابة مقالة جدلية تتكون من 250 كلمة عن موضوع بعينه يتم اختياره بواسطة الطالب من بين ثلاث موضوعات محددة، وكان على الطلاب كتابة هذه المقالات في أوقاتهم الخاصة بعيدا عن غرفة الصف والقيود الزمنية. الفئة المستهدفة في الدراسة هم مائة وثمانية وخمسون طالباً بالسنة الثانية من المرحلة الثانوية؛ من بينهم مائة وأربعة طالباً من إحدى المدارس العربية في حين أن البقية وهم أربعة وخمسون طالباً من إحدى المدارس الإنجليزية بالشارقة. وبدا واضحاً من خلال نتائج هذه الدراسة أن الطلاب العرب في بيئة التعليم الإنجليزية يتفوقون بشكل ملحوظ (p<0.005) على نظائرهم في بيئة التعليم العربية في اكتسابهم لأدوات التعريف والتنكير في اللغة الإنجليزية . تم تفسير النتائج في ضوء تأثير اللغة العربية كلغة أم على اكتساب الطلاب العرب لأدوات التعريف والتنكير في اللغة الإنجليزية. واستنادا على نتائج الدراسة تم تقديم بعض الدلالات التربوية المفيدة لدارسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية، وكذلك تقديم توصيات لمزيد من الدراسات المستقبلية في نفس المجال.

<div dir="rtl">

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

قال تعالى :

"شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ وَالْمَلاَئِكَةُ وَأُوْلُواْ الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ لاَ إِلَهَ إِلاَّ هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ"

[آل عمران: 18]

قال تعالى :

"وَقُلِ اعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَسَتُرَدُّونَ إِلَى عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ"

[التوبة: 105]

قال تعالى :

"يَرْفَعِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ"

[المجادلة: 11]

</div>

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated profoundly to the pure soul of my father. May Allah bless his soul and embrace him into His vast paradises. Additionally, it is dedicated to my beloved mother. May Allah Grant her longevity. Also, to my wife, daughters, brothers and sisters.

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List of Abbreviations

1- Arabic-Medium of Instruction ………………………………………... AMI

2- Article-based ………………………………………………….. +article

3- Article-less …………………………………………………. -article

4- Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis ………………………………………... CAH

5- Definiteness/Indefiniteness ………………………………………….. ±definite

6- Determiner Phrase …………………………………………………. DP

7- English Articles System ………………………………………………... EAS

8- English as a Second Language …………………………………………. ESL

9- English-Medium of Instruction ………………………………………….. EMI

10- Error Analysis …………………………………………………. EA

11- First Language ……………………………………………………... L1

12- Fluctuation Hypothesis ………………………………………………... FH

13- Hearer Knowledge …………………………………………………. ±HK

14- Interlanguage …………………………………………………. IL

15- No/zero Article …………………………………………………... Ø

16- Noun Phrase …………………………………………………….. NP

17- Quick Placement Test ………………………………………………. QPT

18- Second Language Acquisition ………………………………………... SLA

19- Second Language ……………………………………………….. L2

20- Specific Reference ………………………………………………….. ±SR

21- Specificity/Nonspecificity …………………………………………. ±specific

22- United Arab Emirates ………………………………………………. UAE

23- Universal Grammar ………………………………………………. UG

1- INTRODUCTION

1.1 Significance of the Study

Second language acquisition (Henceforth SLA) of English articles system (Henceforth EAS) by English as a second language (Henceforth ESL) article-based and/or article-less first language (Henceforth L1) learners is considered one of the most intricate issues that deserves to be investigated. This intricateness results in ESL learners writing and speaking errors. By the same token, more research in this area is required to provide new insights into the EAS acquisition processes and the linguistic skills that may cause those kinds of ESL learners' errors. Further intricacies arise from the different degrees of definiteness/indefiniteness and specificity/nonspecificity between ESL and other article-less/based languages; Arabic is no exception. On the one hand, Arabic has similar definite article system *the*, which is the prefixed morpheme *al-*, nevertheless, Arabic and English are divergent in their uses of these definite articles *the* and *al-*. On the other hand, Arabic has no indefinite articles *a* and *an,* which in turn, increases the intricacy for L1 Arabic learners.

Substantial bodies of research have focused on SLA of articles by second language (Henceforth L2) learners of English whose L1s are devoid of articles whether definite or indefinite such as Chinese, Russian and Korean. On the other hand, there are few bodies of research that have focused on SLA of articles by L2 learners whose L1s have article systems similar to English such as Greek and Spanish. What increases this study significance is that there is a scarcity of research that has concentrated on SLA of articles by L1 Arabic learners since, Arabic has a definite article but does not have indefinite articles.

What increases this study's importance is that, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, it is not only, the second after Crompton (2011), to examine the impact of L1 Arabic transfer on the acquisition of the EAS in the UAE, but also it may be the first to provide insights into the effect of the medium of instruction on such processes.

1.2 Background to the Problem

Empirically, many studies in the field of EAS acquisition assert the phenomenon that Arab learners of English have exerted considerable efforts to acquire the EAS and still find many difficulties in comprehending their uses correctly (Kharma 1981; Bataineh 2005; Sarko 2008; Crompton 2011; Alhaysony 2012). However, many studies in this particular area have claimed the existence of a binary facet parameter for the English language articles whether it is definiteness or specificity. Therefore, L2 learners of English, whose mother tongues do not have articles such Korean, Russian and Chinese usually fluctuate the use of articles to their definiteness or specification (Ionin, Ko & Wexler 2004). However, these patterns of fluctuation seemingly disappear in the case of L2 Spanish and Greek learners who are usually capable of encoding the English articles definiteness since those languages are article-based in a way somewhat similar to English (Sarko 2008).

The research body is full of many studies that have been dedicated to examining the acquisition of the EAS by L1 speakers such as Schafer and de Villiers (2000), and Schaeffer and Mathewson (2005). In addition, there are many other studies which have investigated the acquisition of the EAS by L2 learners such as Snape (2007), and Ionin, Zubizarreta and Maldonado (2008). The former studies have found that L1 speakers of English find some difficulties in using the EAS appropriately until the age of four or probably older. In contrast, the latter studies of L2 learners of English demonstrate that ESL learners may still suffer in acquiring the EAS until very late in their acquisition of L2. Larder (2004) assumes that ESL learners may not reach a native-like level of acquiring the article system of English.

1.3 Rationale and Theoretical Background of the Study

The role of L1 interference has a prolonged history in the area of SLA since many studies have examined it for decades. Sweet (1899) initiated the idea that complete acquisition of L2 comes through complete comprehension of L1, a principle that widely accepted by Odlin (1989) and both neglected the influence of L1 transfer in SLA. However, at the commencement of 1950s, the language learning-teaching hypotheses and behaviorist theories considered a language as a "habit and that language learning involves the establishment of a new set of habits" (Gass &

Selinker, 2001, p. 72). Henceforth, the role of L1 was considered seriously as one of the causative factors that may hinder SLA properly. Therefore, many theories handle the notion of L1 transfer in relation to the arena of SLA such as the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (Henceforth CAH) which was adopted by Weinreich (1953) and Lado (1957), Error Analysis (Henceforth EA) which was first considered by Corder (1967) and the Universal Grammar (Henceforth UG) which was approved by Siegel (2003) and Odlin (2003).

Theoretically, the acquisition of EAS requires not only full cognition of the appropriate determiner phrase (Henceforth DP) construction and outlining of the morphosyntactic characteristics onto phonological molds, but also recognition of correct semantic contexts for the English articles whether definite or indefinite. For this reason, it is little wonder that not only ESL learners, but also L1 speakers of English have some difficulties acquiring this interactive phenomenon. In this study, the L1 under scrutiny is Arabic, which is rich in the definite article but has no indefinite articles.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

It is noticeable for any ESL instructor that L1 Arabic learners of ESL have a difficulty acquiring the EAS. Most literature in this area of research has assumed that such errors are made randomly by ESL learners and those errors are unpredictable. However, recent studies of SLA of English articles by (Ionin, Ko, & Wexler 2003; 2004; 2007) assert that errors made by ESL learners are non-random and they are strongly predictable in terms of DPs' types hypothesis that may exhibit the difficulties of articles acquisition by Arab learners. Thus, it is visible that Arab learners still have a difficulty in mastering this complex system of articles in English. Although Arab learners' learning of ESL commences at early stages of their education, since they start studying ESL from nursery schooling, they still unable to master the English articles properly.

Strictly speaking, articles are amongst the most frequently used words in English. According to the British National Corpus, *the* is the most frequent word occurring in the English language and it accounts for more than 6% of all words used in English. Similarly, *a* and *an* stand in the fifth place account for approximately 2.5% (Master 2002). Despite this fact of the ample exposure to those copious tokens of those small words, Arab learners still have great suffering mastering

them. To conclude, the problem and the dependent variable in this study is deteriorating quality of acquiring the EAS by high school sophomores in Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates (Henceforth UAE). Additionally, the independent variables in the study are the teaching environment either Arabic or English and L1 Arabic interference.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to examine the acquisition of the EAS as a phenomenon that influences both semantics and morphosyntax levels. Articles exist in enormous bodies of discourse practices and in the symbolic interactionism of linguistic and non-linguistic cognition. Thus, the article taxonomic scheme in English exemplifies the interface peculiarity that affects pragmatics, semantics, and morphosyntax.

The major objective of this study is to investigate whether adult-Arab learners of ESL at Arabic medium of instruction (Henceforth AMI) schools will display similar or different patterns of acquisition of the EAS to adult-Arab learners of ESL at English medium of instruction (Henceforth EMI) schools.

Consequently, this study intends to discuss the acquisition of the EAS by Arab students whether those students enrolled in English or non-English schools to examine whether the teaching environment affects their acquisition of EAS. If so, to what extent does this environment affect ESL Arab learners whether positively or negatively? Moreover, what are types of article acquisition does it affect?

With all considered, the role of L1 Arabic for both groups of students in acquiring those articles will be examined, since Arabic is rich in the definite article (*the = al-*) but does not have the indefinite articles (a/n). Thus, the role of L1 Arabic will be taken into account as a major factor in the acquisition of the EAS. Hence, the influence of L1 Arabic will be investigated in the acquisition process of the EAS in comparison with the Arabic language articles systematization. All the above-mentioned objectives outlined the Research Questions.

1.6 Research Questions

1- Which group has a significant difficulty in acquiring EAS: the EMI or AMI sophomores?
2- Which types of article errors do UAE high school sophomores produce the most/least?
3- To what extent does the role of L1 Arabic transfer influence the acquisition of the EAS?
4- What are the pedagogical implications for ESL scholars?

1.7 Statement of the Hypothesis and Predictions

Empirical studies prove that L2 learners of English with native article-less language often omit, fluctuate, or substitute between articles definiteness and specificity inappropriately (Ionin 2003; Ionin & Welex 2003; White 2003; Ionin, Ko, &Wexler 2004). Whereas, L2 learners of English with native article-based language often do not fluctuate between articles and can grammaticalize definiteness in a similar parameter setting of English (Hawkins et al 2006; Snape 2006). In the light of the mentioned studies, what types of article errors do ESL Arab learners are predicted to commit with the absence of the phonological indefinite article? The study faces two hypotheses; either L1 Arabic negative transfer may predominate fluctuation article errors whether definiteness or specificity or vice versa. It is predicted that ESL L1 Arabic participants in this study may transfer article semantics from Arabic, since Arabic resembles English in the use of definite article since definiteness is concerned in both languages. Another prediction is that this study subjects may fluctuate, omit, or over-insert articles mistakenly in the right contexts since Arabic does not have the indefinite article system. To sum up, both exhibition of fluctuations and articles semantics transfer are predictable from ESL Arab learners since Arabic has one kind of articles (the definite *the = al-*), but not the other kind (the indefinite *a/n*). Hence, the main goal of this study is to determine to what extent L1 transfer affects SLA of English article semantics. Another objective of the study is to examine in a more theoretical level the effect of the UG access in the process of SLA of English articles by ESL Arab learners. Therefore, the utmost objective of this study is to scrutinize the causative factors that influence the process of SLA of articles semantics by ESL Arab learners whether these factors are UG- access difficulties, L1 Arabic transfer, or inadequate input processing.

1.8 Tasks Conducted in the Study

In the present study, two types of tasks were conducted to compare and contrast between the two selected groups of sophomores. The first task is a multiple-choice task in which the learners were asked to choose the correct answer from a, b, c, or d to complete the missing parts in tailored contexts. The second task is the production of a written argumentative essay. These essays were subsequently compiled into two corpora of essays. The first corpus comprised 54 written assignment tasks at one of the EMI schools in Sharjah in the UAE. The other corpus compiles the greater number of assignments which is 104 pieces of assignment writings at an AMI school at the same emirate of the UAE. All the writings whether from the English or AMI school were argumentative essays in which students were asked to express themselves freely selecting one of the offered three topics; 'Should junk food be banned at schools?', 'Should students be allowed to use their cell-phone at schools?' or ' Should teenagers work for their allowance?'

Students from either school are asked to choose one of the assigned three topics and to write about 200-word essay at their own time without time constraints. These topics were chosen thoroughly, since students in the secondary cycle got used to write essays about such argumentative topics from the outset of their high schooling through grade ten, eleven and twelve.

To achieve the purpose of the study a placement test was conducted for all sophomores. Then, the students who got 50% and above in the placement test were allowed to participate in the study since the low-achiever students' writings were less appropriate for the study.

The findings of the study show that the acquisition of the EAS by the informants is interplay of insertion, omission or fluctuation due to the predominant interference of their L1 Arabic.

1.9 The Study Informants

The participants in this study are all Arab students in the second year of their secondary education who have studied English for more than ten years from kindergarten to the secondary cycle in two different medium of instructions; Arabic and English. Both groups of sophomores speak only Arabic in contexts outside their formal instruction and they practice using English

only inside their classroom environment. Hence, it is hypnotized that the transfer of their mother tongue may affect their performance negatively. Even sophomores from the EMI may exhibit syntactic errors that diverge from those of English native speakers.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

This study adopts a theoretical framework based upon SLA as well as pragmatic and semantic theories that provide precise calculations regarding the causes of article-error productions made by Arab learners. After scrutinizing the SLA theories and their predictions, an investigation of the participants' interlanguage deviations is elucidated, and then description premises of those errors are set out since the participants' Arabic L1 does not instantiate similar article system as that of English. After reviewing the previous literature and analyzing the collected data, the study will be described clearly based on the findings. After that, a recommendation for further studies in the same area is rationalized. The study concludes by providing some pedagogical implications to be taken into consideration by ESL teacher and learners alike.

1.11 Definition of Terms

EMI refers to schools in which the medium language or the teaching language for all subjects is English in which students' exposure to ESL is much more than those students who enrolled in non-English schools.

AMI refers to schools in which the medium language or the teaching language for all subjects is Arabic in which the students' exposure to ESL is less than those of the English schools. Concisely, the instruction language at the English schools is English, whereas the instruction language at the non-English schools is Arabic.

2- REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In the following section, the study will provide a concise historical background regarding the influence of L1 in SLA followed by an analysis of the controversy presented by various views in the area of SLA of the English articles. This investigation may lead to a clear recognition of the phenomenon of L1 transfer and help to improve the ESL learners' acquisition of the EAS.

2.2 English Language Articles Systematization

EAS plays a vital role in modifying the following noun phrase (Henceforth NP) they precede. This system comprises four articles: *Ø, a, an* and *the*. Each of these articles specifies the NP it precedes differently. Those small words have the particularity to enable the hearer or reader to encode, postulate, specify, and identify the NP. Specificity refers to the speaker's perception of being peculiar to a specific NP he/she wants to address. If a speaker and hearer recognize what NP the speaker wants to address, then it is time to use *the* in front of this NP. The same rule can be applied between writers and readers. Nevertheless, a specific noun may be preceded by an indefinite article either *a* or *an* according to the initial letter of the noun when the speaker refers to a particular noun, but the speaker does not know which noun is addressed by the speaker. For instance, a speaker may say, "I bought a car yesterday." In this case, the car is specified and known by the speaker, but it is still ambiguous for the hearer as he/she is not aware which car the speaker bought. Hence, the amount of specificity encoded onto such nouns fails to conform with Andersen's (1984) notion which claims that learners may recognize meanings easily when the connection is outlined by a distinctive characteristics since each individual article may convey multiple meanings concerning the NP it modifies.

However, many ESL learners do not have the ability to recognize the proper use of articles to encode those divergent meanings. Instead, they start their L1 parameters values, and then reorganize those values into target language values that cause full transferability, which in turn, violates acquisition (Gas & Selinker 2001).

Therefore, a more elaborated version of EAS environments appearance is appreciated and widely used, these environments were summed up by Ekiert (2004, p. 3) as shown below.

Table 2.1: Environments for the Appearance of a/n, the, and Ø

Features	Environment	Articles	Examples
Type 1 [-SR, +HK]	Generic Nouns	a/n, the, Ø	A paper clip comes in handy. The Grenomian is an excitable person. Ø Fruit flourishes in the valley
Type 2 [+SR, +HK]	Referential definites	the	Pass me the pen.
	Previous mention		The idea of coming to the U.S. was…
	Specified by entailment		I found a book. The book…
	Specified by definition		The first person to walk on the moon…
	Unique in all contexts		
	Unique in a given context		
Type 4 [-SR, +HK]	Nonreferential nouns	a, Ø	Alice is an accountant.
	Attributive indefinites		I guess I should buy a new car.
			Ø Foreigners would come up with a better solution.
	Nonspecific indefinites		
Type 5	Idioms	a, the, Ø	All of a sudden, he woke up.
	Other conventional uses		In the 1950s, there were not many cars. His family is now living Ø hand to mouth.

Adopted From Ekiert (2004, p. 3)

2.3 The Role of L1 Transfer

Definition of the term *transfer*:

The term *transfer* has numerous definitions in the area of research. For instances: Weinriech (1953, p. 1) defines the term as, "those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which accruing in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language." Correspondingly defined by Odlin (1989, p. 27) as, "the influence resulting from similarity and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired." In the same vein, Ellis (1997, p. 51) describes *transfer* as, "the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2." The term

transfer has been interpreted by Gass and Selinker (2001) as the use of L1 knowledge in the SLA process. Others consider this phenomenon as the resultant of their mother tongue influence or as a cross-linguistic generality (Whong-Barr 2006). Hence, the role of L1 transfer cannot be neglected in the study of applied linguistics, SLA, and L2 teaching and learning since the influence of mother tongue is inevitably recognized in the developmental stages of L2 learners' SLA.

2.4 Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) and the Transfer Notion

L1 transfer influences SLA positively if both languages are not dichotomous in the linguistic elements. Conversely, linguistic elements dichotomy between L1 and L2 causes difficulty in acquiring L2. This cognition was adopted by the CAH, which is a lingual association of two languages with respect to lexicon, morphology, phonology, and syntax. The CAH was sustained by two proponents; Weinreich (1953) and Lado (1957) who claim that L2 learners find it easier to acquire the target language in terms of similarities with their L1, however if they are different, L2 learners may suffer acquiring the target language. In other words, the greater the similarities between L1 and L2, the easier the acquisition occurs and vice versa. Hence, errors in L2 are predictable by recognizing the dichotomies between L1 and L2. Gass and Selinker (2001) agree with this assumption since L1 methodical effects on L2 acquisition are conventional on basis of L1 linguistic elements either negatively or positively. Gass and Selinker (1992) stress the importance of comparing two languages as a preliminary phase to facilitate the cognition of L1 and L2 interferences. That is why predicting errors made by L2 learners requires proper description of the linguistic elements of the two languages, comparative selection of certain items in both languages and formal identification of similarities and differences then identifying errors' areas can be realized (Ellis 1985). Nevertheless, CAH proved its inconvenience when it came to empirical testing, since it over-predicted some difficulties that were not recognized in SLA. Criticism that was more serious emerged when CAH failed to predict errors made by L2 learners whose L1 is different in its linguistic elements from the target language. In an attempt to extricate the CAH, weak and strong versions were distinguished. In which the strong version that over-predicted errors was rejected, whereas the weak version was accepted widely. The weak version of CAH that considered part of the error analysis approach "begins with what learners do and then attempts to account for those errors on the basis of NL-TL differences." (Gass &

Selinker 2001, p. 73). Thus, the finale of CAH yielded the emergence of Error Analysis (EA) Hypothesis at the commencement of 1970.

2.5 Error Analysis (EA)

It is suggested that L2 learners' errors not only considered as something learners have to eradicate, but rather a significant indicator in the process of SLA (Corder 1967). For Gass and Selinker (2001) errors are regarded as red flags that provide indicators for L2 learners' acquisition improvement. For them errors occur systematically and consistently and cannot be recognized by L2 learners, whereas mistakes are slips of L2 learners' tongues and they are easily recognized and corrected. Additionally, Gass and Selinker (2001) utilize EA to differentiate between interlanguage (Henceforth IL) and intraligual errors. Since interlanguage errors are caused by L1 interference in the target language, but intraligual errors occur because of the target language overgeneralizations for instance. Nevertheless, EA has been disapproved of because of its complete reliance on errors, which is not reliable enough to explain the process of SLA as Gass and Selinker (2001) claimed.

2.6 Overview on Interlanguage (IL)

Looking at learners' language errors elucidates that they are not random or unpredictable; otherwise, they are linguistically systematic and permanent. Thus, Gas and Selinker (2008) interpret IL as the linguistic system that appears in L2 learners' communication production. Although literature confirms that IL is not an arbitrary mixture of unsystematic collection of errors, IL itself constructs a rule system that is completely divergent from the one used by the native speakers of English. EA hypothesizes that L2 learners' errors are those deviances from the target language. IL is profitably the divergent transitional linguistic system at all levels such as, morphology, phonology, pragmatics, semantics, and syntax that can be interpreted as growing linguistic systems and models. Consequently, IL can be explained in terms of specific sociolinguistic and cognitive processes that create it. Now it becomes clear that EA has a tribulation in interpreting the English article errors by L2 learners. EA sees this kind of article error formation as learners' errors; whereas IL analysis regards it as a rule system formed by L2 learners based on his/her mother tongue interferences that lead erroneously to overgeneralization

in the target language. Tarone (2012) assumes that these cognitive processes' acquisitions of IL happen naturally and unconsciously by the learners being focused on meaning and translation when producing the target language. This systematicity in the ESL learners' productions is his/her universal developmental sequence when acquiring an L2 that is divergent from his/her own (Tarone & Swierzbin 2009).

In addition, many studies in the SLA literature suggest that this linguistic scheme is materialized in human brain cognitive language acquisition processes that all humans expected to apply to respond to SLA. In this process, L2 learners at their early stages of learning, form overgeneralization. In an advanced stage, knowledgeable instructors or peers through adequate feedback also by continuous communication using the target language this overgeneralization rule can be modified and improved (Lightbown & Spada 2006).

2.7 Universal Grammar (UG) Framework and L1 Transfer in SLA

With the emergence of UG, several studies began to investigate how L1 transfer and the UG settings parameters affect the process of SLA (Siegel 2003). UG has drawn the attention towards certain settings where L1 influences may affect SLA. Odlin (2003) adds that within the UG hypotheses, not only many studies have focused on L1 transfer, but also documented its evident influence in the process of SLA. White (1992) distinguishes between the contemporary theories based on UG and others that have adopted the CAH framework, in which he observes four different approaches, which associate UG with L1 transfer phenomenon. Firstly, UG assumes that transfer affects levels of syntactic, whereas CAH only focuses on the apparent similarities and differences between L1 and L2. Secondly, parameters connect clusters of properties thus; L1 values affect L2 learners' awareness of L2 parameters. Thirdly, UG involves numerous interacting parameters that reset separately in SLA. Finally, Learnability considerations are responsible for marking or unmarking parameter settings.

Whong-Barr (2006) states that in spite of the substantial debate about the role of L1 in SLA, there is an agreement about describing transfer as an initial state. Accordingly, Gass (1996) cites three major contingents in association with UG accessibility and L1 transfer. First, an L2 learner has a full access to UG in which the UG is the starting point of L2 learning. Second, an L2

learner has a partial access to the UG in which L1 plays a vital role in the starting point of L2 learning. Third, an L2 learner has no access to the UG in which L1 is the initial point of L2 learning. Amongst the mentioned three phases, a successful learner encouraged to have a full access to the UG in which an L2 learner's affective filter is low/down, in turn, facilitates the SLA process. On the other hand, if an L2 learner's affective filter is high/up he/she has no access to the UG, in turn, prohibits the SLA progression.

Similarly, the literature allocates three states of L1 transfer in terms of L2 initial state, namely, no L1 transfer, partial L1 transfer and full L1 transfer. In no transfer position, "the L1 final state does not constitute the L2 learner's grammar or mental representation at any stage." (White 2000, p. 135), therefore, the initial state in L1 and L2 are parallel. White (2000, p. 138) clarifies the partial position of L1 transfer as, "only parts of L1 grammar is represented in the L2 initial state (either lexical categories alone or lexical and functional categories)". In which an L2 initial state is represented on properties of L1 alongside with the UG. This means that only parts of L1 are transferred while others are not in the development of SLA. White (1992) is the first who introduces the position of L1 full transfer in which she claims that an L2 learner begins with L1 parameter values and then rearranges them into L2 parameter values. Accordingly, Montrul (2000, p. 232) elucidates that in the full transfer position, "UG and L1 are a complementary sources of knowledge that guide interlanguage development," in which an L2 learner's affective filter is very high in a way that prohibits L2 competence.

2.8 The Fluctuation Hypothesis (Henceforth FH)

In her doctoral thesis, Ionon (2003) evaluates the production of articles by two groups of Korean and Russian participants in three different tasks; written translation, multiple-choice and written tasks. She concludes that all ESL speakers whether Koreans or Russians are apt to insert *the* in positions where *a/n or Ø* is mandatory. The same participants are apt to insert a/n or Ø in contexts where *the* is requisite. Ionin (2003) proposes that this kind of errors; using *the* instead of *a/n* or *Ø* and vice versa, amongst non-native speakers of English mirrors a principled system of article selection rather than occurring randomly. Accordingly, Ionin claims that article-less learners of English have insufficient UG grammar knowledge, therefore, they have accessed to biased UG parameter settings unlike native speakers of English who immediately converge on

the sound parameter settings. Hereafter, Ionin (2003, p. 23) identifies this notion as the FH in which:

> *"1) L2-learners have full access to UG principles and parameter settings.*
> *2) L2-learners fluctuate between different parameter settings until the input leads them to set the parameter to the appropriate value."*

The FH anticipates that ESL article-less language background learners' article errors may be due to the synthetic definiteness or specificity division of the NP they intend to modify. This synthetic division can be improved through adequate knowledge of the English article choice parameter settings. Similarly, Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004) examine subjects of ESL learners with article-less language background; Koreans and Russians article acquisition. Their conclusion is similar to Ionin (2003), in which ESL learners substitute the definite article *the* and the indefinite articles *a/n* or *Ø* in a way that conforms the results of the FH.

On the other hand, Hawkins et al (2006) and Snape (2006) assert that ESL learners with article-based language background e.g. Spanish and Greek do not fluctuate in using articles whether definiteness or specificity. Unlike ESL learners with a language that is devoid of articles, article-based L2 learners of English are able to grammaticalize definiteness appropriately.

For those reasons, whether or not the phonological scarcity of the indefinite article *a/n* in L1 Arabic influences the process of SLA of English articles is questionable. The answer for this assigned question is that the FH cannot predict all errors made by L1 Arab learners of ESL. Since fresh study conducted by Ionin, Zubizarreta and Maldonado (2008) proves that native speakers of Spanish tend to transfer their L1 article semantics into English at the process of SLA of English articles despite the fact that Spanish is rich in ±articles. For this reason, L1 Spanish learners of ESL build their article choices on the basis of definiteness only and ignore specificity.

Arabic is a Semitic language, which possesses a definiteness semantic marker, so it is expected from ESL Arab learners to acquire the English definite article in an easier way than the great efforts required to master English indefinite articles. On the contrary, they may fluctuate in – definite, ±specific contexts.

2.9 Fluctuation Hypothesis and Article Choice Parameter

It is suggested by Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004) that L2 learners of article-less L1 usually fluctuate in-between the articles of English on account of either definiteness or specificity due to their L1 full transfer through semantic universals accesses. Accordingly, the research area considers the articles acquisition by L2 learners is a productive field for investigation primarily because ESL learners face many difficulties in mastering EAS.

At this stage of the study, it is convenience to identify the divergence between definiteness and specificity, since these identifications are based mainly on discourse analysis or upon the speaker/writer's intention. Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004) suggest that the features of definiteness/indefiniteness [±definite] are built upon both the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader's knowledge, whereas the features of specificity/nonspecificity [±specific] are built upon the speaker/writer's knowledge only. For that reason, many pieces of research regarding English articles acquisitions adopt Bickerton's (1981) framework in which articles are classified according to either specific reference (±SR) or hearer knowledge (±HK) features as illustrated by Bickerton's (1981) "Semantic Wheel of Noun Phrase Reference" in Huebner's (1983, p. 133).

Figure 2.1: Bickerton's (1981) Semantic Wheel
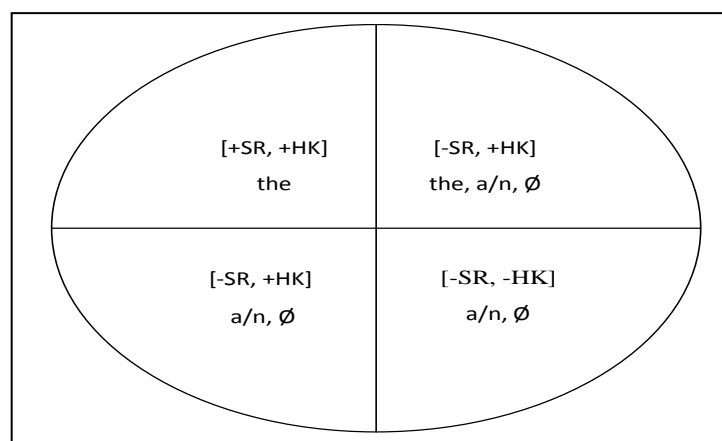
Nevertheless, these features were not addressed semantically. Therefore, Ionin, Zubizarreta and Philippov (2009, p. 338) claims that EAS should be scrutinized "in terms of specificity as speaker intent to refer and definiteness as presupposition of uniqueness." Similarly, definiteness and specificity are informally defined by Ionin, Ko, and Wexler (2004, p. 5) as:

"If a Determiner Phrase (DP) of the form [D NP] is ...

a. [+definite], then the speaker and hearer presuppose the existence of a unique individual in the set denoted by the NP.

b. [+specific], then the speaker intends to refer to a unique individual in the set denoted by the NP and considers this individual to possess some noteworthy property."

2.10 Previous Research of ESL Arab Learners' Common Article Errors

Most previous studies of SLA of articles in English have documented empirical confirmation that absence of similar article system in L1 of ESL learners leads to difficulties in producing the correct form of articles in the proper contexts. These difficulties may lead to omission, insertion, alteration, or fluctuation errors (Bataineh 2005; Farghal and al-Zou'bi 2004; Smith, 2001). Other studies concentrate on one type of the article errors such as the omission of *a* amongst high school Arab learners as it was the predominant errors found in their writings (Scott & Tucker 1974). Similarly, Kharma (1981) investigates the tertiary-level learners in a cloze task and has found that 25% of the Arab learners' errors in using (*a/n, the* and *Ø*) owing to the influence of their L1; the highest rate of errors is in using *a/n,* whereas the lowest rate is in using *the.* Kharma's results confirms the role of transfer from L1 Arabic since Arabic does not have *a/n* but has *the*. Kharma (1981) concludes her study, after analyzing a corpus of essay writings, with the fact that; approximately half of the Arab learners' errors occur due to the misuse of the definite article *the*. Likewise, Bataineh (2005) examines the misuse of *a* in a corpus of tertiary-level writings concentrating on the 319 errors whether semantic or syntactic. Bataineh (2005) concludes that the majority of errors (61%) in the Arab ESL learners' writings caused by the under-use of *a* since students used *Ø* instead of *a* (46%) and used *the* instead of *a* (15%). In the same study, the Arab learners overused *a* instead of *the* (27%) and *a* instead of *Ø* (8%). It is noticeable that Bataineh's (2005) as well as Scott and Tucker (1974) neither categorizes nor tallies the article errors precisely, hence, a general malfunction or predominance rate for each article is very difficult to be calculated. However, Kharma's (1981) study supplies more details about the article error types. The study categorizes five types of article errors for the use of *a* and *the* and three types for *Ø*. Amongst the most common errors in Kharma's cloze task are instances of generic use where the correct answer is *a* or *Ø* and others due to the misconception of idiomatic phrases.

Both Kharma and Hajjaj (1997) and Smith (2001) depict some similarities and differences between the articles system in English and Arabic. Smith (2001) verifies that the similarities between Arabic and English in the use of the definite article *the* may result in positive transfer since in both languages *the* is used to refer back to an indefinite noun mentioned in earlier discourse or to refer to a sole reference. In contrast, the dissimilarities in the indefinite articles production may lead to negative transfer. For instances:

Arab learners tend to say, "This is pen." in which they initiate underuse of *a,* contrawise, Arab learners have the tendency to say, "These are a pens."

Similarly, Arab learners of ESL tend to reinstate *the* in idiomatic phrases where English neglects, such as; "I go to *the* bed at 10 o'clock."

Some proper nouns in Arabic are prefixed by the definite article *the (al-),* but it is ignored in English such as; *the* India, *the* Sudan and *the* Somalia.

L1 Arabic learners tend to say, "Ahmed is from *the* India /Somalia /Sudan."

In the same vein, Kharma and Hajjaj (1997) provide four more errors caused by L1 negative transfer:

Definite article insertion in compound NPs such, "the tea and the sugar"
Overuse of *the* in generic plural NPs such: "The animals are very useful for the humans."
Overuse *the* with abstract nouns such "all people fear the death."
Overuse *the* with mass nouns such "The water is essential for life." and "The reading is very important."

Interestingly, Farghal and al-Zou'bi (2004) introduce a remarkable proof that generic uses of the English articles by ESL Arab learners is considered one of the major factors that hinders full acquisition of the article system of English. They compared three different translations of the Holly Quran made by Arab translators, and they concluded that none of the Arab translators has completely mastered the EAS in how to handle the generic references appropriately. The Arab translators of the Holly Quran inserted *the* instead of Ø with generic plural NPs. Likewise, they inserted *the* instead of *a* with generic singular NPs.

Crompton (2011) conducted another study with ESL learners, aspiring to probe into the argumentative essay productions produced by ESL tertiary learners. Crompton's (2011) aims to determine the most commonly English article errors occurrences and the role of L1 Arabic transfer as a causative factor of such errors. Crompton (2011) concludes that the misuses of the definite article *the* for generic references are amongst the errors that have been occurred repeatedly in the participants' writings. Data analysis proves that those errors have been occurred due to the influence of L1 Arabic transfer.

2.11 Cross-linguistic dichotomies between Arabic and English

Arabic is a Semitic language that has an intricate morphological system. Arabic resembles modern languages as Hebrew and Aramaic and other ancient languages such Phoenician and Akkadian. Arabic is dichotomous from English in the sense that Arabic is rich in definite article since it has an explicit bound morpheme (*al-*) which equals (*the*) in English, however, lacks this explicitness with indefinite articles for instances:

(1) Arabic:	athhab ila al-3amal bi-al- sayyarah.	
	Translation:	Go-I to the work by the car.
	English:	I go to work by car.
(2) Arabic:	Qara'ato Qesah.	
	Translation:	Read-I story.
	English:	I read a story.

In example (1), it is visible that Arabic uses *(al-),* the definite article *the* in positions where English ignores (*the* work and *the* car, in example 1). However, Arabic ignores the indefinite article *a* in positions where English considers a flaw, as illustrated in example (2).

Similarly, Arabic exhibits both ±specific interpretations according to the contexts or situations for instance:

(3) Arabic:	toreed Mariam an taqr'a qesah…	
	Translation:	Want Mariam to read story…
	English:	Mariam wants to read a story…

(4) [- definite] and [+ specific]

       Arabic: ... 3an al-tha'alab al-makkar.

       Translation: … about the fox the cunning.

       English: … about the cunning fox.

(5) [- definite] and [- specific]

       Arabic: … 3an al-haiwanat.

       Translation: … about the animals.

       English: … about animals.

However, all [-definite] NPs in the spoken Arabic whether countable, uncountable, singular, plural, abstract or mass are devoid of articles. In other words, since Arabic is a Semitic language it has a nunation marker (tanwīn ‌ًٌٍ) as a finale sound of nouns (nūn) to denote whether the noun is completely declinable or syntactically unmarked for definiteness. Even so, this idiosyncrasy of nunation markers is completely ignored in Arabic real-life conversations. In a nutshell, the dichotomies in the article systems in Arabic and English can be precised as; English has both definite and indefinite articles, whereas Arabic has only the definite article.

2.12 Articles in Learnability and Teachability

All the reviewed literatures provide various pieces of evidence that ESL learners face difficulties in the acquisition of the articles system of English. An additional pedagogical contemplation is the extent of errors occurrences by L2 learners, and how much efforts are needed for them to master using the EAS in order to be able to communicate and write satisfactorily. Master (2002) annotates that non-mastery of the EAS may afflict the linguistic reliability of ESL scholars who use the English language for academic purposes. Master (2002) summons for intensive instructions for those scholars to improve their pedagogic interferences proficiency. In the same vein, Liu and Gleason (2002) suggest an instructional taxonomy apposite to SLA taxonomy to avoid such misleading hypotheses of *the* for non-generic NPs. In the field of SLA of such morphemes, although ESL learners may experience an immense exposure to L2 system of articles, they still have complexities in acquiring them. Ellis (2006b) claims that such complexities prove that native-like acquisition of the EAS does not occur. He adds that the prohibition of native-like acquisition occurrence may due to the structure-function mappings of

ESL learners that differ from English native speakers. In other words, the role of transfer plays a major factor in L2 learners of English to perceive differences in the target language. Ellis (2006b) recommends instructional fossilisation to enhance L2 learners' articles system acquisition.

2.12.1 Practical Implications for ESL Practitioners to Promote IL Development:

ESL educators can pay attention to their ESL learners' systematic patterns and scrutinize them regularly over time to recognize frequent systematic sequences as the learners are provided by permanent feedback as well as corrective and increased reflections to enrich their language knowledge.

By watching these systematic sequences and patterns, ESL instructors are in the right position of tracking the negative effects of the ESL learners' mother tongue interference influences. Hence, they will be able to minimize those negative influences and maximize the positive efficaciousness of acquiring L2 EAS. In this way, teachers are able to predict their learners' systematic errors as they repeatedly occur in their writings or utterances. Through appropriate errors modification, ESL learners can develop and improve their L2 acquisition. Consequently, ESL instructors can enrich their students' knowledge of the target language as well as provide the research area with adequate and apposite information that can contribute to researchers' cognition of SLA of EAS.

2.13 A Closing Summary

Surprisingly, most of the studies claim that the major causative factor that attributes to ESL Arab learners article errors is the role of their L1 Arabic transfer. For instances, Scott and Tucker (1974) assert that half of their study participants errors caused by their L1 interference. Likewise, Kharma (1981) endorses the majority of the participants errors occur due to their L1 transfer, adding the compounding factors summarized in insufficient instructions. Bataineh (2005) assumes that the negative transfer is responsible only for using Ø instead of *a,* adding other causative factors such as learning and teaching strategies, inadequate practices, communication techniques, and overgeneralizations may lead to errors in articles usages.

3- RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The multiple methods of encoding nouns countability, specificity or the anticipation of hearers/readers' awareness of the NP, within the article system, depends mainly upon L2 learners' mother tongue. In other words, if L2 learners' mother tongue lacks articles e.g. Chinese or Russian, the extent to which L1 interference haunts the acquisition of the EAS is very divergent from other languages that are article-based such as Spanish and/or Greek. Similarly, the extent to which L1 Arabic affects SLA of articles system is somehow different from the other two types of languages mentioned earlier since Arabic has the definite article *the* (*al-*), but it forfeits the indefinite articles *a*/*n*. The intricacy of SLA of articles by Arab learners amongst a diversity of languages has been asserted in Chaudron and Parker's (1990) study. Interestingly enough, Zobl (1982) cross-linguistic comparison has proved that L2 learners of English with article-based background language resemble native-like article use in a way that is very divergent from those with article-less background language.

This study aspires to investigate how Arab high school sophomores acquire the EAS at different educational environments, English and AMI. Therefore, the problem in this study is the quality of EAS acquisition deterioration by secondary education sophomores in Sharjah. In which, the dependent variable is SLA of EAS, and the independent variables are the different medium of instruction and L1 Arabic transfer.

Theoretically, the findings of the data analysis reveal how L2 Arab learners use articles to modify various types of NP. Data analysis may show that Arab learners, at the EMI, usages of articles are significantly different from their peers at the AMI. Therefore, it is inferred that the greater the exposure to the English language at the EMI, the better the learners using as well as acquiring the EAS. The study traces the way in which Arab learners acquire EAS system divergently according to their medium of instruction. It is hypothesized that ESL Arab learners insert, omit, or fluctuate articles usages due to the two languages articles uses divergences.

It is thought that UAE high school learners at AMI or EMI schools share a corresponding developmental path in their target-like use of articles. Unlike the AMI, the EMI learners may possess a more conscious system of articles uses. ESL learners at the EMI may use *the* to address a specific NP in a better way than their peers at the AMI schools. Similarly, L2 EMI sophomores may show superiority in distinguishing whether there is a necessity to use *a*, *an*, *Ø* or *the.* These uses are built upon shrewd awareness of the noun countability, the specificity of the NP and finally upon the assumed reader/hearer's knowledge about the NP being addressed. The study hypothesizes that the learners' overuse of *the* is more significant by AMI sophomores, however, less used by their peers at the EMI. Hypothetically, Arabic L1 transfer may affect both groups' uses of *the, a/n* and *Ø* semantic form-function relations. All considered, the study adopts the quantitative research method to substantiate the results validity.

3.2 Research Design

This study investigates into L1 transfer as well as the medium of instruction impact on SLA of the EAS by Arab learners. In this study, the collected data is from ESL high school Arab sophomores in two different teaching environments one of which is an AMI while the other is an EMI. By the same token, the researcher adopts the quantitative research approach to execute the study and verify the Research Questions. The quantitative design is apt to examine the relation between the study informants and the effect of the teaching environment as well as the effect of their L1 on the acquisition process of the EAS in two different experiences. The first is a forced-elicitation task, while the other is an argumentative essay production.

Achieving this, the study findings will be interpreted systematically utilizing IBM SPSS statistical software version 20 which displays the informants' tests results through descriptive statistics. Additionally, independent *t*-tests will be conducted to expose which variable has a positive significance towards SLA of the EAS which is the dependent variable of the study. This method helps collect, analyze, interpret and transcribe the findings of the study (Creswell 2013). The collected data could be analyzed quantitatively through those descriptive statistics. This quantitative research approach enables generalization and replication of the study findings (Bell 2005). Another merit is that it helps achieve validity, credibility, and reliability of the results through critical assessment. Orlich (1999, p. 354) clarifies that validity characterizes the "degree

to which a test measures what it is intended to measure," whilst the reliability assigns "consistency of the test results." Additionally, confidentiality of the data has to be maintained and the anonymity of the informants assured in order to grant ethical considerations (Creswell 2008).

3.3 Population of the Study

The informants are selected from two different teaching environments one of which is an AMI, whereas the other is an EMI aspiring to examine the effect of their teaching environments on SLA of EAS process. Both groups of informants are Arab because the main aim of the study is investigate the role of L1 Arabic transfer on the process of SLA of EAS, hence, non-Arab participants will not add to the study credibility. All the informants in both groups are in the second year of their secondary education.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The participants of this study are 158 ESL high school sophomores from two different schools. The first group comprises 104 sophomores from an AMI schools while the other comprises 54 sophomores from an EMI school. Both groups were subjected to a quick placement test (QPT). All participants passed the test with grades 50% and plus, it means that they have answered 15 or more items out of 30 in the QPT correctly. The other students who got less than 50% or answered less than 15 items correctly were excluded, since they will not add to the reliability of the study.

3.5 The Sample

All the subjects are males since mixed high schooling is not allowed in the UAE high schools. Both the AMI and EMI sophomores are Arab and their parents' language is Arabic. In other words, all the subjects are monolingual since they only practice English at school in classroom settings, but in their daily life, they only speak Arabic. Hence, Arabic is their primary and dominant language.

Table 3.1: Participants Demographics and QPT Scores

Age * Medium of Instruction Cross Tabulation			
Count			
		Medium of Instruction		Total
		Arabic	English	
Age	15	21	15	36
	16	56	31	87
	17	22	8	30
	18	5	0	5
Total		104	54	158

Nationality * Medium of Instruction Cross Tabulation				
Count				
		Medium of Instruction		Total
		Arabic	English	
Nationality	Egyptian	4	5	9
	Emirati	97	39	136
	Iraqi	1	0	1
	Jordanian	2	0	2
	Lebanese	0	3	3
	Palestine	0	4	4
	Sudanese	0	1	1
	Syrian	0	2	2
Total		104	54	158

ESL Learning * Medium of Instruction Cross Tabulation				
Count				
		Medium of Instruction		Total
		Arabic	English	
ESL Learning	10	8	0	8
	11	26	21	47
	12	66	25	91
	13	3	6	9
	14	0	2	2
	15	1	0	1
Total		104	54	158

	Medium of Instruction	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
QPT	Arabic	104	41.10	6.883	.675
	English	54	52.22	8.025	1.092

3.6 Instrumentation

3.6.1 Quick Placement Test (QPT)

The selectivity of the participants based upon another factor which is passing a QPT achieving 50% and above to contribute to the study efficacy. The researcher being an ESL teacher with 15 years of experience generated this QPT considering the participants' level of education. Two MA colleagues, three high school ESL teachers and the researcher's dissertation supervisor reviewed this QPT to confirm its validity. The QPT comprises two short reading comprehensions, each of

which has twelve multiple-choice and three completion questions tailored to determine the students' proficiency level. The test was designed to be answered within a 50-minute period.

3.6.2 Empirical Tests

All the subject participants experienced two types of written tasks. One of them is a multiple choice task of English articles, while the other is an argumentative essay-writing task.

3.6.2.1 Multiple-Choice Task of English Articles (Test 1)

The multiple-choice task of English articles comprises thirty questions; eighteen of them are adopted from Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004), but with some modifications, the other twelve are generated by the researcher to meet the study objectives and to help answer the Research Questions. Like the QPT, two MA colleagues, three ESL experienced teachers and the researcher's dissertation supervisor reviewed the test to confirm its validity and reliability.

Unlike the original test of Ionin, Ko, &Wexler (2004) that comprises 40 questions which are randomly distributed, the present study questions are contextualized semantically into six different planes according to NPs definiteness and specificity. Each plane of the six comprises five contexts to give overall 30 questions. The first plane entitled [+definite, +specific] entails five previously mentioned NPs (anaphoric) in different contexts that require *the* to be identified properly. The second plane entitled [+definite, +specific] entails five contexts with explicit speaker knowledge about the NPs in which *the* is the target answer. The third plane entitled [+definite, -specific] involves five more questions with denial of the speaker knowledge about the NPs also require *the* to be recognized correctly. The fourth plane entitled [-definite, +specific] comprises five questions with explicit speaker knowledge about the indefinite NPs, the five allocated answers require *a* to be identified correctly. The fifth plane entitled [-definite, -specific] entails five more questions in which the NPs are first mentioned in the context, for that reason, the five answers necessitate *an*, since all the NPs start in a vowel. The sixth and final plane entitled [-definite, -specific] in which NPs are anonymous for the speaker has five questions; all of them deliberately require Ø to be answered properly since all the identified NPs are plural, proper, or uncountable. The task questions are short conversations each of which is

designed carefully to elicit particular article. The participants are given the opportunity to choose the appropriate article to complete the missing parts in the conversation by choosing *a, an, Ø* or *the* according to contexts. The given contexts are designed in a way that avoids leading special properties about the NPs in which no definiteness or indefiniteness becomes detectable before the blanks. In the given contexts, a distinction between singular countable, plural countable and uncountable/mass nouns has been made to examine whether in [–definite] singular contexts ESL L1 Arabic learners are competent enough to correlate the indefinite article *a/n* with singular nouns or NPs. Before the subjects start the task they were instructed to read the contexts carefully before choosing the appropriate article *a, an, Ø* or *the.* In the subjects' task paper, all the given contexts were distributed in a deliberately random way to avoid similarities between the following and preceding answers. Subjects were allowed to ask clarification or interpretation concerning difficult or unfamiliar words, but not the answers, aiming to eliminate confusion or misinterpretation during the test.

All the subject sophomores were given a whole fifty-minute period to complete the multiple-choice task in their regular classroom environment, noticeably, this time limit was sufficient enough for all the participants to finish the task.

3.6.2.2 Argumentative Essay Writing Productions (Test 2)

Strictly speaking, there is a scarcity of corpus-based literature of SLA of EAS. Ringbom (1998) verifies that ESL advanced learners in Western Europe with L1 European backgrounds usually underutilize the definite article *the* in their writings compared with native English speakers. Nevertheless, when Kachru (2003) investigates the definite article uses by acrolectal writers (writers who use a diversity of a language, which is closest to the standard form of English, especially a creolized one) concludes that there is little variation from native English speakers' standards. Correspondingly, this study aims to investigate the English article uses in a corpus-based research in the writings of ESL high school sophomores in two different medium of instruction both AMI and EMI. The study computes and classifies the most common article errors made by the study subjects in naturalistic argumentative essay writing productions. This task aims at recognizing to what extent L1 Arabic transfer attributes to article errors occurrences. In analyzing this task as the second empirical test, the study follows Kharma and Hajjaj's (1997)

in classifying article errors types in a more recent teaching strategies due to the influence of L1 transfer. To achieve credibility and reliability of the study, Master (1997) binary description of article errors occurrence frequencies is adopted to help answer the Research Questions.

The written corpus collected in this study is a corpus of 158 argumentative essays written by 158 high school sophomores in two different medium of instruction, one of which is an AMI, while the other is an EMI; both schools are in Sharjah in the UAE. The subject participants were asked to choose one of three topics to produce an argumentative essay of about two hundred words. The participants were asked to write the essays in their own time out of the classroom environment restrictions as a regular class assignment, but to be written by hand to avoid computer word-processing auto-corrections.

3.6.2.2.1 Data Analysis Procedures for Task 2

All the representations of *a/n* and *the* in the participants' writings are considered cautiously. The argumentative essays produced by the participants were corrected by the researcher who is a teacher of English. Then, those essays were re-marked by another marker to reach agreements on the article errors made by the subjects. Each error is analyzed for appropriateness or inappropriateness. Next, the errors were computed and categorized precisely. After that, the total for each article type error was calculated and compared with the other article type errors. Collecting article errors required prior discourse analysis to determine the specificity of the NP being referenced and identified by the preceding article. At a final stage of the analysis, the article errors were tallied and classified into distinctive prototypes.

4- ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATIONS OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

As described in previous chapters, this study investigates the effect of the medium of instruction (either Arabic or English) on the acquisition of EAS. Additionally, it investigates the role of L1 Arabic transfer influences on this process. By the same token, the study adopts two instruments to answer the Research Questions; the first instrument is the English articles forced-elicitation task, and the second is the argumentative essay writing task. This chapter presents the data, the data analysis and the interpretations of the findings.

4.2 Quick Placement Test Results

The purpose of this section is to discuss the significant difference between the EMI and the AMI groups in the QPT as it is considered a reliable indicator of performance in the two tasks, namely the forced-elicitation and the argumentative essay production.

Table 4.2.1 QPT Results and Interpretations

	Medium of Instruction	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
QPT	Arabic	104	41.1	6.883	0.675
	English	54	52.22	8.025	1.092

Table 4.2.1 shows that there is a difference in mean scores between AMI (*Mean*=41.10, *n*=104, *SD*=6.883) and EMI (*Mean*=52.22, *n*=54, *SD*=8.025). To examine whether the difference in means is statistically significant, the independent samples *t*-test is conducted.

As it is illustrated in table 4.2.2, the *t*-test reveals that the difference in means is statistically significant since (t=-9.098, *df*=156, *p*<0.001). In other words, the EMI group outperforms their peers in the AMI in the QPT. Accordingly, it is hypothesized that the EMI group may outperform their peers in the AMI in the following two tasks since their practice and exposure to the target language is greater.

Table 4.2.2 QPT Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
QPT	Equal variances assumed	0.466	0.496	-9.098	156	0	-11.126	1.223	-13.54	-8.71
	Equal variances not assumed			-8.667	94.146	0	-11.126	1.284	-13.68	-8.58

4.3 The Multiple-choice Results in Details

The informants' answers in the AMI or the EMI are categorized into six planes according to the contexts in which they are included. The first plane involves five contexts in which all the NPs are +definite and +specific and previously mentioned in the contexts. The second plane comprises equal number of contexts which is five in each plane in which there are five contexts in which all the targeted NPs are +definite and +specific with explicit speaker knowledge. The third plane comprises five contexts in which all the NPs are +definite and -specific with complete denial of the speaker knowledge. After that, those first three planes are accumulated since the target answer is *the* in all contexts of the three planes with NPs +definite and/or ±specific. In the first three planes the target answer is *the* since the NPs are definite regardless the speaker state of knowledge and the specificity of the NPs. The fourth plane comprises five contexts in which all the targeted NPs are –definite and +specific with explicit speakers' knowledge and the target answer in all contexts is *a*. In the fifth plane the five contexts comprises –definite, -specific and first mentioned NPs and the target answer is *an*. The final plane contains five contexts in which the NPs are –definite and –specific with complete denial of the speaker knowledge, the targeted answer is Ø.

Scrutinizing the collected data from both groups of sophomores in the AMI and the EMI exhibits that when the target answer is *the* in the first plane, the AMI sophomores' correct answers were 73% of their answers, whereas the EMI sophomores' correct answers were 83%. This reveals that the EMI sophomores mastering of the definite article *the* is greater than the AMI peers as shown in table and figure 4.3.1.

Table and Figure 4.3.1: The First Plane of the Multiple-choice Task Results		the-for-the	a-for-the	an-for-the	Ø-for-the
Plane 1: [+ Definite, + Specific] Groups					
Previous Mentioned	AMI (n=104)	**73%**	10%	5%	12%
	EMI (n=54)	**83%**	6%	1%	10%
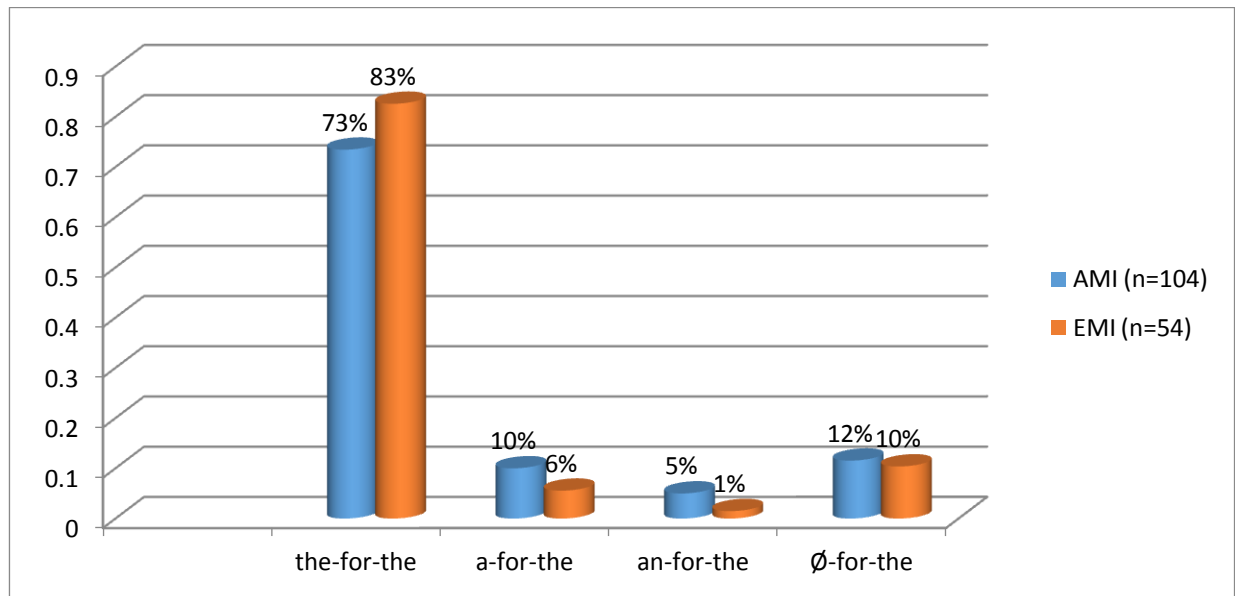
It is noticeable that AMI sophomores fluctuate between their choices of *the* and other articles differently. They chose *a* instead of *the* 10% of their answers, *an* instead of *the* for 5% and Ø instead of *the* the most fluctuation which is 12%. Similarly, their peers in the EMI show fluctuations in their choices of the articles, but in less proportion. In which they chose *a* instead of *the* for 6%, *an* instead of *the* for 1% and Ø instead of *the* for 10%. This reveals that, despite the fact that the EMI sophomores show higher proficiency level than their peers in the AMI, they still unable to master the EAS appropriately and shows similar fluctuations amongst their answer, but in smaller proportions. To facilitate reading the data in the table, the correct answers always highlighted in the first column, while the wrong ones are not.

Similarly, inferential statistics reveals no significant difference between the two groups acquiring the EAS in the first plane since (t=-1.446, *df*=156, *p*>0.005, 2-tailed).

Table and Figure 4.3.2 Groups Answers in the Second Plane

Plane 2: [+ Definite, + Specific]	Groups	**the-for-the**	a-for-the	an-for-the	Ø-for-the
Explicit Speaker Knowledge	AMI (n=104)	**65%**	12%	6%	17%
	EMI (n=54)	**69%**	14%	6%	11%
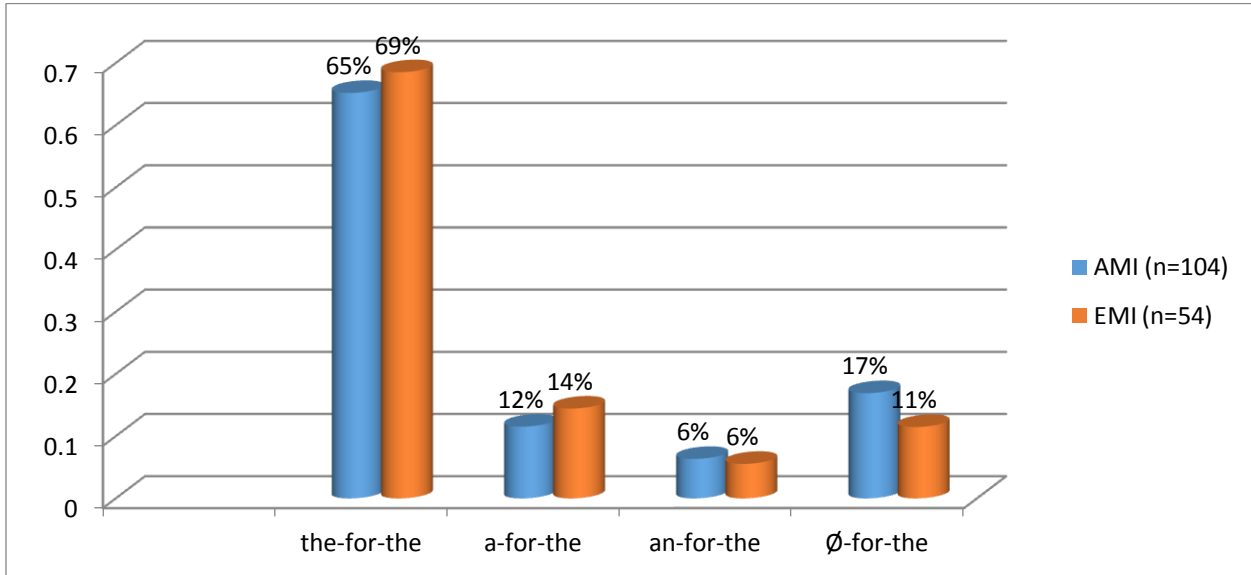
Inspecting the second plane elucidates that the right answers for the AMI group represent 65%, whereas their peers in the EMI correct answers represent 69%. Both groups show similar fluctuations between *the* and *a, an* or *Ø*, but in different proportions; *a*-for-*the* is 12% for the AMI and 14% for the EMI. Using *an* instead of *the* is equal for both groups since it is 6% for both. However, their alternative use of *Ø*-for-*the* is little different since it is 17% for the AMI, but 11% for the EMI. This reveals that both groups acted badly when the target answer is *the* and the NPs are not repeated but only recognized by the speaker. Likewise, inferential statistics reveals no significant difference between the two groups acquiring the EAS in the second plane since (t=-.471, *df*=156, *p*>0.005, 2-tailed).

Table and Figure 4.3.3 Groups Answers in the Third Plane

Plane 3:[+ Definite, - Specific]	Groups	**the-for-the**	a-for-the	an-for-the	Ø-for-the
Denial of Speaker Knowledge	AMI (n=104)	**66%**	13%	6%	15%
	EMI (n=54)	**86%**	7%	2%	5%
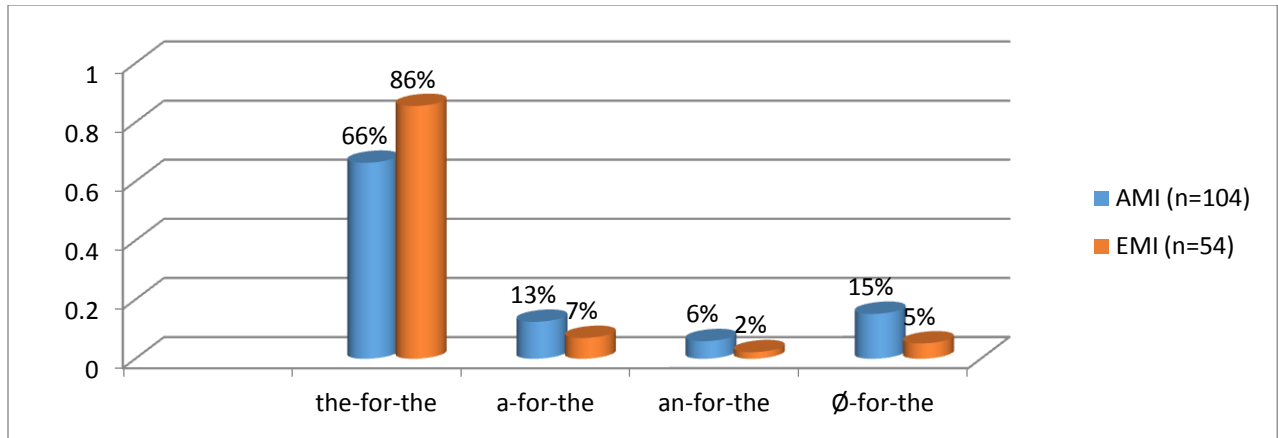
When the analysis comes to the third plane in which all the contexts include +definite and -specific NPs with denial of the speaker knowledge, it is obvious that the EMI correct answers overrides their peers' in the AMI. The EMI sophomores could achieve 86% correctly, but the AMI sophomores could only get 66% out of 100%. Similarly, the EMI sophomores do not fluctuate in a great proportion like their peers in the AMI since they used *a*-for-*the* for 7%, *an*-for-*the* for 2% and *Ø*-for-*the* for 5%. On the other hand, the AMI sophomores used *a*-for-*the*, *an*-for-*the* and *Ø*-for-*the* for 13%, 6% and 15% respectively. Furthermore, inferential statistics show a statistical significant difference in means between EMI and AMI performance acquiring the EAS in the third plane since (t=-3.175, *df*=156, *p*<0.005, 2-tailed).

Table and Figure 4.3.4 Groups Answers in the Fourth Plane

Plane 4: [- Definite, + Specific]	Groups	**a-for-a**	the-for-a	an-for-a	Ø-for-a
Explicit Speaker Knowledge	AMI (n=104)	**43%**	24%	6%	27%
	EMI (n=54)	**56%**	18%	4%	22%
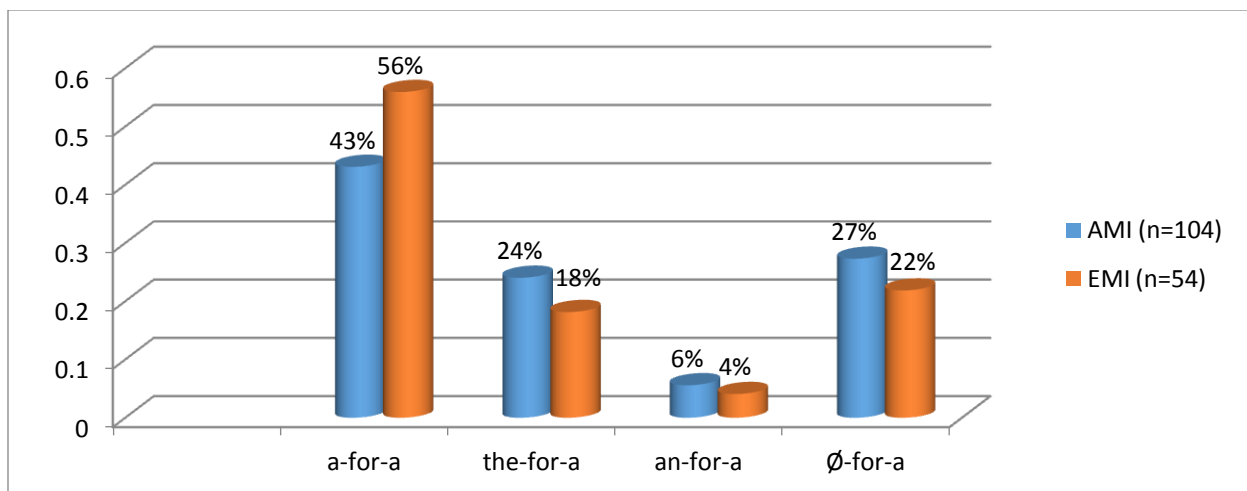
Examining the fourth plane shows that both groups' answers are affected negatively when they come to indefinite NPs. It is shown that the AMI correct uses are 43% and the EMI right answers are 56%. This regression in both groups' degrees is considered as an indicator that there is a strong effect that influences their answers negatively. This influence, as hypnotized, is the role of L1 Arabic transfer since Arabic does not have indefinite articles similar to *a/an*. Despite the EMI group higher level of proficiency, they face difficulties in acquiring English indefinite articles properly and achieved poorly since the target answer is *a*. Similarly*,* comparable regression is anticipated with *an* and *Ø*. However**,** there is no statistical significant difference in means between EMI and AMI performance in the fourth plane since (t=-1.724, *df*=156, *p*>0.005, 2-tailed).

Table and Figure 4.3.5 Groups Answers in the Fifth Plane

Plane 5: [- Definite, - Specific] First Mention	Groups	**an-for-an**	the-for-an	a-for-an	Ø-for-an
	AMI (n=104)	**52%**	19%	6%	23%
	EMI (n=54)	**63%**	19%	2%	16%
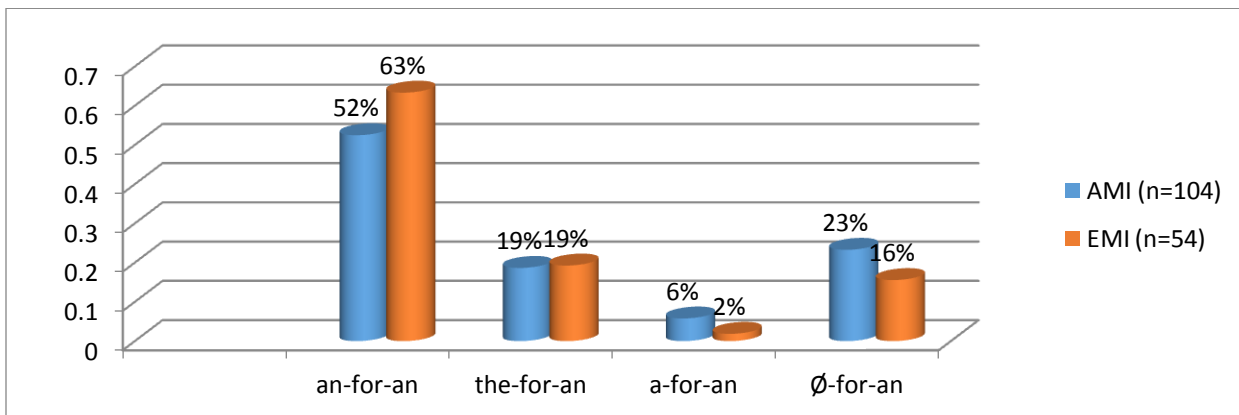
It is recognized that both groups performed as anticipated, they supply either *the* or *Ø* in *an* places in greater proportions. The AMI answered only 52% correctly and fluctuate in the other answers between *the* and *Ø* where *an* is required for 19% and 23% respectively, and for *a* with the least proportion 6%. Similarly performed but with slight differences, the EMI group answered 63% correctly and used *the*-for-*an* and *Ø*-for-*an* for 19% and 16% respectively in a way that is similar to their peers in the AMI group, but showed less fluctuation between *an* and *a* with a 2% proportion only. Apparently, both groups misused *an* in -definite and -specific contexts in a similar way to their performance with *a*. The results shown in planes 4 and 5 are

exactly as anticipated. Although the EMI group practice and exposure to the English language is greater, they performed worse than expected. Inferential statistics reveal no statistical significant difference in means between EMI and AMI performance in the fifth plane since (t=-1.445, *df*=156, *p*>0.005, 2-tailed).

Table and Figure 4.3.6 Groups Answers in the Sixth Plane					
Plane 6: [- Definite, - Specific]	Groups	**Ø-for-Ø**	the-for-Ø	a-for-Ø	an-for-Ø
Denial of Speaker Knowledge	AMI (n=104)	**56%**	28%	13%	3%
	EMI (n=54)	**80%**	17%	2%	1%
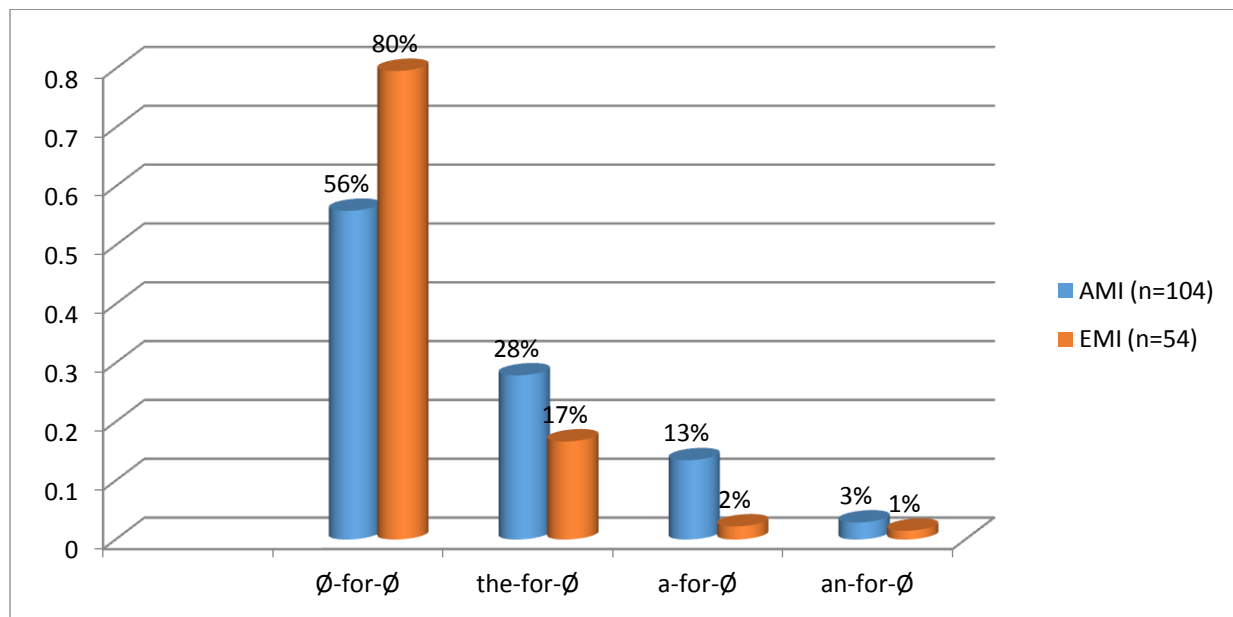
Plane six data analysis illustrates that the AMI group performed in a way that was expected, but surprisingly the EMI group performed in a way better than their performance with *a* and *an*. The AMI group correct answers represent 56%, while their peers in the EMI correct answers represent 80% in the –definite and –specific with denial of speaker knowledge contexts. However, it is detectable that both groups overused *the* where *Ø* is required, since the AMI group misused *the*-for-*Ø* for 28% and the EMI group misused *the*-for-*Ø* for 17%. Nevertheless, their usages of *an* where *Ø* is required is markedly less as it is 3% for the AMI group and 1% for the EMI group. However, their misuses of *a* in place of *Ø* is totally dissimilar, since the AMI group overused *a* in place of *Ø* for 13%, but the EMI misused *a* in place of *Ø* only for 2%. Additionally, inferential statistics reveals a statistical significant difference in means between EMI and AMI sophomores in the sixth plane since (t=-3.231, *df*=156, *p*<0.005, 2-tailed).

4.4 Overall Comparison of the Forced-Elicitation Task

To get an overall view comparison of the forced-elicitation task all the 30 questions that comprise the six planes are accumulated and analyzed according to correctness to determine whether or not there is a significant difference in means between the two groups and which group has a significant difficulty in acquiring EAS: the EMI or AMI. Accordingly, Research Question 1 could be answered.

Table 4.4.1 Task 1 Overall Comparison

Medium of Instruction	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Arabic	104	17.84	12.007	1.177
English	54	21.78	10.902	1.484

Table 4.4.1 shows that there is a difference in mean scores between AMI (*Mean*=17.84, *n*=104, *SD*=12.007) and EMI (*Mean*=21.78, *n*=54, *SD*=10.9.2). To examine whether the difference in means is statistically significant, the independent samples *t*-test is conducted.

As it is illustrated in table 4.4.2, the *t*-test reveals that the difference in means is statistically significant since (t=-2.018, *df*=156, *p*<0.05, 2-tailed). In other words, the EMI group outperforms their peers in the AMI in the forced-elicitation task. Hence, it is obvious that the AMI have a significantly greater difficulty in acquiring EAS than their peers in the EMI.

4.4.2 Task 1 Independent Samples Test

Overall Task 1	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	4.318	.039	-2.018	156	.045	-3.941	1.953	-7.799	-.084
Equal variances not assumed			-2.081	116.915	.040	-3.941	1.894	-7.692	-.190

The analysis shows that the EMI group is able to interpret contexts better than their peers in the AMI. However, their mother tongue effects override the effect of their teaching environment, since their language in daily-life is Arabic and they practice English in the classroom for educational purposes only. Interestingly, both groups' errors are similar but in different

proportions since both groups share the same Arabic background influence. The results of this study are similar to other studies (Ionin 2003; Ionin, Zubizarreta & Maldonado 2008; Ionin, Zubizarreta & Philippov 2009), in a way that article-less language learners always overuse *the* instead of *a/n*. Unlike the previously mentioned studies, the participants do not overuse *a/n* or *Ø* in places of *the* since it is completely different from Spanish and Korean in a way that Arabic is rich in the definite article (*the*), but does not have the indefinites *a* and *an*. While the two groups performed accurately in +definite and ±specifics regardless of the speakers' knowledge of the NPs being modified, they exhibit negative performance when they meet with −definite and ±specific contexts.

Closer inspection elucidates whether addition of *the* or omission of *a/n* is a resultant of the influence of L1 Arabic transfer. It is traceable from such examples from the test in which many subjects used *the* where *a* was required. For instances; At the airport Youssif asked the staff member, "Have you seen ………man with a red rose?" which used in Arabic as:

Hal Ra'ait al-rajol al-athi maaho warda hamra'a?

Have saw-you the man who has rose red?

Also, "He has a meeting with ………students, but I do not know who they are." In Arabic used as: Hoowa fi ijtem'a ma'a al-tulab, laken ana ma a'arafhum.

He in meeting with the students, but I not know-them.

Such contexts in Arabic necessitate *the* not *a/n* or *Ø*. Dissimilarly, in the example: "…and my rich uncle gave him ………iPod."

Wa ami al-ghani a'taho iPod.

And uncle-my the rich gave-he iPod.

In Arabic this context does not require any articles in front of 'iPod' that is why many subjects in both groups omitted *an* and used *Ø* instead since −definite and −specific NPs take no articles in Arabic. This contradicts English which requires *a/n* or *Ø* in similar context to modify the NP being addressed.

4.5 Comparison Summary: The Multiple-choice Results

The following table shows in numbers the correct answers vs. the wrong answers made by both groups, and the total number of articles used in the multiple-choice test in a trial to measure both

groups acquisition of the EAS and compare between two different teaching environments by ESL L1 Arabic learners in the UAE high schools.

Table 4.5.1 Frequencies of	Required Articles	for Correctness vs.			Chosen Articles		
		Test 1: Multiple-choice					
	Required Articles	Chosen Articles				Total	Values
AMI Group (n=104)		a	an	Ø	the		
	a	224	29	142	125	520	
	an	30	274	119	97	520	
	Ø	70	15	291	144	520	
	the	177	90	227	1066	1560	
Correct		224	274	291	1066	1855	59.40%
Incorrect		277	134	488	366	1265	40.60%
						3120	
EMI Group (n=54)							
	a	151	11	59	49	270	
	an	5	171	42	52	270	
	Ø	6	4	215	45	270	
	the	73	25	73	639	810	
Correct		151	171	215	639	1176	72.60%
Incorrect		84	40	174	146	444	27.40%
						1620	
AMI & EMI Groups (n=158)							
Correct		375	445	506	1705	3031	63.90%
Incorrect		361	174	662	512	1709	36.10%
Total						4740	

4.5.1 Proficiency Level and Fluctuation Outcomes:

Table 4.5.1 above reveals the number of correct answers and the number of errors made by both the AMI and EMI sophomores. It is traceable that the AMI group's errors override the number of errors made by the EMI group. The AMI group correct answers are 1855 ones that represent 59.40% of overall their answers which is 3120, whereas their mistakes are 1265 out of 3120 which represent 40.60% as displayed in figure 4.5.1.1.

Figure 4.5.1.1 AMI Correct and Incorrect Choices Representation
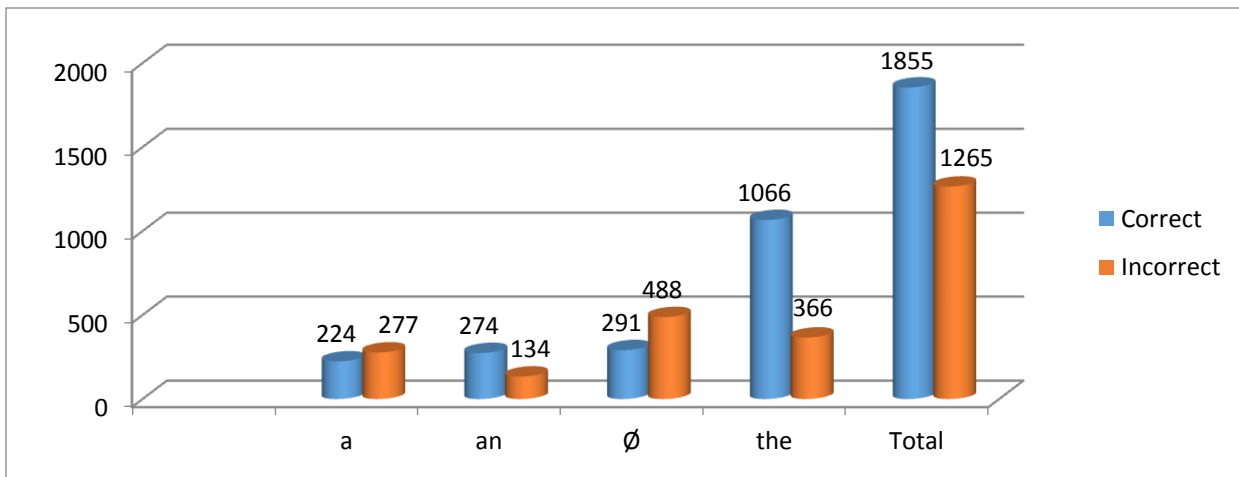
However, the EMI group total answers are 1620, from which 1176 are correct answers that represent 72.6% and 444 are incorrect answers which represent 27.4% as shown in figure 4.5.1.2.

Figure 4.5.1.2 EMI Correct and Incorrect Choices Representation
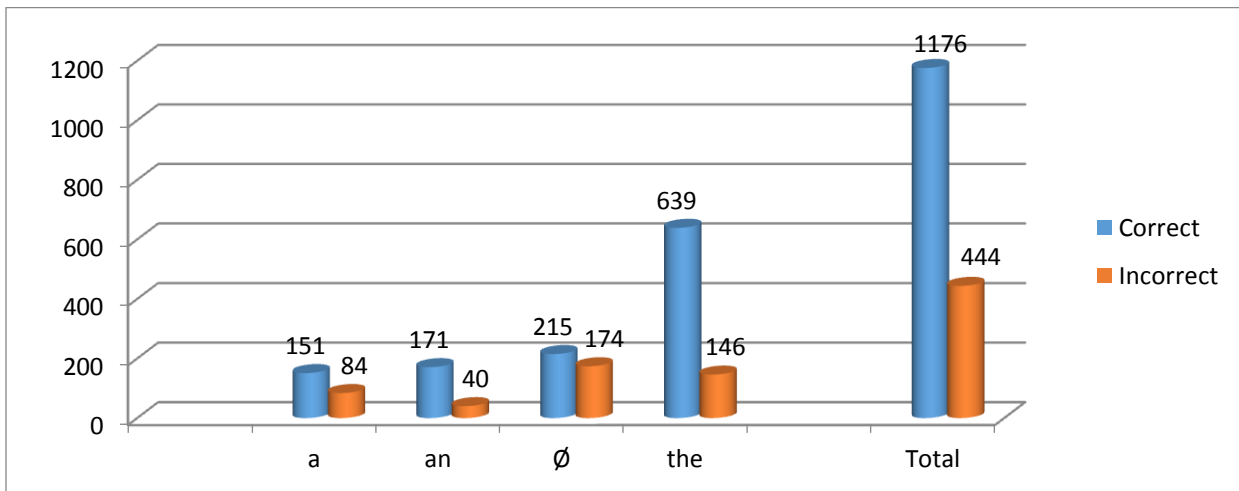
Obviously, the EMI group does not show a degree of fluctuation in their choices of articles as the AMI group. Therefore, as hypothesized, different level of proficiency amongst the participants shows different degree of fluctuations. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the greater the ESL L1 Arabic learners exposure to the language, the less the fluctuations occur. Henceforth, minimizing the use of Arabic and maximizing the use of English in the ESL classes is advisable to facilitate acquiring such systems like English articles. When L1 Arabic learners are given sufficient input, they could distinguish between the definiteness and specificity settings since English depends on

definiteness rather than specificity settings in determining which article is required in the correct context to modify the addressed NP. Nevertheless, neither the AMI group nor the EMI group could master the English article system professionally in a way that resembles native-like English speakers. Hence, improving the acquisition of the EAS is still questionable and in a need of further research and investigation amongst ESL L1 Arabic learners.

To conclude, it is depicted from table 4.5.1 that both groups of learners show more realization of the +definiteness than the –definiteness regardless of the ±specificity and this was expected since English is in favor of definiteness rather than specificity patterns.

4.6 The argumentative Essays Findings and Interpretations (Task 2)

To attain credibility, the study scrutinizes another variable of L1 Arabic learners' writings in a more comprehensive manner, since the data collected from the multiple-choice contexts deployed in this study and others e.g. Master (1997), Ionin (2003), Ionin, Ko and Wexler (2004) and Ionin, Zubizarreta and Maldonado (2008) endeavor to scrutinize the acquisition of articles in made-up contexts that may differ from the real productions of articles by L2 learners in actual contexts. In such contexts, it is impossible for L2 learners to present interlanguage features resulted in absence of associations in the target language. For this reason, the study investigates the writings of argumentative essays generated by the learners themselves in their own time away from classroom settings and time constraints to examine whether L2 learners' errors are the result of interferences from their L1.

Table 4.6.1 summarizes the total number of all articles that were used in each group's essays either visible or invisible for correctness and incorrectness. The accumulation of both groups written articles are 4380 articles, of which 3476 (79.40%) are correct, while 904 (20.60%) are incorrect. To compare each group performance, it is visible that the AMI group's overall production of articles whether correct or incorrect is 2724 of them 1943 (71.30%) are correct, while 781 (28.70%) are incorrect. On the other hand, the EMI group's overall production of articles is 1656 of them 1533 (92.60%) are correct, while 123 (7.40%) are misused.

Table 4.6.1 Frequencies of Required Articles for Correctness vs. Written Articles							
		Test 2: Argumentative Essay Writings					
	Required Articles	Written Articles				Total	Values
AMI Group (n=104)		a	an	Ø	the		
	a	400	14	72	80	566	
	an	11	239	58	79	387	
	Ø	28	12	578	260	878	
	the	43	26	98	726	893	
Correct		400	239	578	726	1943	71.30%
Incorrect		82	52	228	419	781	28.70%
						2724	
EMI Group (n=54)							
	a	345	0	6	23	374	
	an	2	188	11	9	210	
	Ø	7	2	409	12	430	
	the	10	4	37	591	642	
Correct		345	188	409	591	1533	92.60%
Incorrect		19	6	54	44	123	7.40%
						1656	
AMI & EMI Groups (n=158)							
Correct		745	427	987	1317	3476	79.40%
Incorrect		101	58	282	463	904	20.60%
Total						4380	

Such comparison gives lucid representation of linguistic characteristics in written corpora produced by ESL L1 Arabic learners in a way that reveals their writings habits and the resultant occurrences of errors. Similarly, Hunston (2002) verifies that many studies of written learners' corpora elucidate that those writings are characterized by containing typical spoken English rather than academic written productions. For instances, they have additional emphatic particles as well as additional first and second person pronouns. For this reason, the study aims to examine two variables of articles production; one of them is the multiple-choice task, while the other is the argumentative essay writings. The former task conducted at classroom environment within time-limit period, whereas the latter produced in the participants own time away from classroom and time restrictions.

Ringbom (1998) recognizes that L1 authors use *the* in their writings more than any of the non-native speakers of English authors. Interestingly, it seems that ESL L1 Arabic learners resemble the English authors in using *the* more than any other article in their writings if incorrectness is ignored as shown in table 4.6.1. It is detected that the AMI group uses *the* 726 times while they use Ø 578 times, *a* 400 times and *an* 239 times, with *the* being the most used, *an* being the least

used, Ø being the second most used and *a* being the second least used. Similarly, the EMI group used *the* 591 times being the most used article, Ø 409 times being the second most used article, *an* 188 times being the least used article and *a* 345 times being the second least used article. Accumulating all the tokens of the four articles *the, Ø, a* and *an* in the written corpora by both groups shows that: *the* is used 1317 times being the most used article, Ø is used 987 times being the second most used article, *an* is used 427 times being the least used article and *a* is used 745 times being the second least used article out of 3476 correct uses of all articles. In this respect, the role of L1 Arabic transfer is traceable since Arabic is rich in the definite article *the (al-),* but it does not have the indefinites *a* and *an*. Likewise, the results reveal that Ø is overused by both groups as it stands in the second position after *the*.

4.7 Proportions of Correct and Incorrect Article Uses in the Second Task

An alteration from an overall view of the data analysis to a more specific inspection is more profitable. By the same token, each article used in the participants' writings will be represented with proportion of correctness and incorrectness accompanied by proportions of substitutions with other articles, also the type of definiteness and specificity of NPs addressed in the writing contexts will be overviewed.

Table and Figure 4.7.1 Groups Use of *the* in Type 1 Context

Type 1: [+ Definite, + Specific] Previous Mentioned	Groups	**the-for-the**	a-for-the	an-for-the	Ø-for-the
	AMI (n=104)	**81%**	4%	4%	11%
	EMI (n=54)	**93%**	1%	1%	5%
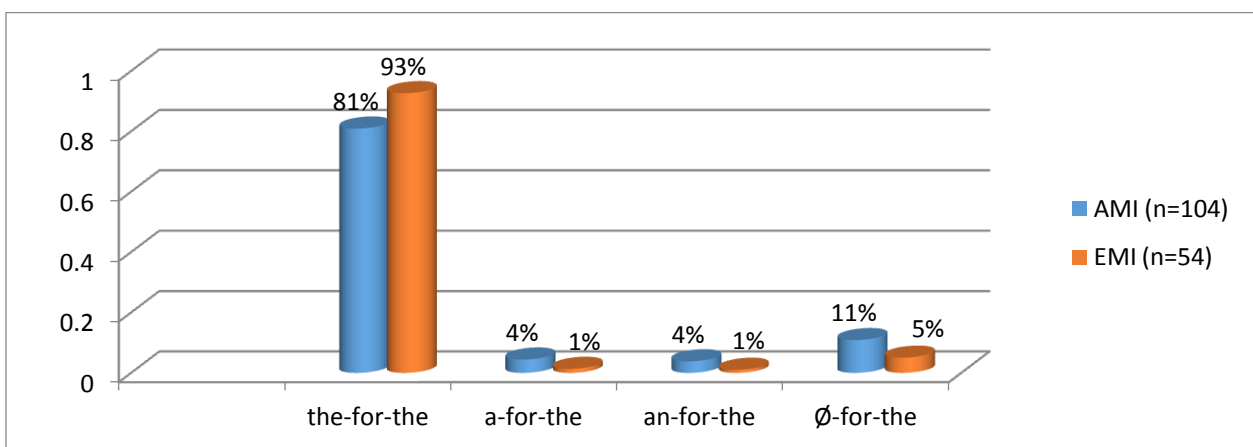
Data analysis illustrates that both groups show higher proficiency level when they were asked to write essays at their own times. The AMI group used *the* in +definite and +specific contexts when the NPs are previously mentioned in their contexts correctly for 81%. However, the same group misused *a*-for-*the* and *an*-for-*the* in equal portion that is 4% in their writings and they overused Ø when *the* was required in 11% of their uses of articles in this context. The EMI group shows higher proficiency level in their use of *the* in +definite and +specific contexts when the NPs were previously mentioned in their writings and they achieved a level of 93% of correctness. However, they misused *a*-for-*the* and *an*-for-*the* in equal proportion in this context for 1% for each. It is also noticeable that the EMI group overused Ø in *the* places for 5% in this context. The higher level of mastering the definite article *the* in this context by the EMI sophomores is really interesting since Brown (1973) claims that the proficiency level of 90% and above is a remarkable sign of complete acquisition. According to Brown's (1973) claims, it can be said that L1 Arabic learners at the EMI have mastered the English article *the* when used in +definite and +specific contexts, whilst their peers in the AMI have not. However, this judgment needs more investigation and further research since the EMI group performance in the multiple-choice in the same context was obliviously lower since their correct answers represent 83%. Notably, this higher level of proficiency is shown in writing productions that were done at the students own time away from classroom restrictions and without time limits or constraints, so the wise judgment in this situation is definitely thorny.

Table and Figure 4.7.2 Groups Use of *the* in Type 2 Context

Type 2: [+ Definite, + Specific]	Groups	**the-for-the**	a-for-the	an-for-the	Ø-for-the
Explicit Speaker Knowledge	AMI (n=104)	**79%**	4%	2%	14%
	EMI (n=54)	**89%**	1%	1%	9%
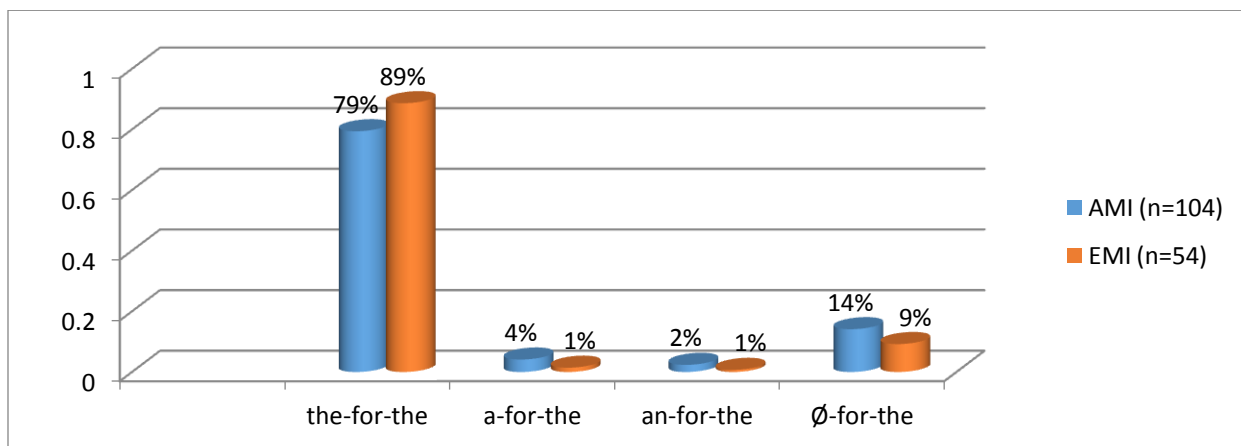
Table and figure 4.7.2 show that the EMI group has performed better than the AMI group in this type of contexts in which the NPs are +definite and +specific with explicit speaker knowledge. The EMI group used 89% of *the* uses correctly, while the AMI group got 79% correct usages. The EMI group substitution rates in *a*-for-*the* and *an*-for-*the* was similar in which 1% for each of their uses was incorrect. However, they used Ø-for-*the* in 9% of their uses. Similarly, the AMI group fluctuate between *the* and *a* in 4% of their uses and they used *an* where *the* was required in 2% of their uses, but their substitution was high with Ø in *the* places since their incorrect uses was 14%. It is traceable that both groups fluctuation with *a/an*-for-*the* is less, while their substitution with Ø-for-*the* is noticeably greater. This also an indicator that their mother tongue has a great influence on their uses of the articles in their writings since L1 Arabic has no *a/n* article, and this type of permanent error is considered interlingual rather than intralingual.

Table and Figure 4.7.3 Groups Use of *the* in Type 3 Context					
Type 3:[+ Definite, - Specific]	Groups	**the-for-the**	a-for-the	an-for-the	Ø-for-the
Denial of Speaker Knowledge	AMI (n=104)	**84%**	6%	1%	9%
	EMI (n=54)	**94%**	2%	0%	4%
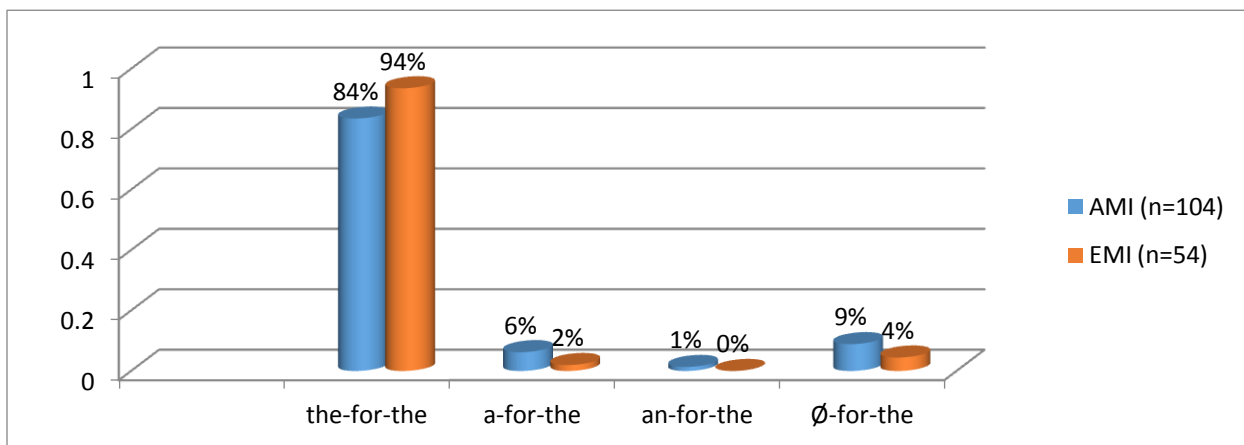
In the above context, the EMI group shows high performance level of article uses since their correct uses when the NPs are +definite and –specific with denial of speaker knowledge represent 94%. They fluctuate in *a*-for-*the* for 2% and Ø-for-*the* for 4% of their uses, however, they did not show any fluctuation with *an* in *the* places. On the other hand, the AMI group shows less performance level than their peers in the EMI, since their correct uses of *the* represent 84%. They fluctuate between *a* in *the* places for 6% and *an*-for-*the* for only 1%, while their misuse of Ø when *the* is required is markedly higher which represents 9% of their uses. Notably, the EMI

group performance with the article uses in the essay writings is much higher than their performance in the multiple-choice task, similarly is the AMI. However, the EMI group outperforms their peers in the AMI in both tasks.

Table and Figure 4.7.4 Groups Use of *a* in Type 4 Context					
Type 4: [- Definite, ± Specific]	Groups	**a-for-a**	the-for-a	an-for-a	Ø-for-a
Correct Use (a)	AMI (n=104)	**71%**	14%	2%	13%
	EMI (n=54)	**92%**	6%	0%	2%
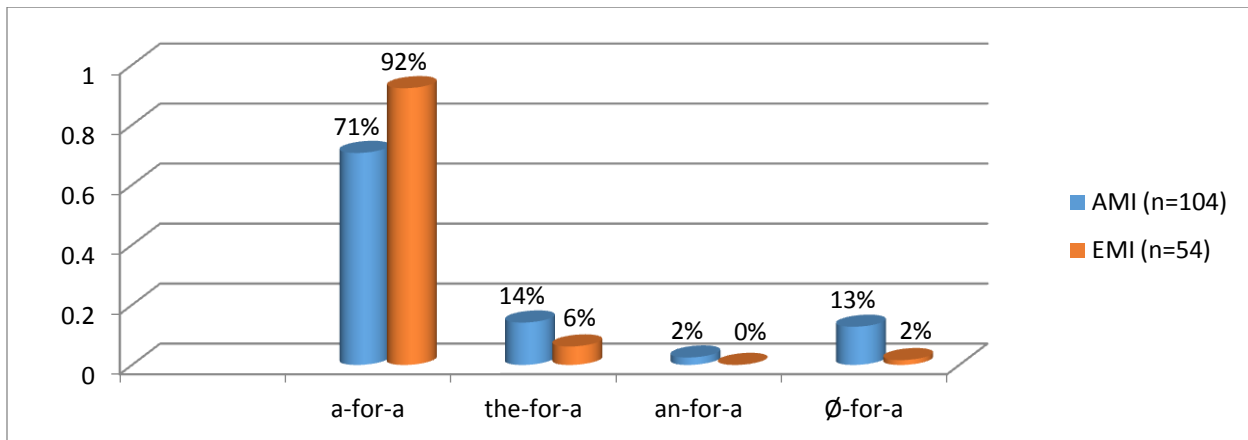
Table and figure 4.7.4 show the groups performances in –definite and ±specific contexts with the target answer *a*. To start with the AMI group, it is apparent that they used the indefinite article *a* where it is required for 71% of their usages. However, they misused *the* in *a* places for 14 %, missed *an*-for-*a* for 2%, while their fluctuation in using Ø where *a* is required represents 13%. On the other hand, the EMI group showed higher performance level in using *a* in –definite and +specific contexts, since their correct uses are 92%, but they misused *the*-for-*a* for 6%, Ø-for-*a* for 2%, however they did not misuse *an* in *a* places.

In the fifth type context where the NPs are –definite and ±specific and *an* is required for correctness, the EMI group showed higher performance level while their peers in the AMI group performance level decreased radically. Table and figure 4.7.5 show that the EMI group used *an* correctly for 90%, while the AMI group used it correctly for only 62%. The AMI group used *the* in place of *an* for 4%, while their peers in the AMI group misused *the* where *an* is required for 20%. Both groups show lower misuse of *a* where *an* is required for 3% for the AMI and 1% for the EMI group. Nevertheless, there is a great divergent in their misuses of Ø where *an* is

required, although the EMI group misused Ø-for-*an* for 5% only, the AMI group overused Ø where contexts necessitate *an* for 15%.

Table and Figure 4.7.5 Groups Use of *an* in Type 5 Context

Type 5: [- Definite, ± Specific] Correct Use (an)	Groups	**an-for-an**	the-for-an	a-for-an	Ø-for-an
	AMI (n=104)	**62%**	20%	3%	15%
	EMI (n=54)	**90%**	4%	1%	5%
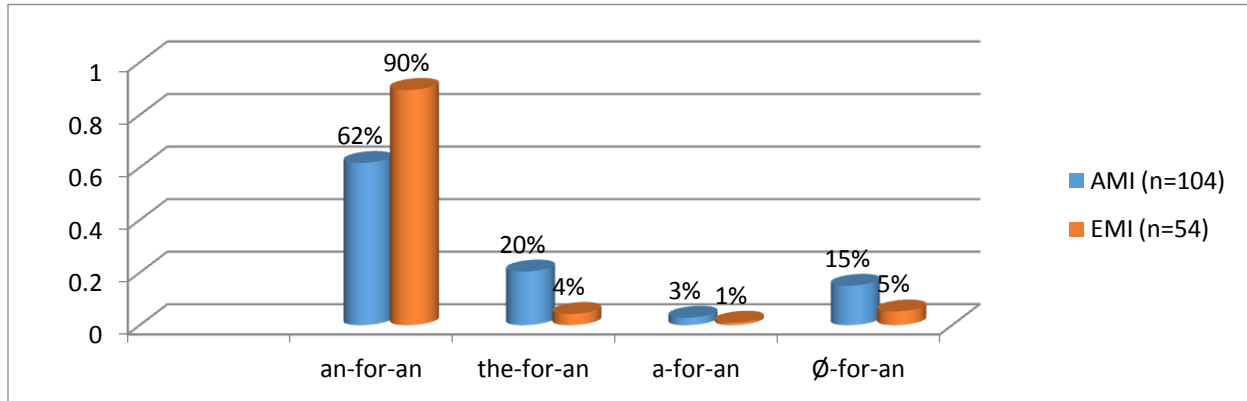
Table and Figure 4.7.6 Groups Use of Ø in Type 6 Context

Type 6: [- Definite, ± Specific] Correct Use (Ø)	Groups	**Ø-for-Ø**	the-for-Ø	a-for-Ø	an-for-Ø
	AMI (n=104)	**66%**	30%	3%	1%
	EMI (n=54)	**95%**	3%	2%	0%
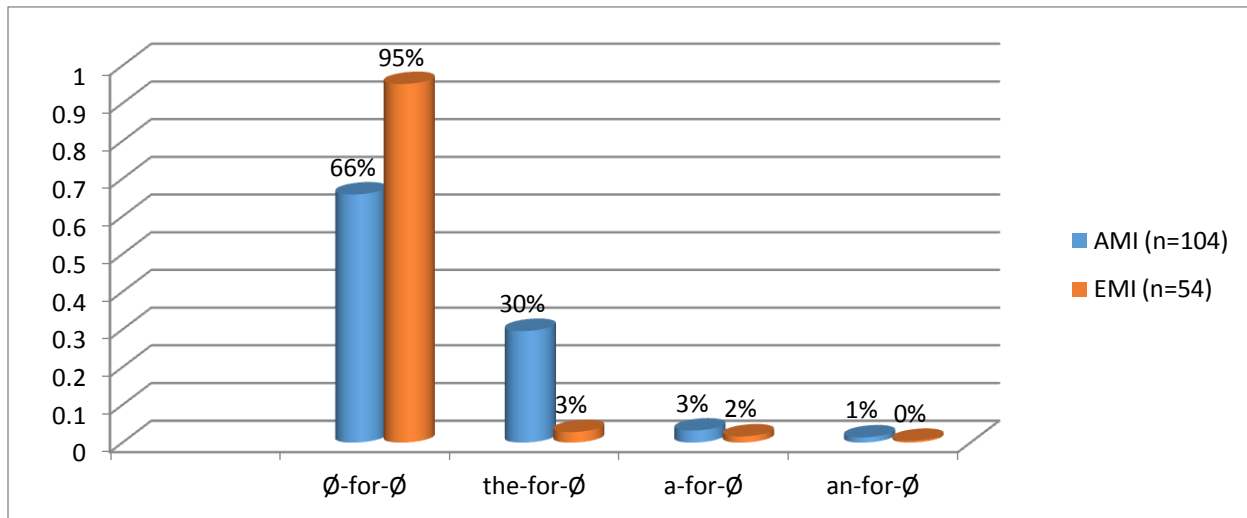
Table and figure 4.7.6 reveal extreme dichotomy in the groups' uses of Ø in –definite and ±specific contexts. While the AMI group used Ø correctly for 66%, their peers in the EMI group used it correctly for 95%. The AMI group overused *the* in place of Ø for 30%, but the EMI group

misused *the* in Ø places for only 3%. Both groups' misuses of *a* in places of Ø is somehow similar, it is 3% for the AMI and 2% for the AMI group. The AMI group misused *an* in place of Ø for 1%, while the EMI group did not show any fluctuation between *an* and Ø in this context.

In the following chapter, the above-mentioned findings are interpreted and discussed in light of the participants' mother tongue influences.

5- DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In this section, Research Question 2 is addressed. The foremost archetypes of English article errors made by ESL L1 Arabic learners participating in this study are examined in detail and the role of L1 Arabic interference as a causative factor of those errors is discussed.

5.2 Archetypes of Articles Incorrect Uses in Task 1 and 2

Table 5.2.1 Task 1 Errors Summary

	Article Errors				Total
	a	an	Ø	the	
		40	201	174	
	35		161	149	
	76	19		189	
	250	115	300		
Total	361	174	662	512	1709

Table 5.2.2 Task 2 Errors Summary

	Article Errors				Total
	a	an	Ø	the	
		14	78	103	
	13		69	88	
	35	14		272	
	53	30	135		
Total	101	58	282	463	904

Table 5.2.3 An Accumulation of Task 1 and 2 Errors Summary

	Article Errors				Total
	a	an	Ø	the	
		54	279	277	
	48		230	237	
	111	33		461	
	303	145	435		
Total	462	232	944	975	2613

Table 5.2.4 Errors Arrangement from Commonest to Least Common

	Number		Percent	
the-for-Ø	461		17.64%	
Ø-for-the	435		16.64%	
a-for-the	303		11.59%	
Ø-for-a	279		10.67%	
the-for-a	277		10.60%	
the-for-an	237		9.07%	
Ø-for-an	230		8.80%	
an-for-the	145		5.54%	
a-for-Ø	111		4.24%	
an-for-a	54		2.06%	
a-for-an	48		1.83%	
an-for-Ø	33		1.26%	
Total	2613		100%	

It is traceable from the above four tables that the most commonly frequent error is using the definite article *the* where *Ø* is required, whereas the least commonly frequent error is using *an* where contexts necessitate *Ø*. The study categorizes the misuses of *the* in *Ø* positions into four subcategories.

Table 5.2.5 The Misuses of *the* in *Ø* Positions Subcategories

Table 5.2.5 Classification of the-for-Ø Incorrect Uses		
	Number	Percent
Generic uncountable nouns	211	45.77%
Generic plural countable nouns	178	38.61%
Generic singular countable noun	59	12.69%
Idioms/Others	13	2.81%
Total	461	100%

Table 5.2.5 shows that the most commonly misuses of *the* where *Ø* is required in the contexts by both the AMI and the EMI groups were more often with generic uncountable nouns. The written essays exemplifies such repeatedly occurred errors with generic uncountable nouns e.g. junk, health, life, money, work, advice, information, growth, culture, juice, sugar, water, homework, milk, happiness, human nature, energy, taste, equipment, garbage, prevention and time. These examples apparently emerge in plane '1' in the multiple-choice task as well as in type '1' in essay writing task in which NPs are previously mentioned in +definite and +specific contexts. In

such contexts Ø is preferred rather than *the*. For the same reason, all investigations were made after analyzing the aforementioned discourse to comprehend the situation either explicitly or implicitly.

Here are some instances from the participants' essays aiming to elucidate the errors occurred because of the misuse of *the* where the contexts require Ø.

1- *The* junk food is harmful for *the* health.
2- *The* junk food is full of *the* sugar.
3- Overusing *the* cell phones damages *the* human life.
4- *The* crimes damage *the* society.
5- *The* money is very important for students.
6- *The* students should not work to get the allowance.
7- *The* authorities should prevent *the* junk food in *the* schools.
8- It is the parents' responsibility to work and give *the* allowance to their kids.
9- The students have to work for *the* money.
10- *The* cell phones help us to communicate with *the* relatives and *the* friends.
11- *The* prevention is better than *the* cure.

Strictly speaking, those above-mentioned instances of article errors exemplify the influence of L1 Arabic transfer. Here are the Arabic translations of the previously mentioned examples that show L1 Arabic interferences, they are presented by number order.

1- Al-wajabat al-saree'a modderra bil-al-seha.

[The junk food harmful for the health]

2- Al-wajabat al-saree'a malea'a bil-al-sukkariat.

[The junk food is full of the sugar]

3- Kathrat estikhdam al-hawatif alnaqalla tudammer hayat al-insan.

[Overusing the cell phones damage life the human]

4- Al-jara'em tudamer al-mujtam'a.

[The crimes damage the society]

5- Al-noqoud mohema jedan lil al-tulab.

[The money is important very for the students]

6- Al- tulab la yajeb An ta'amal men ajl al-masrouf.

[The students do not should to work for the allowance]

7- Al-sulutat yajeb man'e al-wajabat al-saree'a fi al-madaris.

[The authorities should prevent the junk food in the schools]

8- Inha masouliat al-walidian an ta'amal wa tu'etty atfalihm al-masroof.

[It is the responsibility of the parents to work and give kids-their the allowance]

9- Al-tulab yajeb an ta'amal men Ajl al-noqoud.

[The students have to work for the money]

10- Al-hwatif alnaqala tusa'eduna an natawasal ma' al-ahl wa al-assdeqa'a.

[The cell phones help us to communicate with the relatives and the friends]

11- Al-weqaiha khairon men al-e'laj.

[The Prevention is better than the cure]

Such errors occurrences of *the* insertion where it is not favored are clear evidence of L1 Arabic transfer, since such situations in Arabic necessitate using *the* in front of the nouns they address. This kind of error is consistent with Ellis (2006b) hypothesis, which stresses blocking of L2 acquisition due to the influence of L1 transfer.

The main objective of this study is to provide a clear picture of the influence of L1 Arabic in the SLA of English articles, so some more examples of *the* misuses in *a/n* places are in demand. It is visible that the participating learners misused *the*-for-*a* for 277 (10.60%) and misused *the*-for-*an* for 237 (9.07%) out of 2613 errors. If accumulated, *the* misuses for *a* and *an* would be 514 (19.67%) of all errors, which ranks *the*-for-*a/n* misuses in the first position. Most of these errors occurred due to the learners' intention to generalize their ideas, where it is recommended to remove *a/n*, pluralize the NPs being addressed and use Ø instead of *the*. For instances:

1- In my point of view, *the student* should not use *the cell phone* at schools.
2- Working for *the allowance* is a debatable issue.

3- Junk food gives *the student* more energy.

4- Paying *the student* an allowance help him to enjoy his leisure time.

5- Most teens have a lot of *the homework*.

6- If *the student* has to work for his allowance, he cannot study for *the test*.

7- *The student* should not have junk food in his diet.

8- Large amounts of *the sugar* make *the student* nervous.

9- *The child* has to make *the choice* about what to eat.

10- *The health official* says that there is too much sugar in *the student* diets.

Another type of permanent errors in the participating learners' essays is the misuse of *Ø-for-a/n,* for instances:

1- Junk food is Ø means to save time for Ø busy person.

2- Ø allowance helps students to understand the connection between working and spending.

3- I have Ø right to take my allowance from my parents.

4- Ø recent survey reveals that half the students in my class get Ø allowance.

5- As Ø result, some schools banned junk food.

6- Ø student at my school says, "Junk food is tasty."

7- Ø adult in my family says, "We should not eat junk food."

8- Ø healthy diet helps us concentrate at school.

9- Eating Ø apple everyday fights diseases.

10- I eat Ø bar of chocolate daily.

Here are some more examples of the misuses of Ø where contexts require *the:*

1- On Ø other hand,…

2- At Ø end,…….

3- Ø number of overweight children has doubled.

4- Now, they sell fruits and healthy wraps in Ø school cafeteria.

5- Students can use their cell phones at school but not in Ø classroom.

6- It is Ø responsibility of officials to prevent cell phones at schools.

7- Ø idea of working for an allowance is not common in my country.

8- Diabetes is Ø most serious disease caused by junk food.

9- High blood pressure is another health problem in Ø country.

10- Sometimes my father tells me to water Ø trees and plants in Ø house garden to give me my allowance.

Here are *a/n*-for-*Ø* errors instances:

1- I advise my friends to make *a* balance between eating junk food and healthy food.

2- Junk food gives me *a* happiness.

3- *An* officials always debate about using *a* cell phones at schools.

4- Fruits and vegetable are full of *a* healthy natural items.

5- *An* orange juice is better than a cola.

6- Many students have *a* different opinions about working for allowance.

7- KFC is *a* very delicious.

8- *A* fizzy drinks have a lot of soda

9- It is very dangerous to be *an* obese.

10- We have to avoid these kinds of food which are called *a* junk food.

Interestingly, these last two kinds or errors; *Ø*-for-*the* and *a/n*-for-*Ø* are predicted by Smith (2001) and Bataineh (2005). Both of them categorize this kind of article errors as presumably a resultant of an earlier stage of acquisition rather than L1 transfer consequences.

5.3 The Role of L1 Arabic Transfer in SLA of EAS

In the previous section, the most commonly misused types of errors have been examined in details in an attempt to answer the study question number two. Now it is time to shed some light on the role of L1 Arabic transfer in the acquisition of EAS in an attempt to justify the study question number three. The intricacies of the acquisition of the EAS have been long-established by massive areas of literature. Thomas (1989) and Berry (1993) argue that the definite article *the* and the indefinite articles *a/n* and *Ø* of English can be found in twenty contexts, and only three of them are generic. By the same token, Liu and Gleason (2002, p. 6) assert "the non-generic use of *the* is much more complex and hence more problematic for ESL students than the generic use." However, most articles' misuses in this study are either countable or uncountable generic

referents rather than countable specific referents. This supports Smith's (2001) prediction regarding the positive transfer of L1 for the usage of the definite article *the* for specific references, since Arabic is rich in *the* (al-). Additionally, it is traceable that most overuses of *the*-for-*a* aimed to form generic expressions; such errors are obviously due to L1 Arabic interference. This type of errors corresponds to Kharma and Hajjaj's (1997) prediction of article errors with generic NPs as well as mass and abstract nouns. Similarly, most of the mass and abstract nouns in this corpus of ESL Arab learners' essays always recognized as generics.

Schulz (2004) explains that, since Arabic has no indefinite articles *a* and *an,* therefore the absence of the definite article *the* is a lucid marker of indefiniteness. Thus, Farghal and al-Zou'bi (2004) clarify that in Arabic the definite article *the* is inevitably required to form generic singular, plural or non-count NPs, unlike English which sometimes deviate and accept generics as definite. Interestingly, regular usages of *the* in generic expressions by ESL L1 Arabic learners will usually generate proper contexts in English. Consequently, to summon the Research Question 3, it is, by no means, easy to classify the participating learners' article errors in generic contexts as interlanguage or intralingual. Arguably, L1 Arabic transfer has had a profound impact on both groups' performances as represented in the analysis, since most of their errors even in generic contexts are not permissible in English at all. By the same token, the study concludes that the most commonly article errors in the ESL Arab learners writings are due to the influence of their mother tongue transfer, and then they are considered interlanguage errors.

Strictly speaking, it is very comprehensible from the data analysis that the majority of the sophomores' errors in this study occurred due to insertion of the definite article *the* where *a/n* or Ø is required. Another important aspect is that the second major article errors committed by the Arab learners in this study is the overuse of Ø where *a/n* is required. The definite article *the* is misused in Ø positions for 17.64% (461), and it is overused mistakenly in *a/n* positions for 19.67% (514) which represent 37.31% (975) out of the 2613 errors. The zero article Ø is used in places of *a/n* for 19.47% (509), another large proportion of errors out of 2613. If accumulated, *the*-for-Ø, *the*-for-*a/n* and Ø-for-*a/n,* they would give the sum of 1484 errors, which represent 56.78% of the total errors made by the participating groups in the two assigned tasks. Unfortunately, most of those errors occurred under the influence of L1 Arabic transfer which considered interlanguage. By this end, the third question of the study is quantitatively vindicated.

Arguably, the performance dichotomies between the AMI and EMI groups are due to not only L1 Arabic transfer, but also to dichotomies between both groups in their natural receiving of exposure to English at different learning instructions; one of which is Arabic, whereas the other is English. The former may affect the acquisition of English articles process negatively, while the latter may affect the same process positively. For the same reason, the EMI group reported to have higher performance level than the AMI group in the two tasks assigned for this study. However, it is presumably that L1 Arabic transfer is efficacious at the English article semantics level for both groups.

5.4 The Role of Input in the SLA of English Articles

If it is hypothesized that L1 Arabic learners are influenced by the UG-access in their SLA of EAS, then the errors they produce and their deviation of the English appropriate patterns settlements are actually controversial. Resolving this controversy requires scholars to distinguish between learners' grammar state and their learning development. Arguably, the learners' grammar state in this study is restricted by UG-provided semantic universals settings as it is inferred from their essay productions and their choices errors in the forced-elicitation task. Thus, if theorizing about the role of innate linguistic knowledge provides ESL learners with presumable articles' uses specifications, so it is hypothesized that this innate linguistic knowledge does not with the same role instruct the ESL learners how to produce the tangible specifications for the target language. Strictly speaking, based upon the previous hypotheses the input plays a vital role in determining that English articles distinction is constrained by definiteness but not on specificity as it is believed by many ESL L1 Arabic learners, even if acquiring from input may be problematic for ±articles L1 learners of ESL as claimed by Ionin, Zubizarreta and Maldonado (2008). Thus, it is advisable for ESL learners to analyze the discourse to determine which article is required and which one has not been used in such context. For instance, contexts which are indefinite but ±specific, it is not acceptable at all to use the definite article *the*. Otherwise, if the contexts are definite and ±specific, the use of *the* is mandatory. However, the accurate article choice is on some occasions confusing even for the native-English speakers. In other words, if someone says, "I chatted with the new friend from Egypt yesterday evening." In this example *the* is characterized by definiteness even if the new friend from Egypt is anonymous for the interlocutor, but it is anecdotal evidence that this new

friend from Egypt is impressive and exceptional with whom the speaker had chatted. By the same token, *the* in the previously mentioned context characterizes +specificity, since the speaker aspiring to attract the interlocutor's attention to the identity of the new friend mentioned in the context.

In the same vein, assuming that someone says, "I chatted with a new friend from Egypt yesterday." In this context it is premised that the indefinite article *a* is used to contextualize the existence of indefiniteness and nonexistence of specificity in which the speaker supposes that the interlocutor has no prior knowledge about the new friend from Egypt in which no peculiarity to the new friend's identity is appended.

After shedding some light on how the EAS is sometimes ambiguous, one may wonder how ESL learners can master such English semantics; the answer is, in fact, intricate. However, presumably to resolve this conflict, L2 learners of English have to get used to eliminate the ambiguity from a single DP by a conscious distinction between +definiteness and ±specificity and indefiniteness and ±specificity contexts and to end that *the* is used to characterizes definiteness but not specificity. Thus, it can be simply concluded that if the NP is:

Table 5.4.1 Simple EAS Characterizations		
	Definite	Indefinite
	±Specific	±Specific
Singular, Countable Noun	the	a/n
Plural or Uncountable Noun	the	Ø

Apparently, in this study most of the article errors produced by the participating learners in both groups are due to their complete reliance on L1 Arabic transfer without paying enough attention to the interlocution analysis in the generated contexts, , and this is what negatively affects the process of their acquisition.

6- CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The main objective of this study is to provide insights into SLA of EAS by Arab sophomores and the effect of their learning environments whether EMI or AMI on the acquisition process. Additionally, it sheds light on the role of L1 Arabic transfer effects whether positive or negative on this process. Furthermore, this chapter presents the synopsis of the findings of the study in view of the literature and theoretical frameworks appraisals and discussions. Besides, this chapter pinpoints some pedagogical implications and concludes providing some areas for future research.

6.2 Discussion

Finally, in relation to Research Question 1, the study concludes that the EMI sophomores outperform their peers in the AMI. Furthermore, inferential statistics assert this significance since (t=-3.175, *df*=156, *p*<0.005, 2-tailed) in the forced-elicitation task. Similarly, the EMI group achieved higher performance in the argumentative essay production. These findings may be due to the EMI group's great exposure to the English language at their school, since English is the medium of instruction for all subjects. In contrast, the fact that the AMI sophomores find significant difficulty in mastering the EAS may be due to their insufficient exposure to the English language, since they practice English only in the ESL classes, which is 50 minutes a day, unlike their peers in the EMI who practice the target language for 7 hours a day. However, both groups display similar errors resulting from the influence of their L1, since both groups are Arab learners with Arabic as their mother tongue. Besides, Arabic is the only language used in daily life by both. As for Research Question 2, the study concludes that the most commonly occurring article error produced by both groups is the overuse of *Ø* where *the, a/n* are required in the first task which is multiple-choices. Otherwise, it is the overuse of *the* where *Ø* or *a/n* is required in argumentative essays productions predominantly with generic referents. After accumulating the results of task one and two, the number of *the*-for-*Ø* overrides all the other article errors, which represents 17.64% (461) of all the article errors made by both groups, which is 2613. This discussion of the first two Research Questions paves the way to a consideration of Research

Question 3 which addresses the resultant factors which negatively influences the SLA of the EAS.

Analyzing the written corpus produced by both participating groups adequately illustrates that L1 Arabic learners either intentionally or unintentionally tend to prefix *the* to the NP being addressed aiming to create generic references affected negatively by their L1. This kind of error occurs repeatedly in the analyzed corpus with generic uncountable, plural countable or with singular countable nouns, with generic uncountable nouns being the commonest. Unlike, the specific references particularly the anaphoric references whose occurrences are infrequent, and does not represent a higher proportion of the results.

The results reveal that the learners' performance shows higher level of proficiency in the argumentative production, done at their own time, than the multiple-choice task, which was performed in the classroom environment under time constraint, particularly the EMI group. The overall number of correctness for the AMI group in the multiple-choice task is 59.40%, while their peers in the EMI achieved 72.60%, with average 63.90% for both groups. Whereas, the argumentative writing essay production grades are noticeably higher: 71.30% for the AMI group and 92.60% for the EMI group, with average 79.40% for both. It is inferred that the higher level of performance amongst the participating groups is due to the fact that both of them are used to produce such argumentative essays throughout their writing tasks at school. Besides, the allocated three topics they are asked to write about are familiar to them whether about junk food prohibition, using cell phones at school or working for allowance, adding up the removal of classroom and time restrictions. Thus, it is hypothesized that even though the participating groups show higher proficiency level in mastering the EAS in particular the EMI one, the highlighted errors in their productions are lucid evidence that a complete acquisition of articles is still deficient for both groups, particularly the AMI one. Arguably, the best-prescribed answer for the first Research Question is that although the EMI group significantly outperforms the AMI group in using the EAS properly in different contexts, both groups have not completely acquired the EAS.

The data analysis accompanied by instances from L1 Arabic learners' writings with Arabic transcripts altogether have contributed to answering the third question of the study concerning

the causative factors of such article errors with a conclusion that: L1 Arabic transfer plays a major role in affecting both groups negatively to master the article system of ESL. Thus, it is concluded that L1 Arabic transfer has a profound impact on the SLA of the EAS for L1 Arabic learners either in the EMI or in the AMI in particular. Hence, both groups are in a need of more practice and exposure to the target language in order to facilitate their acquisition of such small but very essential words in English that have an effect on their production of both writing and speaking.

Strictly speaking, the repercussions of ESL learners of L1 article-less languages is that they tend to fluctuate between definiteness and specificity repeatedly until an appropriate input of English parameters values lead them to correct this mistaken regularity (Ionin, Ko & Wexler 2004). Similarly, L1 Spanish learners of ESL do not have the ability to transfer article semantics from their article-based Spanish into English being +article language (Ionin, Zubizarreta & Maldonado 2008). However, +article language learners of ESL have the ability to transfer such semantics into the target language from their L1, for this reason, they usually avoid fluctuations in their uses of articles (Hawkins at al 2006; Snape 2006). By the same token, ESL learners with –article language background, their acquisition of English articles is problematic. In contrast with ESL learners with +article language background who may find it easier to master such system of articles (Sarko 2008). Sarko (2008) even goes further to claim that her participating groups either L1 Arabic or L1 French resembles native speakers of English in their choices of definite articles of English in a similar forced-elicitation task in both specific and nonspecific contexts, since they could transfer L1 Arabic properties into the target language properly.

Unfortunately, unlike Sarko (2008), this study concludes that even L1 Arabic learners of ESL with +definite article face noteworthy difficulties in acquiring the EAS until advanced developmental stage of cognition. This conclusion may parallel Crompton's (2011) results in similar argumentative essay production. Likewise, Ellis (2006b) draws a similar conclusion in which the interference from L1 and L2 as well as the role of L1 maximal transfer are stressed as main causative factors in SLA of articles in English. Arguably, it is suggested in this study that these difficulties result in the transfer of L1 Arabic parameter settings to prop up Ellis's (2006b) suggestion for L1 and L2 interferences. However, the difficulties faced by L1 Arabic learners either in the EMI or the AMI group in mastering the EAS may be associated with the L1 Arabic

parameter setting values or with the settings of a widespread developmental interlanguage settings which are actually controversial in SLA studies.

6.3 Pedagogical Implications

Master (1987) suggests that it would be profitable for intermediate and advanced learners to answer six questions before allocating the proper article required to modify any noun in discourse:

1- Is it countable or uncountable?
2- Is it definite or indefinite?
3- Is it post-modified or not?
4- Is it specific or generic?
5- Is it proper or common?
6- Is it idiomatic or not?

All answered, would help ESL learners be aware of, not only the articles individual uses, but also the EAS.

Master (1997) proposes highlighting the distinction between count and non-count NPs definiteness in early stages of learning ESL, since early distinction would presumably have a profound positive influence on SLA of EAS. In English, the most common form of generic expressions for count NPs is with plural and Ø. Therefore, ESL learners with article-less language may transfer the use of Ø presumably naturally. On the contrary, in this study with L1 Arabic learners negative transfer was exactly as expected, since Arabic is rich in its uses of *the* for generic expressions rather than Ø. Therefore, Master's (1997) implications for ESL learners with article-less languages to overcome misusing Ø-for-*the* may also help those with +article languages such Arabic, in our case, to overcome overusing *the*-for-Ø and *the*-for-*a/n* mistakenly. In which he recommends directing ESL learners' attention to the articles uses in both reading and writing processes with more emphasis on the lexical phrases with *the* and Ø. Master (1997, p.228) suggests using this procedure repeatedly particularly "with many different lexical items since it can no longer be assumed that learners at this stage will generalize from specific instances." By the same token, ESL instructors have to provide sufficient time throughout their

teaching processes emphasizing English generic references feasibilities and/or infeasibilities either implicitly or explicitly aspiring to improve their learners' acquisition of English articles.

In fact using articles properly needs a talent that can be enriched over time through keen attention to articles usages in listening, speaking, reading and writing contexts. A natural sensitivity towards the English articles complexity can be developed through the keen attention, so patience is required throughout the acquisition journey.

Simplified rules for using articles correctly are:

(a) If the NP being addressed in the interlocution refers to all of them globally (this is what called '*generic reference*' aiming to generalize), then you have to use either *a/n* with singular nouns (when one represents a group) or Ø with plural and countable nouns (the most common). Notice that *the* can be used with singular nouns for generalization in technical and scientific writings only.

(b) If the NP being addressed in the interlocution refers to one of many (this is called '*indefinite reference*'), then correct choices are either *a/n* with singular countable nouns or Ø with count or non-count nouns. Notice that many other expressions can be used to identify indefinite plural or uncountable nouns such as few, little, some, many, much and several without articles at all or with articles such as a few, a little and a lot.

(c) If the NP being addressed in the interlocution refers to exact one (this is called '*definite reference*'), then the two choices available are; Ø with most proper nouns with some exemptions for using *the*, and the second choice is *the* with singular/plural countable or uncountable nouns. Notice that *the* is mostly used to specify this mentioned one exactly with unique nouns, shared knowledge, second explicit or implicit mentioned nouns, superlatives, ordinals, specifiers, restricters and with partitives of countable nouns.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Studies

Further research in the arena of SLA of EAS is recommended. This recommended research may investigate into ESL learners' tribulations with generic references and –definite NPs, however, with a larger corpus of writings involving native speakers of English as a controlled group for measuring the extent to which L1 Arabic learners of ESL resemble and/or differ from native

speakers of English in using the English articles in similar contexts. This study results propose that further studies into generic references in the writings or interlocutions of ESL learners with ±articles would be of great importance in academic research considering the negative as well as the positive transfer influences. Furthermore, it would be profitable if productions of ESL learners with article-based language background as L1 Arabic, which is rich in definite article whose generics are featured by +definiteness compared with other languages whose generics are featured by –definiteness as in English. This study contemplated the English article errors produced by ESL L1 Arabic learners throughout two tasks; the multiple-choice task and the argumentative essay writings task. Therefore, it would be significantly useful if another study contemplates the correct uses of English articles in generic expressions made by ESL L1 Arabic learners either in forced-elicitation or writing task either in both as deployed in this study. Since the participants in this study are high school learners, it is suggested that similar study can investigate into ESL L1 Arabic learners incorrect uses of English articles at earlier stage of learning English and dedicate appropriate implications and remedies for misuses of articles. Hence, such misuses of articles surveyed in this study can be avoided at advanced stage of English learning.

Those above-mentioned pedagogical implications may inspire further research in which the efficacy of utilizing those pedagogical implications can be tested in classroom settings. This recommended research may adopt the experimental vs. controlled group pre/post tests to investigate whether acting on those implications bears fruit.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Quick Placement Test

Quick Placement Test

Student Name:………………………… School:……...........................…….

Medium of Instruction: …………………………………

60
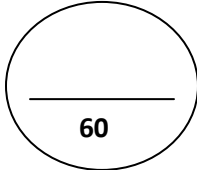
I. Reading Comprehension

30
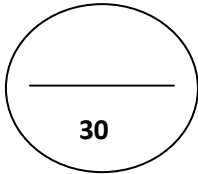
(Part A: Reading 1)

Directions: (30 items. Each worth 2 points)

Read the article then answer the questions below:

The Blue-Ringed Octopus is a deadly marine animal that **inhabits** the coastal waters around Australia. The blue-ringed octopus is normally light in colour, with dark brown bands over its eight arms and body, with blue circles superimposed on these dark brown bands.

When the octopus is disturbed or taken out of the water, the colours darken and the rings turn a **brilliant** electric-blue colour, and it is this colour change that gives the animal its name. The blue-ringed octopus secretes a very deadly poison, either by biting with its parrot-like beak, or by squirting the poison into the water surrounding it. The direct bite from the blue-ringed octopus is usually painless, but the deadly effects of the poison will be noticed **immediately**. The poison apparently interferes with the body's nervous system. The victim will immediately experience

numbness of the mouth and tongue, blurring of vision, loss of touch, difficulty with speech and swallowing, and paralysis of the legs and nausea. If the victim does not receive medical treatment immediately, full paralysis may occur within minutes, followed by **<u>unconsciousness</u>** and death due to heart failure and lack of oxygen.

There is no anti-venom for the poison from a blue-ringed octopus. It is usually necessary to perform continuous CPR on a victim until the effects of the venom have **<u>subsided</u>**. This may take several hours, but it may mean the difference between life or death for the victim.

1. **Which of the following would be the BEST title for this article?**
a- The Blue-Ringed Octopus Is Enchanting   b- The Blue-Ringed Octopus Is Frightening

c- The Blue-Ringed Octopus Is Loveable   d- The Blue-Ringed Octopus Is Wanted

2. **What is the suitable habitat for the Blue-Ringed Octopus?**
a- The springs   b- The deserts   c- The lakes   d- The seas

3. **What does "inhabits" mean in this sentence? "**The Blue-Ringed Octopus is a deadly marine animal that inhabits the coastal waters around Australia."
a- dies   b- resides   c- leaves   d- participates

4. **What colour are the rings that cover the dark brown bands on the Blue-Ringed Octopus arms and body?**
a- blue   b- brown   c- dark blue   d- dark brown

5. **What changes in colour that happen when the Blue-Ringed Octopus is annoyed?**
a- The colours become darker and the circles change into shining electric-blue colour.

b- The colours turn into light black and the circles become dark brown.

c-The colours become darker and the rings become dark blue.

d- The colours darken and the rings become brown.

6. **In which paragraph can you find the meaning of this sentence?** "BRO is normally dark brown to dark yellow in colour but changes to a vivid yellow with bright blue rings when agitated."

a- Paragraph 1   b- Paragraph 2   c- Paragraph 3   d- It does not exist

7- **"**When the octopus is disturbed or taken out of the water, the colours darken and the rings turn a **brilliant** electric-blue colour." **The opposite of the word "brilliant" in this sentence is…**

a- luminous   b- excellent   c- pristine   d - dull

8- How does the Blue-Ringed Octopus produce its venom?

a- Either by biting or by spraying the venom into water.

b- Either by biting and or by changing colours.

c- By following and attacking the victim.

d- By shaking its arms into water.

9- "The deadly effects of the poison will be noticed **immediately**." The root of the word **"immediately"** is…………………………

a- immedicable   b- immediateness   c- immediate   d- mediator

10- **In this sentence, "**full paralysis may occur within minutes, followed by unconsciousness and death due to heart failure and lack of oxygen.**" The word "unconsciousness" is a / an**

a- verb   b- noun   c- adverb   d- adjective

The Blue-Ringed Octopus	
What gives the animal its name	**11**- ....
The shape of the animal's mouth	**12**- ....
If the victim does not receive medical treatment, he/she may die because of ……	**13**- ....

14. According to the article, which of the following is TRUE?

a- The anti-venom for the poison from the Blue-Ringed Octopus is more expensive.

b- It is so difficult to find a medicine for the venom from the Blue-Ringed Octopus.

b- The anti-venom for the poison from the Blue-Ringed Octopus is very cheap.

d- It is easy to find a cure for the poison from the Blue-Ringed Octopus.

15. What does "subsided" mean in this sentence? "It is usually necessary to perform

continuous   CPR on a victim until the effects of the venom have **subsided**."

  a- became less   b- looked after

  c- swelled up   d- swam into

……

(Part B. Reading 2)
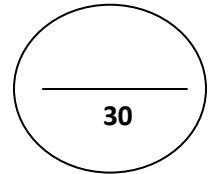
Read the story. Then answer the questions below:

Mariam likes to go to the park with her mom. She likes to play at the park with her friends. Today when Mariam goes to the park, she looks around and becomes very sad. "What is wrong, Mariam?" Mom asks. "There is so much **trash** on the ground," Mariam says. "It seems like each day, I see more trash here." Mariam and her mom look around. There are old boxes on the ground. There are popped balloons on the ground. There are old cans, too. "You are right," Mom says. "The park is very **dirty**." "What can we do?" Mariam asks. "I am sure you will think of something," Mom says.

 Mariam and her mom go home. Mariam **paints** a picture of a park. She uses blue, green, brown and yellow paint. PLEASE KEEP OUR PARK CLEAN, she writes in big letters on top of her picture. "Let's go back to the park, Mom," Mariam says. "Okay," Mom says. Mariam **grabs** a bunch of trash bags to take with her. She also brings along some tape. When Mariam gets to the park, she tapes her picture on a big trashcan.

"Here you go!" she says to her mom. She hands Mom a bag. "Will you help me pick up the trash?" "I sure will," Mom says. The children at the park run over to see what is going on. Mariam **hands** them bags. The children pick up lots of trash. They talk and laugh as they work.

Soon all the bags are full. "We need to come back another day. There is still some trash on the ground," Mariam says. "But the park looks much better." "It does," Mom says. "I knew you would think of some way to help."

16. What is the text mainly about?

a- Helping Mom in the kitchen

b- Teenagers are irresponsible

c- It's not our duty to clean the park

d- Fight pollution and preserve the environment

17. Why is Mariam sad?

a- Her friends aren't at the park   b- There's a lot of trash at the park

c- She hurts herself on the slide   d- She can't find her mom

18. In the sentence, "There is so much trash on the ground," The word trash means

a- Wealth   b- Rubbish

b- Health   d- Brush

19. Which of the following sentences is not true?

a- There are popped balloons on the ground   b- There are old boxes on the ground

c- There are old cans on the ground   d- There are old shoes on the ground

In the Park	
In the park Mariam gave the children	20- ....
People who helped Mariam to clean up the park...	21- ....
After cleaning up the park, it looked ...	22- ....

23. To which paragraph does the following sentence BEST belong "Let's clean this place up," Mariam says to the children in the park

a- Paragraph 1   b- Paragraph 2   c- Paragraph 3   d- Paragraph 4

24. In this sentence "The park is very dirty." The word "dirty" is a / an

a- verb   b- noun   c- adverb   d- adjective

25. What does the word "paints" mean in this sentence? "Mariam **paints** a picture of a park."

 a- celebrates   b- destroys   c- draws   d- shows

26. What is the opposite meaning of the word "grabs" in this sentence? "Mariam **grabs** a bunch of trash bags to take with her."

a- snatches   b- drops   c- grips   d- holds

27. Why does Mariam tape her picture to the trashcan?

a- So people get mad.

b- So people can see it.

c- So it falls to the ground.

d- Because she is tired of holding it.

 28. What does Mariam learn at the park?

a- That the park has no trashcans.

b- She can help make things better.

c- People do not care about cleaning parks.

d- That her mom does not like to pick up trash.

 29. In the sentence "Mariam **hands** them bags**." The word hand is a / an**

a- verb   b- noun   c- adverb   d- adjective

30. Why does Mariam say that she will come back another day? She will come back to…

a- play at the park .

b- clean up more trash.

c- empty the trash bags.

d- show her father her great work.

Appendix 2: Participants Demographics

Participants Demographics

Dear students,

    I would like to thank you in advance for your collaboration in this study. This is not an exam or any kind of school evaluation. Your answers will contribute to the accomplishment of a study related to the field of second language acquisition of the English articles system by ESL Arab learners. Your personal information will be treated confidentially. NB Your complete sincerity is required throughout answering all the questions. Thanks again for your precious time!

Name:…………………………………………………………………………………

School: …………………………………………………………………………………

Medium of Instruction :………………………………………………………………

Gender: …………………………………………………………………………………

Nationality: ……………………………………………………………………………..

Age: ……………………………………………………………………………………..

Parents' First Language: ………………………………………………………………

How many years have you been studying English? ……………………………………

QPT score out of 60: ……………………………………………………………………

Appendix 3: Task 1 Instrument

The British University in Dubai

الجامعة البريطانية في دبي

Multiple-choice Task (Test 1)

Student Name:……………………………   School:……...........................….

Medium of Instruction: ……………………………………

Choose the correct article from (a, b, c or d) to complete the missing parts in the contexts below:

Plane 1: [+ Definite, + Specific], Previous Mention

1. Mariam: Where were you yesterday? I tried to call you, but you were not home.

Mirna: I went to a bookstore.

Mariam: Oh, what did you get?

Mirna: I got many things – several magazines, two red pens, and an interesting book. I really liked ………book.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

2. Ibrahim: What should we do for a vacation this year?

Youssif: Let us go to Fujairah. It is supposed to have an amazing environment.

Ibrahim: Good idea. But I don't care about ……environment. I want to spend time at the malls.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

3. Maram: Look, I just bought some fresh bread.

Malak: Hey – that looks really good. In addition, I am hungry.

Maram: Let us eat then. What should we have with ………bread?

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

4. Yesterday I had my lunch with Ahmed. He is ………minister of education.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

5. Ibrahim bought three cars for his three sons. A red car, a black car, and a white car were in the park. He asked the elder son which car he wanted. His elder son said, "I would like ………red car."

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

Plane 2: [+ Definite, + Specific], Explicit Speaker Knowledge

6. Omaima: My son Mazen loves the new comic strip about Super Mouse.

Ashraf: Well, he is in luck! Tomorrow, I am having lunch with ………creator of this comic strip – he is an old friend of mine. Therefore, I can get his autograph for Mazen!

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

7. Mohsen: The lectures in our history class have been very interesting.

Basant: Yes, they have. I am learning a lot about India.

Mohsen: So am I. However, unfortunately, I could not come to class last week. What did the professor talk about?

Basant: She talked about ………life of Gandhi. It was a great lecture.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

8. Mohammed: Hi, Hanan! What are you doing in the park?

Hanan: I am just walking my dog around the little lake here.

Mohammed: Then where is your dog?

Hanan: Oh, there he is. He is swimming in ………water and chasing those birds.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

9. Hanan: Where is your mother?

Basant: She is meeting ………principal of my brother's elementary school. He is a very nice man. He is talking to my mother about my brother's grades.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

10. Abdullah was eating at the restaurant when he smelled a bad smell. Abdullah says, "This food smells bad. I want to talk to ………owner of this restaurant."

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

Plane 3: [+ Definite, - Specific], Denial of Speaker Knowledge

11. Ahmed: I am looking for Mahmoud. Is he home?

Abdullah: Yes, but he is on the phone. It is an important business matter. He is talking to ………manager of his company! I do not know who that person is – but I know that this conversation is very important to.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- <mark>the</mark>

12. Aya: Have you seen that new building downtown?

Abdullah: No, I have not. Is it impressive?

Aya: I do not know. Nevertheless, people seem to like it. They are talking about………imagination of the architect. However, because I have not seen the building, I do not really know what to think.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- <mark>the</mark>

13. Aya: I have not seen your sister in a while. How is she doing?

Malak: Oh, she is great. She is in Hawaii right now.

Aya: Wow! Hawaii – I have never been there.

Malak: Neither have I, but I would love to go. My sister says she spends all her time at Waikiki Beach. She swims and lies on ………sand. She is really enjoying herself.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- <mark>the</mark>

14. My school team won the match. The principal is going to honor ………winners.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- <mark>the</mark>

15. Ahmed knows that Mariam is married, but he does not know her husband. When he was asked to whom Mariam get married, he answered, "Mariam married ………manager of an oil company in Dubai."

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- <mark>the</mark>

Plane 4: [- Definite, ± Specific]

16. Youssif: I heard that you just started college. How do you like it?

Mirna: It is great! My classes are very interesting.

Youssif: That is wonderful. Moreover, do you have fun outside of class?

Mirna: Yes, in fact, today I am having dinner with ………girl from my class – her name is Basant, and she is really nice!

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

17. Hanan: Have you been to the restaurant next to our office recently?

Mohammed: The last time I ate there was 2 years ago.

Hanan: It is better than it was. You should go again – they are changing everything. And they are creating ………different style.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

18. John: Hi, William! I haven't seen you in a while. What are you doing in the market?

William: Oh, just a little shopping. I am buying ………special equipment for cooking a turkey. The recipe I am following tells me exactly what I need.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

19. Jasim moved from Sharjah to live in Abu Dhabi. However, the school where he works is little far from his new home. That is why he wanted to buy………new car.

b- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

20. John is Youssif's pen friend, but they have never seen each other before. John came to the UAE to visit Youssif. John told Youssif that he would hold a red rose when he arrives to the airport. Youssif tried to see John at the airport but he could not since the airport was so crowded. At the airport Youssif asked the staff member, "Have you seen ………man with a red rose?"

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

Plane 5: [- Definite, ± Specific]

21. Mother comes home

Mother: How did Peter spend the day at his grandmother's house?

Father: He had a good time. He did his homework for tomorrow. Then he went outside and played with ………elder girl – I do not know who it was. Then he came back inside; and then I came and took him home.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

22. Ahmed: How was your trip to New York?

Mirna: Great! I went to many museums, and ate in lots of wonderful restaurants. I also visited many friends. And I watched ……… exciting play..

b- a   b- <mark>an</mark>   c- Ø   d- the

23. Malak: Last Saturday, I did not have anywhere to go, and it was raining. I was bored.

Omaima: So what did you do?

Malak: First, I cleaned my apartment. Next, I read a book. Then, I sent ………e-mail.

a- a   b- <mark>an</mark>   c- Ø   d- the

24. Mariam: I heard your little brother got many presents when he was in the hospital.

Abdullah: Yes, he did. He got books from my Mom, a video game from my Dad, the neighbors gave him a coloring book, and my rich uncle gave him ………iPod.

a- a   b- <mark>an</mark>   c- Ø   d- the

25. Today is Maram's weekend. She did not decide what she would do. When Mirna asked her about her program that day she answered, "I may go outside to buy ………umbrella for the rain."

a- a   b- <mark>an</mark>   c- Ø   d- the

Plane 6: [- Definite, ± Specific]

26. Professor Mahmoud: I am looking for Professor Ahmed Shalaby.

Secretary: I am afraid he is busy. He has office hours right now.

Professor Mahmoud: What is he doing?

Secretary: He has a meeting with ………students, but I do not know who they are.

a- a   b- an   c- <mark>Ø</mark>   d- the

27. Mariam: Have you been to that new store?

Malak: No, I have not, but I have heard good things about it.

Mariam: Like what?

Malak: People say it sells very good and cheap things, however I do not have ……..money for shopping.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

28. Maram: I need to find your roommate Basant right away.

Mirna: She is not here – she left a few hours ago.

Maram: Where did she go?

Miran: She is moving ………furniture – but I don't know whose. A friend of her is moving into a new apartment.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

29. Mazin invited Ibrahim to watch a new movie with him, but Ibrahim apologized since he watched the movie with………Youssif.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

30. I have visited Ahmed at home. He served me………sweets I have never tasted in my life.

a- a   b- an   c- Ø   d- the

Appendix 4: Task 2 Instrument

الجامعة
البريطانية في دبي
The British University *in* Dubai

Argumentative Essay Writing Task (Test 2)

Student Name:………………………   **School:……..............................….**

Medium of Instruction: …………………………………

Choose one of the following topics and:

Present a written argument to an educated reader with no specialist knowledge of the following topics:

1- Should junk food be banned at schools?
2- Should teenagers work for their allowance?
3- Should students be allowed to use their cell phones at schools?

Give reasons for your answer and include any relevant examples from your own experience or knowledge.

You should write at least 200 words.

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