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Research Article

A cross-sectional study of the present perfect tense in Arabic and Indonesian EFL settings

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Abstract

This document-based paper investigates EFL learners' uses of the present perfect tense when using English as their second or foreign language. A sample of 216 sentences written by 38 Indonesian and Arab undergraduate students was analyzed to detect erroneous uses of the present perfect tense (PPT) in their English writing. Twelve erroneous structures in the Arab corpus and 17 in the Indonesian dataset were underlined. The incorrect sentences were singled out and discussed. Pairing these grammar-related errors to SLA research and existing literature, the findings demonstrate that the majority of errors were grounded in either Arabic or Bahasa Indonesian language interference with English. The Arab learners seem to have more difficulties in using the PPT than the past simple tense. In contrast, the Indonesian EFL learners seem to have difficulties in both past and present perfect tenses altogether due to the absence of the past tense in the Indonesian tongue. It is concluded that learners' mother tongues in both contexts affect their uses of English grammatical structures. This yields important implications with reference to the effects of the mother tongue in EFL settings.

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Introduction

The English language has achieved a genuine status, and teaching English to non-English speakers has become evident worldwide. It is obviously used as the global contact language or the world language of science, business, tourism, and much more (Djenar, 2005; Hazzaa, 2021; Moqbel, 2022; Rizka, 2017). Given this significance, non-English-speaking countries such as Yemen, Jordan, and Indonesia adopt it to their local working languages as a second or additional language. Such countries strive to provide workable TESOL programs at schools and universities (Hazzaa, 2021; Rizka, 2017; Rochman, 2017). The programs certainly include grammatical aspects which are believed to be essential to produce grammatically correct English. Many English teaching materials over the last century have magnified the role of grammar in learning other languages – English is a case in point (Al-Kadi, 2020; Al-Khulaidi & Alzokhaimy, 2022; Mudhsh & Laskar, 2021; Rizka, 2017; Rochman, 2014). However, learning English grammar in contexts where it is not used natively has been generally reported as a source of difficulty and interference with learners' first language (Halik, Kareema, & Arsath, 2022; Mudhsh et al., 2021; Rochman, 2014; Sholeha, Ardian, & Amri, 2020; Teng, 2022).

The common sense that studying grammar helps to learn and understand English in general (Ellis, 2008) is complicated by its elaborated linguistic structure, primarily the tense aspect – the present perfect tense (hereafter PPT) is a working example. English tense, specifically the perfect tense, continues to be one of the most problematic tenses learners of English worldwide encounter during their course of English learning and use (Al-Khaleel, 2018; Frederickson, 1997; Halik et al., 2022; Moqbel, 2022; Rizka, 2017; Sholeha et al., 2020; Teng, 2022). Learners of languages lacking PPT (e.g., Arabic and Indonesian) likely encounter problems in using the PPT correctly. Numerous studies in Arab and East Asian contexts have tapped into English tenses through students' writing (Halik et al., 2022; Hazzaa, 2021; Jubran, 2021; Mudhsh, 2021; Rochman, 2017; Teng, 2022). This body of researchers, using an error analytic approach, identified errors in writing sentences or paragraphs. Nevertheless, few analyzed the causes, which can hardly be a coincidence, of such errors (Alzahrani, 2020). In this light, Ellis (2006) contended that "the fragile features of L2 acquisition are those which, however available as a result of frequency, recency, or context, fall short of intake because of one of the factors of contingency, cue competition, salience, interference, overshadowing, blocking, or perceptual learning, which are all shaped by the L1" (p. 164).

Hence, it is possible to speculate about such factors in the present study, departing from the error analysis model and second language acquisition (SLA) theory. Although prior research centers such errors around the aftermaths of the mother-tongue interference in solo contexts (Hazzaa, 2021; Jubran, 2021; Karim & Nassaji, 2013; Moqbel, 2022; Odlin, 1989), this linguistic issue remains at the forefront of language transfer research and is worth noting across contexts. Hence, the present study is based on a premise that research virtually conducted in single contexts seems to have missed some important findings derived cross-sectionally. It revisits such an assumption in three EFL settings: Jordan and Yemen where Arabic is the first language versus Indonesia where Bahasa is the mother tongue of the participants – a topic which is well-suited for a contrastive cross-sectional analysis. This endeavor measures how much EFL learners in these contexts have adequate knowledge about English PPT being one of the confusing tenses to

EFL learners (Rizka, 2017; Rochman, 2017; Teng, 2022). The investigation centers around the following two questions.

1. To what extent are Arab and Indonesian EFL learners able to use English PPT?
2. What are the sources of errors behind the inappropriate uses of PPT in these two settings?

Literature Review

Time and tense aspects across languages

Linguists who recognize the notion of time (not tense) as a universal concept contend that time and tense do not always correspond to each other (Fredericksonn, 1997; Levinson, 1983; Noochoochai, 1978; Ockenden, 1967). Time is, more often than not, entwined with other grammatical features and signals for a person and mood. According to Levinson (1983), time attributes are expressed in the systems through which languages represent these divisions. English is a time-oriented language requiring the overt marking of time when producing sentences. This time orientation is generally expressed in tense or a set of inflected verbs to indicate the time of an event occurrence: occurred, occurs, or will occur. In some cases, time is expressed through auxiliaries and adverbial time terms (Noochoochai, 1978). Admittedly, tense plays the most crucial part of the grammar of a language. It is, undeniably, challenging for non-native learners who spend a long time before they can use tenses correctly (Croft, 2012; Frederickson, 1997; Halliday, 2002; Karpava & Agouraki, 2013; Lado, 1975; Noochoochai, 1978; Ockenden, 1967; Sholeha, Ardian, & Amri, 2020).

In English, verbs strongly indicate when an event, an action, or something else happens. Even though there may be an absence of adverbs of time, it is directly known when the action takes place. When someone says, *I go to work*, for example, a clear indication is that the action happens in the present. However, when someone says, *I went to work*, it is known that the action happened in the past (Talking Indonesia, 2022). In the Indonesian language, however, there is no indication of the tenses reflected in the verbs. No changes in the verbs are abound. For all tenses, the verbs stay the same. In the Indonesian language, when someone says, *Saya makan sebuah apel*, which means *I ate an apple*, we will not know whether the action takes place in the present or past. In English, however, the tense is inherent with the verb, indicating when the action or event takes place. The time signals in Bahasa such as *kemarin* (yesterday), *setiap hari* (every day), or *saat ini* (at present), are the indicators of tenses.

Bahasa Indonesia or Indonesian is claimed to be relatively easy to learn. It is because the grammar is simple, especially in terms of verbs. In Indonesian, all verbs are the same, no matter what the time is. The verbs are the same in the past, present, or future tense (British Council, 2022). This difference in the concept of tense and verb causes difficulties for Arab and Indonesian English learners in understanding the English time and tense concepts. For instance, for the PPT in the Indonesian language, the only signal is the word 'sudah' or 'telah' which means has or have (been) done. When Indonesians want to say *I have eaten an apple*, they say, *Saya sudah makan sebuah apel*. The basic verb does not change. There are no changing endings in the verbs. There is no need to change the verb as well (Indonesianpod 101, 2021). Based on the fact that there are no changes in the basic verbs, whatever the tense is, many Indonesian EFL learners fail to formulate the right verbs in the tense, especially the past and perfect tenses (Djenar, 2005; Indonesianpot, 2021; TalkingIndonesia, 2022).

Teaching tenses to L2 learners

One aspect of English grammar is learning tenses. According to Halliday (2002), misunderstanding the concept of tenses deters ESL learners from advancing their English to a high level. Frederickson (1997) asserted that the problem is that students get confused when they encounter many verb forms. Teaching PPT is connected to the past and present altogether (Jubran, 2021; Tahang, 2020), which is also referred to as the 'unfinished time aspect' (Ockenden, 1967). In many languages that lack this type of tense, it becomes confusing to differentiate between the simple past tense and the PPT (Rizka, 2017; Sholeha, Ardian, & Amri, 2020). It is even more challenging for learners whose first language is tenseless as in the Chinese language (Teng, 2022). In English, the PPT covers actions that happened in the past that have resulted in the present speaking about such actions. Establishing this connection between the past and present is, arguably, a good strategy to absorb in them the notion of the PPT and thus avoid mistakes and confusion in using such a tense (Karpava & Agouraki, 2013).

Teaching the English PPT to Yemeni and Jordanian native speakers of Arabic and Indonesians, whose mother tongue is Bahasa, is one of the biggest challenges for EFL learners in these learning contexts. Perhaps this is because there is no corresponding tense in Arabic and Indonesian languages. In addition, the use of the present perfect tense shows a point of view on the part of the speaker relating the past to the present, which can make it difficult to grasp (Croft, 2012). In the Indonesian context, there are no tenses or changes in the verbs. Whatever the tenses are, the verbs stay the same. To say verbs in the past, present, and future, the verbs will stay the same (Croft, 2012). For example, to say *I ate an apple yesterday*, it will be *Saya makan sebuah apel kemarin*. While to say *I have eaten two apples today*, this will be stated as *Saya sudah makan dua buah apel hari ini*. There are no changes in the verbs. For the PPT, the word 'sudah' which means '*have been done or have happened*' is added. Basically, there are no changes in the main verb.

Language transfer and interference

What happens when a second language learner has a mother tongue with a particular language aspect that has no similarity to the target language? This question has guided a plethora of prior research and theorists, giving rise to what has been termed 'language transfer'. It has been argued that "L2 acquisition does not start from scratch like in L1 development, but it relies on the entire set of parametric values fixed in the L1; this assumption is known as the 'full transfer hypothesis'" (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996, as cited in Leśniewska, 2019, pp. 56-57). The transfer has been evidenced as 'positive' or 'negative'. Negative transfer is understood as 'interference'. The transference of the first language's aspects (also known as interlingual interference) to the learners' second language has morphed into a phenomenon that researchers and language pundits have examined over the past century (Alzahrani, 2020; Lado, 1975; Levinson, 1983; Noochoochai, 1978; Odlin, 1989; Scovel, 1970). This body of researchers has acknowledged the unavoidable influence of L1 on second language learners' potential linguistic capacities.

Given the broad concept of first language transfer, SLA research has attributed this transfer to mother-tongue interference (also known as negative transfer) which poses difficulties in mastering tenses of the target language (Al-Kadi & Moqbel, 2022; Karim & Nassaji, 2013; Karpava & Agouraki, 2013; Mudhsh & Laskar, 2021; Tahang, 2020). Drawing on SLA research, it has been widely accepted that similarities and differences between L1 and L2 can be a source of success or

failure when using the target language, e.g., English (Hazzaa, 2021; Karim & Nassaji, 2013; Odlin, 1989; Richards, 1974). Transfer can be positive when L1 supports the acquisition of L2 or negative when the influence of L1 imposes difficulty in the acquisition and, even worse, the misuse of L2 (Alzahrani, 2020; Hazzaa, 2021; Odlin, 1989; Karim & Nassaji, 2013; Rizka, 2017). Negative transfer results in underproduction, overproduction, production errors, and misinterpretation. That is, the linguistic structure of L1 seemingly influences the structures of the target language, leading to misuse and misunderstanding in the target language (Alzahrani, 2020; Hazzaa, 2021; Karim & Nassaji, 2013).

This linguistic issue has been examined with relevance to various levels of interference: phonology (Utami et al., 2017), morphology (Baykalova et al., 2019), grammar (Moqbel, 2021), productive skills, e.g., speaking and writing (Rubab & Zaidi, 2022), among many other related works. Besides the transfer of linguistic structures (Karim & Nassaji, 2013), Odlin (1989) suggested that non-structural factors, namely proficiency, literacy, and variation influence language acquisition (Hazzaa, 2021). Ng (1998) questioned the relationship of multilingualism with first-language interference, addressing a hypothesis that the more languages an individual uses, the more interference will occur. However, relying on a Stroop color-word test administered to 44 participants, Ng's study did not support this hypothesis. It discussed the interference with proficiency in their languages- the more proficiency, the less the interference. In contexts that take grammatical rules for granted, negative-transfer-based errors can be used as indicators of learners' attempts to develop hypotheses about the target language from such learners' limited experience or exposure to the target language. They may overgeneralize, ignore some morphological and syntactic rules, and add aspects of the target language to the second language. Educators can build on such linguistic behavior and design adequate materials that address such errors.

To sum up, Arab and Indonesian learners admittedly rely on their first language, as in many other EFL situations wherein learners recall their mother tongue while using English. It has been demonstrated that a possible reason for this is that L2 learners, unlike children learning their first language, have their first language to turn to when they face difficulties producing specific structures of the L2. This is an SLA phenomenon – L2 learners transfer forms and meanings in their L1 to the target language (Hazzaa, 2021; Lado, 1975). With the present perfect tense as a case in focus, it is necessary to explain such interference of the mother tongue across a sample of learners with a heterogeneous first language background and yet share learning the target language – English. The PPT has been one of the most challenging areas of English grammar for L2 learners, including Arab and Indonesian learners. Perhaps this is due to such a tense aspect in the English language that has no correspondence in the languages in question (AlKhaleel, 2018; Hazzaa, 2021; Mudhsh, Mohammed, & Laskar, 2021; Mudhsh, 2021; Mudhsh & Laskar, 2021).

The English tense-aspect system challenges many learners, including Jordanians, Yemenis, and Indonesians, which is the underlying reason for conducting this research project. The study, premised on first language transfer, delves into the first language impact on acquiring the PPT of Yemeni, Jordanian, and Indonesian students learning English as a foreign language. Hopefully, it is beneficial for EFL English teachers to develop their teaching methods or activities to improve teaching about the PPT. Similarly, students in a local context will better understand the basic

rules of the PPT by devoting more time and effort to the significance of time and tense aspects for their English proficiency.

Methodology

This cross-sectional document-based study set out to articulate how EFL learners in the Jordanian, Yemeni, and Indonesian EFL contexts use the present perfect tense. It examined the magnitude of a mother-tongue's impact on learning another language across EFL learning situations. It analyzed errors in using the PPT as reflected in a sample of learners' writing. Drawing on Rose, McKinley, and Baffoe-Djan (2020), the study derived evidence from written learners' compositions for the current investigation, which was "subject to the same criteria of rigor as other data collection methods" (p. 196). Rose et al. (2020) contended that "a document data collection methodology is used for qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods applied linguistics research. It can form the sole or main data collection method for a study" (p. 197). Arguably, document-based research helps researchers avoid the messiness that might happen with the survey data or the associated biased data collected from interviews. The research design was based on components of EFL students' writing, including structures of the present perfect form, which was suitable for the current inquiry as it "categorizes, investigates, interprets, and identifies the limitations of physical sources" (p. 197).

Participants

Thirty-eight EFL learners at the collegiate level were recruited in the investigation. Sixteen of them were third-year Indonesian students enrolled in a private university in Central Java, Indonesia, and twenty-two were Arab students (from Jordan and Yemen) representing Arabic as their native language and pursuing their bachelor's degrees in their own countries. They participated in the current study on a voluntary basis, and their background information is tabulated herewith.

Table 1. Background information of the participants

Variables	Indonesian EFL learners		Arab EFL learners		Total	%
	male	female	male	female		
Gender	3	13	12	10	38	100
Age average	20-21		19	20	19	
Total	3	13	12	10	38	100

Data collection

The two cohorts of learners were asked to write what they had done or had not done in their lifetimes in general. They were not instructed to use the PPT. The Indonesian respondents were instructed to write six sentences, with a total of ninety-six sentences, out of which, seventeen instances were elicited as examples containing errors. Similarly, in the Arab context, 22 participants provided 120 sentences with 12 instances of sentences with erroneous present perfect uses. In the students' writing, the following tense aspects were the focus of analysis: (a) subject-verb agreement (did, has/have), (b) forms of verbs (past-past participle), (c) time markers (ever, yet, so far, yesterday, last week/year, etc.), and (d) sentence forms (statements: positive/negative, interrogatives)

Data analysis

The sentences with wrong verb/tense uses were extracted for analysis. The sentences were read by four inter-raters, basically EFL lecturers, who helped in evaluating the sentences and agreed on the erroneous PPT structures. The purpose of asking these inter-raters' help was to find second opinions on the corrections done by the researchers. Sentences that were disagreed upon were excluded from the analysis. These teachers were arbitrators who suggested corrections to the wrongly phrased sentences. The corpus underwent a thematic analysis, looking for structures containing present perfect or past tense compared to each other. In total, twelve sentences were detected as erroneous in the dataset produced in the Arab context and sixteen in the Indonesian setting. The illustrative examples are arranged in Table 2 and Table 3 with corresponding interpretations.

Findings and Discussion

Some wrong verb uses emerged from the samples collected from the participants with a primary concern on improper uses of the PPT verbs. In the sentences collected from the Indonesian participants as displayed in Table 1, there was a mistake in using the present perfect or the participial verb (case numbers 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, and 16). These students wrongly used the verbs. They should have been put in the PPT. The underlying reasons may be because the students forgot the right form of the verbs. They were mixed up with the past-tense verbs. Likewise, there was a mistake due to the wrong tense. This case can be seen in case numbers 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11. *I have accompanied my dad to a doctor regularly*, for example, does not need a PPT. Instead, a verb in the present tense is used since the activity is done regularly. This might be caused by the students' lack of understanding of when to use the present perfect verbs.

Table 2. Errors in the present perfect verbs in the Indonesian EFL

Case	Students	Errors in the Present Perfect Verbs	Corrections
1.	Student 4	I have feed my pets and my mom's pets.	have fed (wrong use of V3)
2.	Student 4	I have help parents find mice in the house.	have helped (wrong use of V3)
3.	Student 4	I have get good grades above 80.	Have got (wrong use of V3)
4.	Student 6	I have accompanied my dad to a doctor regularly.	accompany (no perfect form is needed)
5.	Student 9	I have been loving myself.	love (no perfect form is needed)
6.	Student 10	I have graduated from senior high school.	graduated (no perfect form is needed)
7.	Student 7	I have gone to Bali.	have been (the use of be Vs go)
8.	Student 12	I have ever worked in a coffee shop.	once worked (no perfect form is needed)
9.	Student 12	I have ever worked as a live streaming host.	once worked (no perfect form is needed)
10.	Student 12	I have ever become an online seller;	once became (no perfect form is needed)
11.	Student 12	I have ever climbed a mountain.	once climbed (no perfect form is needed)
12.	Student 12	I have never gone abroad.	have never been (the use of be Vs go)
13.	Student 13	I have get close with a new person.	have got (wrong use of V3)
14.	Student 15	I have became an English tutor.	have become (wrong use of V3)
15.	Student 10	I have never gone to Singapore.	have never been (the use of be Vs go)
16.	Student 11	I have never became an artist.	have never become (wrong use of V3)
17.	Student 5	I have not world where I want to be.	have not been in the world (missing verb)

Apparently, there was confusion in using the verbs "been" and "gone" as in cases 7, 12, and 15. In Indonesian language, when someone wants to say that he/she has never been somewhere, the verb used is "pergi", which means "gone". In fact, "been" and "gone" have different meanings in English, a result endorsed by Rizka (2017) and Rochmanb (2017). In the Indonesian language, all verbs, no matter what the tenses are, stay the same. No inflections are needed and therefore, no changes take place. This may lead Indonesian language learners to find problems with past or past perfect verbs in English. When asking whether someone has been somewhere or not in Indonesian, the question starts with "sudah", and the verb does not change. For example, *Have you been to* (or visited) *Australia*? It is stated as *Anda sudah pernah ke Australia*? (Djenar, 2005). The last case is the missing verb. It is shown in case no. 17. The student surely had forgotten to write the verb in the sentence. This can typically happen, as a student may not concentrate fully on writing one's sentences. Besides that, the student did not recheck her sentence.

In comparison, Table 3 captures common errors in the use of the present perfect tense against the past tense in the Jordanian and Yemeni EFL situations, wherein Arabic is the learners' first language (Jubran, 2021). Among the 22 participants' writing samples, 12 examples of erroneous present perfect tense vs. past tense were illustrative of the problem of using verbs in the tense in question. As seen in the dataset in the table, the majority of those mistakes have to do with using the tense in the present perfect form. For instance, students 1, 3, and 5 misused the past tense for the PPT. In contrast, in case 5 the present perfect form is not required. It is a misuse of the PPT and confused for the past tense.

Table 3. Errors in the present perfect verbs in the Arab EFL setting

Case	Students	Errors in the Present Perfect Tense	Corrections
1.	Student 1	I ate caviar once in my whole life.	Have eaten (wrong use of tense)
2.	Student 2	I travelled a lot despite my busy life.	Have travelled (wrong use of perfect tense)
3.	Student 5	I never drove a limousine.	Have never driven (wrong use of perfect tense)
4.	Student 8	When I was in India, I have ridden an elephant.	Rode (no perfect form is needed in this example)
5.	Student 3	I have lived alone when I was abroad.	Lived (no perfect form is needed)
6.	Student 3	I never cooked a big meal like this one.	Have never cooked (perfect form is needed)
7.	Student 6	I repaired the broken window and need to wash my hand now.	Have repaired (perfect form is needed)
8.	Student 8	I ate too much. I will go and sleep.	Have eaten (perfect form is needed)
9.	Student 22	I know my friend Fatima for a long time.	Have known (perfect form is needed)
10.	Student 10	I have never drink whisky.	Drunk (past participle form is required)
11.	Student 19	I worked on my project and should work more.	Have worked (perfect form is needed)
12.	Student 17	She was waiting for her all day and I am angry now.	Waited for (perfect form is needed)

One interpretation of the results in Table 2 and Table 3 would be the influence of the mother-tongue in learning English in environments that barely use it natively. With the two

datasets in both tables, the Arab learners who participated in the study produced sentences with errors using the present perfect tense much more than the past tense. They mixed using the past tense for the PPT, which could be attributed to the fact that the Arabic language and English both share the concept of the past tense. However, Arabic does not have the concept of the PPT. This is why learners recoursed to using the past tense instead of the PPT. On the other hand, Indonesian English learners had problems producing sentences both in the past tense and PPT, which could be attributed to the fact that in the Indonesian mother tongue, there is no such past and PPTs. That is to say, Indonesian EFL learners are significantly affected by the mother tongue in using the target language (English). In contrast, Arab learners seem to have less impact due to the Arabic language's availability of the past tense.

Tying this to the literature, language transfer seems to be a factor in such unconventional uses of the PPT, confirming that the mother tongue transfers some of its properties to the target language. The greater the differences between the two languages, the more adverse effects. This manifests itself when Indonesian learners have no past tense or perfect tense and seem to have more problems using the PPT accurately. The Arab learners, whose first language does have past form but not tenses, seem to suffer less than the Indonesian learners in using the PPT. Therefore, it is important not to overlook the role the first language plays in learning another language, either positively or negatively. This is supported by a number of previous studies in this regard (Hazzaa, 2021; Karim & Nassaji, 2013; Moqbel, 2022; Odlin, 1989).

The results outlined in both tables are significant in some aspects. First, the perfect tense is almost absent in the Arab learners' samples; such learners lack the notion of the PPT in their first language (mother-tongue). In contrast, Indonesian learners seem to have more problems with using the past tense, which is non-existent in their mother-tongue (Indonesian). Such learners in both contexts tend to use, under the influence of their mother-tongue linguistic systems, the tense that comes close to the required tense in English in the given examples. For instance, instead of saying *I have eaten caviar once in my life*, the example outlined above is *I ate caviar once in this life*. Second, the results confirm the previous findings of Sholeha, Ardian, and Amri (2020) in that the lack of a perfect tense in some languages causes problems for English learners who belong to such languages. It also contributes to our understanding of the influence of the mother tongue on learners' uses of English tenses as explained by Odlin (1989), Karim and Nassaji (2013), and Hazzaa (2021), among others. In such cases, it is possible to speculate that interference of the mother tongue negatively impacts the construction of proper English sentences in the PPT (Karpava & Agouraki, 2013; Rizka, 2017).

The endeavor highlighted such a linguistic problem that might be foundational for TESOL teachers and educators as well as students enrolled in EFL and ESL programs. They could consider the mother-tongue in their programs and settings, and exert efforts to help learners make appropriate English verb tense-aspect choices, namely the PPT by avoiding the first language interferences discussed in this study.

Conclusion

The present comparative study set out to inspect erroneous uses of the PPT in relation to the past tense in the Indonesian and Arab contexts. It foregrounded the problem of interlingual and intralingual interference exemplifying the research problem in the Arabic context, wherein the present perfect hardly exists as well as in the Indonesian context, wherein both the PPT and

the past tense are non-observable. The sources of the particular errors were discussed to provide valuable contributions in the teaching of grammar to Arabic (manifested in Yemeni and Jordanian Arabic), and Indonesian EFL learners because the idea of the PPT and past tense is difficult to understand in the contexts at hand, which may be a shared phenomenon in some other situations.

There are obvious limitations to the study. For one thing, given the number of participants and data collected, the findings may not translate well to some other contexts. The study was limited to a few examples of EFL learners' writing using the PPT. Besides that, the topic under discussion was limited to one tense aspect – the PPT. Other aspects of the language likely interact and influence one another. Such limitations offer opportunities for further research. Despite these limitations, it can be said that the study sowed the seeds for further investigation employing more languages and participants in a diversity of contexts. Future researchers can have more participants with various data collection methods and add more language aspects in the investigation because such a grammatical issue is suggested to be explored in "a whole portfolio of writing, including drafts, written feedback, and written reflection, to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of developing a student writer (Rose et al., 2020, p. 199). Participants' level of proficiency and gender-based errors may also attract the attention of some other researchers as it was understated in the literature. Last but also important, it has been hypothesized that the more languages an individual uses, the more interference takes place. The current study could not gain data to contribute to this assumption and it passes on the torch to other researchers to further examine it with an adequate research method.

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