CHAPTER 6: INTERFERENCE OF MOTHERTONGUE

6.0 Introduction:

Language interference (also known as L₁ interference, linguistic interference, cross-linguistic interference or transfer) is the effect of language learners' first language on their production of the language they are learning. The effect can be on any aspect of language: grammar, vocabulary, accent, spelling and so on. It is most often discussed as a source of errors (negative transfer), although where the relevant feature of both languages is the same, it results in correct language production (positive transfer). The greater the differences between the two languages, the more negative the effects of interference are likely to be. Interference is most commonly discussed in the context of English as second language teaching, but it will inevitably occur in any situation where someone has an imperfect command of a second language.

Mechanism: Interference may be conscious or unconscious. Consciously, the student may guess because he has not learnt or has forgotten the correct usage. Unconsciously, the student may not consider that the features of the languages may differ, or he may know the correct rules but be insufficiently skilled to put them into practice, and so fall back on the example of his first language.

6.1 Interlanguage:

The idea of interlanguage is founded upon the assumption that an L₂ learner, at any particular moment in his learning sequence, is using a language system which is neither the L₁, nor the L₂. It is a third language, with its own grammar, its own lexicon and so on. The rules used by the learner are to be found in neither his own mother tongue, nor in the Target Language. The lesson to be learned, suggest applied linguists such as Nemser, Pitt Corder and Selinker, is that we need to understand the learner's language as a system in its own right. This is both possible, and interesting because learners tend to go through a series of interlanguages in systematic and predictable ways.

According to Selinker, there are a number of basic processes - but, particularly in his later work, he insists upon learning strategies - that is, activities that the learner adopts in order to help her acquire the language.
• **Language transfer** - the learner uses her own L₁ as a resource. This used to be looked upon as a mistake, but it is now recognised that all learners fall back on their mother tongues, particularly in the early stages of language acquisition, and that this is a necessary process.

• **Overgeneralization** - the learner uses an L₂ rule in situations in which a native speaker would not. This can occur at a number of levels:
  - at the **phonetic level**, for example, learners of English, after having learnt to master the English 'r', may take to placing it at the end of words, whereas in RP it is not pronounced.
  - at the **grammatical level**, a learner in the early stages may use nothing but the present tense. Later, there may be extensive, non-native use of 'be-ing' forms of the verb.
  - at the **lexical level** - learners tend to use base terms and to stretch them - thus a 'goose' might be referred to as a 'chicken', or a teaspoon may be a 'little spoon'.
  - at the **level of discourse**, lexical items and expressions may be used in inappropriate social contexts. Someone learning English as an L₂, and who has been staying with a friendly family with teenagers may find themselves using the 'they' or 'you' form to strangers.

• **Simplification** - both syntactic and semantic - the learner uses speech that resembles that of very young children or of pidgins. This may be either because they cannot, in fact, as yet produce the target forms, or because they do not feel sure of them.

Let us look more closely at transfer. It can have several different effects:

• a) **Negative transfer**: Until the morpheme studies of Dulay and Burt, it was often assumed that most errors were derived from transfer of the L₁ to the L₂ - this was referred to as interference. It is now no longer clear where errors derive from. As we have seen, Dulay and Burt believe that the majority of errors are **not** based on transfer. However, it is **not always a simple matter to decide whether an error is L₁ based or not**.
  - For example, when Kannada speakers use 'have -en' forms in inappropriate settings, is it because of overgeneralization, a developmental error, or an interference error?
  - Indeed, it is not always easy to decide whether an error has occurred at all. Take again the case of the 'have -en' forms. A Kannada speaker learning English **may use the form in the correct setting, but actually derive it from the Kannada language** - he has done the right thing, but for the wrong reasons. Has an error actually occurred? How would we know?
  - Consider this dialogue, derived from English:
If speakers of different mother tongues do, in fact, make different mistakes, and if these mistakes do appear to be related to structures in the mother tongue, then it would seem reasonable to speak of 'interference errors'.

At the level of phonology, this certainly appears to be the case.

- There are typical accents, and it is comparatively easy to distinguish between the English pronunciation of, say, a Kannada L1 speaker, a Urdu L1 speaker.

However, even here, there appear to be rules that are target language specific - progress through to full acquisition of the 'th' appears to follow a fairly regular pattern, which is similar to that of an English child learning the L1.

b) Positive transfer: Not all effects of language transfer are negative - indeed, we may consider that without some language transfer, there would be no second language learning. It is found that, it is very difficult to master a language after the age of 11 or 12 years of age, unless one already has a mother-tongue to fall back on. It may be that younger children are able to pick up an L2 without reference to their L1, but for adolescents and adults, the mother tongue is a major resource for language learning.

Where languages are historically and linguistically related to each other, the positive effects of transfer may be obvious. Kannada-speaking learners of English and English speaking learners of Kannada quickly come to realise that they share an enormous amount of vocabulary.

However, the Chomskian perspective has lead specialists in SLA to believe that there are deeper levels at which the L1 may aid in language learning. If all languages are fundamentally the same, then it makes a lot of sense to use the rules of the mother-tongue as initial hypotheses about the rules of the L2. We will come back to this point in a later stage, when considering implicational hierarchies.
We must conclude that - The teacher who tries to forbid his students from having recourse to their L₁ may be doing them a disservice, for L₁ can, in fact be extremely helpful.

- c) Avoidance: Where certain structures are very different from L₁, students may simply avoid using them. Schachter (1974) found that Chinese and Japanese learners of L₂ English made less errors in the use of relative clauses than did Persian or Arabic learners - but this was because they tried to use them less often. This is because Persian and Arabic relative clauses are structured in a similar way to English ones, while the two Oriental languages treat them in a very different way.

It is difficult to know when a student is using avoidance as a strategy - he must show some evidence that he knows of the structure that he is avoiding, and it must also be so that a normal speaker of the target language would have used the structure in that situation.

Kellerman distinguishes 3 types of avoidance:

- 1. Learner can anticipate that there is a problem, and has some idea of what the correct form is like.

- 2. Learner knows the target form well, but believes that it would be too difficult to use in the circumstances in which he finds himself - free-flowing conversation, for example.

- 3. Learner knows how to use the target form, but will not do so because it breaks a personal rule of behaviour - ready use of 'you' form by person coming from a culture where formality is highly valued. This is true mostly in all the Indian languages.

d) Overuse: This may be a concomitant of avoidance. Students will use the forms that they know rather than try out the ones that they are not sure of. It may also reflect cultural differences - thus Olshtain (1983) found that American college students, learning Hebrew in Israel, were much more likely to use direct expressions of apology than were native speakers. This also seems to be true of Kannada medium students learning English.

In fact, there is considerable variation in treating errors from one teacher to another, and also the treatment of error by any one teacher may vary from one moment to the next.
Studies of what teachers do have shown that very often they are inconsistent. Also, some errors are more likely to be treated than others - discourse, content and lexical errors receive more attention than phonological or grammatical errors - and here there is variation between native and non-native-speaker teachers. Many errors are not treated at all. Further, the more a particular kind of error is made, the less likely the teacher is to treat it.

Another question is 'about the repairing'. In natural settings, there is a preference for self-initiated and self-completed repair. However, in the classroom, it is the teacher who initiates repair - at least during the language-centred phase - while s/he expects the student or one of his peers to produce the correct form.

Error treatment seems to have little immediate effect upon student production - thus the teacher may correct an error made by student A to have student B make exactly the same error five minutes later - and hear student A do it again before the end of the lesson!

Some experts - Krashen among them - have deduced that this suggests that correction is a pointless exercise. However, we should be aware that there are no studies as yet of the long-term effects of error correction.

When we observe about students' attitudes to error correction, mainly they say that they want to be corrected, both in the classroom, and in conversation with native speakers. However, when they are taken at their word, they feel uncomfortable with the resulting style of discourse.

Our recommendations for action can only be very tentative, and lack empirical backing. However, it would appear that the following rules are accepted by most members of the profession now - which does not mean that they are right!

1. Teachers should respect student errors - they are a part of the learning process. Respecting does not mean taking no notice of them, but it does mean that they are not to be treated as necessarily being evidence of stupidity, idleness or evil intent on the part of the learner.

2. Only treat those errors that students are capable of correcting, according to the state of their inter-language at the time of the error. Written scripts should not be returned with simply everything underlined in red ink.
3. Self-repair is preferable to other-repair, as the student feels better about it. Being corrected by the teacher, or by other students, may be humiliating.

4. Teachers need to develop strategies for overcoming avoidance. The student needs to be put in a situation where he or she is forced to use the unassimilated structure and to think about the problems that this poses. However, this needs to be treated as a process of discovery rather than as a minefield.

Most important, to remember that the students errors are a precious resource for the teacher, which inform her about the state of her pupils' inter-language. This is why it so important to avoid negative marking, where the student simply learns that if he makes an error he will lose points.

6.1.1 Phonology: I tried to find interference of mother tongue on the phonological level. I set up a test to see if the English alveolar /t/ would be articulated as the dental /θ/ in different phonological environments. The result was that the retroflex completely replaced the alveolar; in fact, it has been found that the entire series of English alveolar consonants tends to be replaced by retroflex consonants. One item that did come out of the experiment was that some students had a tendency to drop the -ed ending after /k/ and /t/ (ex: walked became walk). Some interesting things seemed to be happening with the articulation of /ð/ (as in then), which normally is pronounced as an interdental /d/, but which sometimes seemed to become alveolar. Also, listening to the taped discussions revealed that sometimes a was used in front of vowel-initial words before which North American English and British English speakers would use an. This is a very natural adjustment for native speakers, yet it is apparent that a conscious effort to do this is sometimes required by the students. To discover whether or not these observations are significant would require further testing.

Trudgill and Hannah (1994) has listed some other items that Indian English tends to have a reduced vowel system; /r/ tends to become a flap or retroflex flap; the consonants /p/, /t/, and /k/ tend to be unaspirated; and in some regions, /v/ and /w/ are not distinguished (volleyball is the same as wallyball), while in others, /p/ and /v/, /t/ and /θ/, /d/ and /ð/, and /s/ and /ʃ/ are not (1.4.4). They also note that "Indian English tends to be syllable rather than stress-timed. Also, syllables that would be unstressed in other varieties of English receive some stress in Indian English and thus do not have reduced vowels. Suffixes tend to
be stressed, and function words which are weak in other varieties of English (of, to, etc.) tend not to be reduced in Indian English”.

6.1.1.1 Phonological interference of mother tongue: Since English is a second language to most Indians, it’s only natural that there is an influence of the mother tongue on the speaker’s accent (usually termed MTI in industry parlance - Mother Tongue Influence). MTI manifests itself in certain sounds - technically termed phonemes - for instance the word “Listen” may be pronounced as “Lizzen” by people whose mother tongue is Kannada [depends on the region they belong]. The degree of MTI varies from speaker to speaker depending on a variety of factors such as home environment, school, college, friends, T.V. programs watched etc.

Speech experts agree that the sounds you hear are the sounds you make - if you hear a word pronounced in a certain way in your formative years, it is very likely you will pronounce it the same way. This is why external factors such as school and friends play such a significant role in influencing a speakers’ accent. It has also been noticed that the influence of schools is the most significant. People from what is termed “convent” schools tend to speak better than people from other schools. This is probably because people spend most of their waking hours in their formative years in school.

When confronted with something new, whether it is a new food, a different kind of music, or just new information, it is a natural instinct to look for similarities with things that are familiar, to try to draw some comparison with what we know already. Consciously or unconsciously, we bring what we know to what we do not, making it impossible to learn anything entirely from scratch.

This is certainly no less true when we set about learning a foreign language. In most cases, textbooks and teachers’ explanations are in the students’ mother tongue, a bilingual dictionary is consulted in the early stages, and even in the classroom using the most direct language-teaching methods, the learner will still, of necessity, conduct any internal dialogue or rationalization in their native tongue. It is not possible to learn a foreign language without relying to some extent on our mother tongue, and the impulse to look for similarities and to draw conclusions based on them is as strong here as in any other learning context. This impulse will be stronger the greater the incidence of apparent similarities. And the apparent similarities that exist between many of the languages of the world are innumerable. They are also in the eye of the beholder, since our individual perceptions of similarity are as individual as we are.
There are, of course, many other influences at play when we learn a foreign language, but the influence that the mother tongue has on the language we produce when we use a foreign language has become a very important area of study for people interested in second language acquisition, language teaching, and language in general and is usually referred to as ‘Language Interference’, ‘Transfer’, or ‘Cross-linguistic influence’. It is suggested that the language produced by foreign learners is so unavoidably influenced, and even distorted, by the mother tongue of the learner that it should rather be termed an ‘Interlanguage’, since it will always be a blend of the foreign language and the mother tongue. The better the learner is at overcoming language interference, the more dilute that blend will be.

This reliance on similarities between the language being learnt and the mother tongue can be both a help and a hindrance, and will often lead to correct ‘guesses’ (positive transfer). It can help the learner to get things right. This is a rich area of study, and I also want to concentrate here on the role that interference plays in causing learner errors (negative transfer), and on the types of errors that it causes.

### 6.1.1.2 Error identification:

The phonological interference was identified in the following test item given to Std V to X. The following words were selected from the reading and conversation of students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>English words</th>
<th>Pronounced forms</th>
<th>Sound related errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Poor, our, girl</td>
<td>puwer, ovar,ガ:rl, hearts, herds</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Heard, hello, handy, Hungry, he, his, had, him</td>
<td>e:d, alo, endi, engri</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Future, farmer, dear, heard, find, Flourished, of, famous, Teacher, Birthright, birthday, think, thankyou Modern, after, with, that</td>
<td>pu:car, parmar, diyar, Pind, plarished, ti:cer, ap, pemas, Barthait, Barthde, a:pter, modern, tink, tank yu, det</td>
<td>f, θ, abbix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Listen, decided, voice</td>
<td>lizen, dizaided, woiz</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Walk, would, could, Should, listen, often,</td>
<td>wa:lk, wuld, kul, ʧuld, lizan, a:ften kno,</td>
<td>w, l, t, k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Example</td>
<td>Rule or Explanation</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>With, then, wit, with, then</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Examination, should, shaking, sheep, station</td>
<td>egjaminešan, şud, seking, seking, sip, stesan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Station, glad, sku:l, grammer, kiriket, black, private, class, film</td>
<td>istelan, gilæd, isku:l, giramer, kiriket, bilæk, piraivate, kila:s, filam, Added vowels i, a,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Zero, examination, busy civilization, magazine</td>
<td>ji:ro, egja: minesan, civilai jesan, magajin, biji.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hall, all, of, on, Called, ball</td>
<td>a:l, a:l, af, a:n, ka:ld, ba:l</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sit, pit, bed, red, could, should</td>
<td>sitt, sittu, pitt, pittu, bedd, beddu, red, reddu, kudd, kuddu, judd, juddu, Doubling the consonant [sounds are ending with vowels]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Depended, decided, walked, flourished</td>
<td>dipend, disaid, ua:k, flaril, sarpris, Past tense forms: ed, ‘id’ and ‘t’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Surprised, flourished, walked, Caused,</td>
<td>ka:zid, sarprisid, ka:zed, waked, Stressing of past tense forms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Giye, lived, sat, and, cat, that, Another, everything, told</td>
<td>giwu, liud, sya:t, ya:nd, kya:t, dy:t, yanader, yavrihting, told Addition of vowels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Very, voice, lovely</td>
<td>weri, voice, lowwli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.1.1.3 Error explanation:

A] The students had pronounced [r] in all positions whenever the [r] is found in the spelling of words. They had adopted this strategy because in Kannada there is one to one correspondence between spelling and pronunciation. So the students have done a negative transfer and used the strategy of overgeneralization. Rs are trilled, and are rolled when following hard ts and ds. eg: No.1, 2 and 3. Heavy rhoticity with trilled [r]. 57% of the primary and 78% of the high school students have adopted this strategy.
• B] The students had pronounced [p] instead of [f], [th] instead of [θ], because this sound in English does not occur in the mother tongue. They have pronounced the sound similar to what exists in their mother tongue. [An interlingual transefer]. The "th" sound (in "thing"), as it is in kannada, is a plain dental t, or The "th" sound in the word "thing" is the kannada "th": a dental t followed by a moderately-prominent h, one that has the potential to sound like spitting with the teeth.

• Nonexistence of 'f voiceless labio-dental fricative instead, a voiceless aspirated bilabial plosive [ph] or [p] type sound is employed.

* All native languages of India, and hence General Indian English, lack the phonemes /θ/ [voiceless dental fricative] and /ð/ [voiced dental fricative]. Hence, the [aspirated] [voiceless dental plosive] /th/ is substituted for /θ/ and the unaspirated [voiced dental plosive] /ð/ is substituted for /ð/. This can create confusions at times. 57% of the primary and 71% of the high school students had followed this strategy. eg: No.3

C] The 'h' sound is not pronounced by many of the students, though there is 'h' sound present in their mother tongue. 30% of the students have done this. eg; no.2

D] Contrary to popular belief, 'z' and 'j' are distinct in kannada English. Treasure does not become "tresor" or "treshor". The j-z shift is distinct largely with the lower classes and Kannada, who speak a distinct Urdu-influenced Kannada of Kanndigas themselves. Eg; no.9 The following errors too had occurred due to the same reason. 80% of the students had followed this strategy: 1] 'th' sound is pronounced instead of [θ] Eg; No.6 2] 'z' sound is pronounced instead of [s] Eg; No. 4

3] [ʃ] sound is pronounced as [ʃ] Eg; No.7

E] Avoidence of consonant cluster is the strategy found among the students who tend to include a vowel in the consonant clusters in the Eg; No; 8] 30% of the students had followed this strategy

F] [l, t, k] sounds though silent were pronounced Eg: No.5 this is due to the kannada language influence. All the letters are pronounced in their mother tongue. [U] sound is employed in place of [w] sound. 25% of the students had followed this strategy
G] [ɔ:] sound is pronounced [ə:] Eg: No.9 Nonexistence of ’ɔ: ’ in kannada; instead, ‘a:’ type sound is employed. This kind of errors occurred among 50% of students.

H] Gemination of consonant sounds is the strategy followed by students in Eg; No.10. This is due to the interference of kannada the consonants in kannada words mostly double at the end position. It is found that 80% of the students had adopted interlingual strategy. 25% of the students had adopted the addition of vowel at the end position of words and gemination of consonant sounds. Eg: No.11

I] Past tense forms are not pronounced by many of the students ‘ed’ ‘id’ and ‘t’. Eg: no; 12. 60% of the students employed this strategy.

J] The past tense forms are stressed by some students. Eg: no; 13. 40% of the students followed this strategy.

K] 60% of the students have adopted the strategy of vowel lengthening and addition of vowels. Eg; 14.

L] Nonexistence of ’v’; in kannada language, instead, a double-[ww] or [w] type sound is employed - "lovely" is therefore "lawwly." Eg: no; 15. 70% of the students employed this strategy

6.2.0 Overcoming phonetic interference:

1. The nature of interference: Phonetics is about describing the sounds of speech and the patterns they make. Among its various practical applications the one that will be uppermost in the minds of most readers is that of teaching and learning the pronunciation of a foreign language. This applies particularly to those concerned with teaching English pronunciation to Kannada learners.

When we encounter a foreign language, our natural tendency is to hear it in terms of the sounds of our own language. We actually perceive it rather differently from the way native speakers do. Equally, when we speak a foreign language we tend to attempt to do so using the familiar sounds and sound patterns of our mother tongue. We make it sound, objectively, rather differently from how it sounds when spoken by native speakers. This is the well-documented phenomenon of phonological interference. Our L₁ (mother tongue) interferes with our attempts to function in the L₂ (target language).
We can easily demonstrate the effects of interference by considering the pronunciation of loanwords. In each case the loanword has its pronunciation modified so that it accords with the sounds and sound patterns of the language into which it is borrowed.

In Kannada, bottle [bɔ:tli] is pronounced [ba:talı]. The word begins with a voiceless bilabial plosive [b] (bilabial). This consonant is followed by a vowel that is usually made with lips neutral,[back half open]. After this comes /t/ it is released laterally [that is the central closure is retained and the sides of the tongue are lowered; the compressed air escapes along the sides of the tongue ] when it is immediately followed by /l/. Kannada people perceive the word as composed of three pieces : [ba:], [ta], [li]. The first and last of these are composed of what from an English point of view are exotic sounds – sounds unknown in English. So when English learners of kannada encounter this word, they tend to replace them by English sounds; and the same happens when the word is borrowed into English. We are not quite all agree how to anglicize it. The Kannada The vowel gets a degree of lip-rounding, and – perhaps mainly because of the spelling – is identified with English long [a:] rather than with short [ɔ]. Although in some respects Kannada [o] is more similar to English [ɔ:] than to [o], we nevertheless equate it with [o]. Again, although the Kannada [t] voiceless retroflex plosive is slightly similar to English [t], we render it as the latter, again perhaps mainly because of the transliterated spelling. And we perceive the word as composed of two pieces (syllables), not three: in English [ɪ] a voiced alveolar lateral consonant followed by a vowel sound [e] must be non-syllabic. In this way the distinctively kannada sounds are replaced by characteristic English sounds, and the kannada structuring is in ‘pada’[shabda] where as an English structuring is in ‘syllables’.

When the Kannada learners confront English words (something that happens considerably more often than the other way round), the effects are similar. In English football is pronounced ['futbɔ:l]. The Kannada medium students perceive the unfamiliar [f] and [ɔ] in terms of their own sounds, and render it as [ (pu,t, 'ba:,lu) (b) show the Kannada pitch accent by the mark ['] placed before the pada in question, in accordance with IPA principles. The mark ['] denotes a non-contrastive pitch upstep.) Not only do speakers of Kannada replace the exotic English consonants by familiar Kannada ones, they also
reorganize the way the sounds are arranged (the phonotactics). Both syllables of the English word end in consonants; but Kannada syllables cannot end in a consonant. (other than the obstruent or the nasal). An English short vowel followed by a voiceless plosive is rendered as a Kannada geminate, for reasons that are not exactly clear. The syllable–final consonant has to be followed by a supporting vowel, normally [o] after [t] or [d], and [lu] otherwise. Thus [fut] becomes [futu]. The first vowel is actually likely to be voiceless, since Kannada has high vowels tend to get devoiced between voiceless consonants. The English word consists of two syllables. Since it is a compound (foot plus ball), in English it has the early stress characteristic of compounds. If a native speaker of English pronounces it as a one–word answer, the pitch of the voice typically falls from high to low on foot and then remains low on ball. In Kannada, on the other hand, this word has four sylables [fu–tu–ba:–lu] and arguably four syllables. Kannada compounds typically have a word accent on the second element, so the accent gets placed on the syllable [ba]. The resultant pitch pattern in a citation form typically involves a high–to–low fall during the long [a:] vowel, which to English ears sounds as if it has the main word stress.

These examples demonstrate that incorporating a loanword from one language into another may involve not only the sounds (phonetic segments, phonemes) of which the word’s pronunciation is composed, but also the positions in which those sounds are used (syllable structure, phonotactics), the phonetic processes they undergo (phonological rules) and their accompanying suprasegmental features (duration, stress/accent). Examples for loan words: bus [bAssu], office [a: fisu], bank [bæŋku], bench [bencu], factory [fæktari], college [kaldeju], pen [pennu], lorry [la:ry], lottery [latari], glass [gla:su], and master [mestru] The other words that were found in students speech and writing are: class [klasu], teacher [ti:caru], driver [drivaru], sir [seru], pass [pasu], period [piredu], station [stej Anu], fail [fe:lu], market [marketu] (marukAtte),

6.2.1 Phoneme difficulties: It is well understood that certain sound–types are intrinsically more difficult than others. According to one phonological theory, they are 'marked' (Chomsky & Halle 1968: ch. 9; Lass 1984: 7.4). Quite apart from this, any sound–types in the L2 that have no obvious
counterpart in the L1 are likely to cause problems for learners. Thus the English dental fricatives, [θ] and [ð], are a familiar stumbling-block for beginning learners from many language backgrounds. (They are also a stumbling-block for native speakers, being among the last sounds that children acquire and tending to be replaced by [f, v] or [t, d] in various local accents.) Teachers and learners of English know that they have to devote time and energy to the articulation of these sounds.

Ever since the heyday of structuralist linguistics in the middle of the twentieth century, teachers and textbook writers have known of the usefulness of minimal-pair drills in which the difficult sounds are compared and contrasted with other sounds that might be confused with them. We can practise, for example, with pairs such as [θəm] thumb – [təm] , [θɪk] thick – sick – [sɪk], [ʃɪk] [paːθ] path – [paːt]. In the last example becomes [pæθ] – [paːt]. It is not only that the dental fricatives are problematic in themselves, being articulatorily difficult; they also stand in phonemic contrast with the alveolar fricatives: /θ/ vs. /t/, /ð/ vs. /d/, /p/ vs. /f/, /s/ vs. /ʃ/. There are many pairs of words which are distinguished from one another only by this contrast, and there are therefore messages that have the potential for being misunderstood if the contrast is not mastered (Look at that strange moth/mot). [1]

It can be very helpful for learners to be given an articulatory explanation of what is involved, particularly in cases where the relevant organs of speech can be easily seen. English [v] [f] is another difficult sound for kannada medium learners of English, and it needs to be carefully distinguished from [b]. In the case of [v], the lower lip, as active articulator, is pressed against the upper teeth in such a way as to allow the air expelled from the lungs to continue to pass through: in phonetic terminology, it is labiodental and fricative. With [b], on the other hand, the lower liparticulates with the upper lip and forms a firm contact with it such that the air flow is completely blocked for a moment: it is bilabial and plosive. Learners can easily see the difference if the teacher demonstrates it accurately and confidently, and they can usually manage to reproduce it themselves by imitation.
Sound production, however, is only one side of the coin. We also need to train learners in sound perception. This is where ear-training is vital. The learner must learn to hear the phonemic contrast /v/ vs. /b/, and /f/ vs /p/. With a picture showing a vote and a boat learners can be drilled to respond correctly to Is this the boat? Is this the vote? Which is the boat? Show me the vote.

The same thing can be done with the very much more difficult contrast /r/ vs. /l/ (difficult, that is, for Kannada medium learners of English in some part of the region in Karnataka). Articulatory explanations — /r/ with central air-flow, side rims of tongue in contact with side teeth, tongue tip retracted, some lip-rounding; /l/ with lateral air-flow, side rims of tongue free of contact, tongue tip firmly on the alveolar ridge — must be supplemented by ear-training and minimal pair practice. Is it right? Is it light? A red pencil? A lead pencil? Shall I correct them or collect them?

We can combine the two problems by drilling loving [ˈlʌvɪŋ] and laughing [ˈlaːfɪŋ]. Students must learn to identify the two words on hearing them, and they must learn to pronounce them in a way that leaves no doubt as to which is which.

Similar considerations apply to vowels and vowel contrasts. Learners must learn to both hear and reproduce the difference between central /ʌ/ and front /æ/: fun and fan, butter and batter, mud and mad, cup and cap, which truck should I follow? and which track should I follow? Likewise the difference between mid /ɜː/ and open /əː/: stir and star, curve and carve, occur and a car, burn and barn, hurt and heart.

All pronunciation textbooks offer drills of this kind (e.g. O'Connor and Fletcher, 1989); indeed such a minimal pair is responsible for the title of the well-known Ship or sheep? (Baker, 1977). There are similar drills in many general classroom textbooks of English.

6.2.1.1 Allophonic difficulties: In all languages phonemes are pronounced somewhat differently according to the phonetic context in which they are found that is, they comprise a number of distinct allophones. There are two kinds of interference problem this can give rise to for the learner:
• failure to acquire allophonic rules appropriate for the L2 but not the L1, and
• carry-over into the L2 of inappropriate allophonic rules of the L1.

Instances of the first kind include a failure to apply the appropriate distribution of aspiration for English /p, t, k/ (e.g. aspirated in *pin, tanned, come* but unaspirated in *spin, stand, scum*), a failure to distinguish clear and dark /l/, or a failure to apply pre-fortis clipping (Wells 1990: 136, 2000: 149).

More important, and more insidious, are instances of the second kind. Kannada [s], for example, [ʃ] and [ʒ] respectively. Hence in kannada [s] and [ʃ] can be regarded as allophones of the same phoneme. The consequence for of English is difficulty in producing sequences such as those in *seat [ʃi:t]*, *receive [rɪˈsi:v]*, *sick [sɪk]*. They tend to pronounce *sheep* in a way that sounds to English speakers like *seep* [ʃi:p], and indeed fail to distinguish such minimal pairs as *sheep–sit*. Ship–sip This is particularly unfortunate in the case of the words *sit* and *city*. The students have found difficulty in producing sounds such as [ʃ] in *sheep*, [ʒ] in *zoo*, [v] in *receive*.

Some students, as is to be expected, have difficulty not only in producing the [ʃ–ʒ] distinction but also in hearing it. They can benefit from ear-training as well as from articulation practice.

Other kannada consonants, too, have special positional allophones before [i]. They are [z], [t] and [d], which are replaced by [dʒ], [tʃ], and [dʒ] respectively. For [z], this leads to problems with words such as *busy* [bizi], *zoo* [zu:], *lazy* [ˈleizi], and *resist* [rɪˈzɪst]. Although there are no English words pronounced [ˈleizi] or [rɪˈzɪst], these forms are sufficiently different from the native-English pronunciation to give rise to serious problems of intelligibility.

With [t] and [d], fortunately, there are English loanwords in kannada which may provide a model. The English word *team* [tiːmu] comes into kannada not necessarily as the expected [tiːm] team but often as [tiːmu]. Although this violates the usual kannada allophonic rule, knowledge of English pronunciation is sufficiently widespread for it to have become established. This means that only the more naïve learner will mispronounce *team* in
English as [ti:mu]; most can produce [ti:m], and this can serve as a model for teach [ti:tʃ], teeth [ti:ð], tip [tɪp], stick [stɪk], plenty ['plenti] and so on.

Another English loanword that may provide a suitable model is pen(-paper), borrowed as [pennu('pe:pa:)] pennu(-pe:par) . Minimal pairs for reinforcing the English phonemic distinction include tease [tɪ:z] and cheese [tʃi:z], tip [tɪp] and chip [tʃɪp], tears [tɪəz] and cheers [tʃɪəz].

Building on this, the learner can also cope with [d] before a high front vowel, rather than [dʒ], in words such as deep [di:p], different ['dɪfrənt], discuss [dɪ'skʌs], dear [dɪə], lady ['leidi].

6.2.1.2 Phonotactic difficulties:

1. Consonant clusters: At the beginning of a word, a Japanese consonant must be followed either immediately by a vowel or else by a palatal semivowel [j] and then a vowel. An English initial consonant, on the other hand, may well form part of a consonant cluster comprising two or three consonants. Typical examples of two–consonant initial clusters that may be difficult for Japanese learners are those in play [pleɪ], tree [triː], clear [klær], brain [breɪn], draw [drɔː], glue [ɡluː], free [friː], through [θruː], shrink [ʃrɪŋk]. These tend to be resolved by inserting a vowel between the two consonants, thus [pleɪ] etc. To achieve an English–style pronunciation the learner must eliminate this inserted vowel, while also taking care to make the appropriate English distinction between [r] and [l]. The aim should be a close transition from the first consonant to the second. It is to be remembered that native English speakers think of these words as consisting of just one syllable.

It may be helpful to practise hearing and making the difference between pairs such as prayed [pretd] and parade [pa'reid], plight [plæt] and polite [pa'lait], Clyde [klaɪd] and collide [kə'laɪd], drive [draɪv] and derive [drɪ'raɪv, də'raɪv].

Clusters involving [w], on the other hand, tend to be resolved by replacing the semivowel by a vowel – not necessarily a disaster, provided that the result has lip rounding. If not, the English monosyllabic switch [switʃ]
becomes in kannada—two syllables [swi/ tf] quite [kwit] a syllable becomes two [kwi /i t].

Another group of difficult initial clusters are those involving [s]. Examples are found in the words spin [spi:n], steep [sti:p], school [sku:l], smile [smal], snow [snou] private [privet]. There are also the three–consonant clusters exemplified in spray [sprei], split [spli:t], straight [stret], screen [skri:n]. These, too, tend to be resolved by the insertion of extra vowels, as when English school is borrowed into kannada as i sku:l. Again, learners must aim at close transition between the consonants. Ideally, spin, smile, spray etc. should be felt as one syllable rather than as three or more syllables. The word school, which when borrowed into Kannada comprises three syllables [i/ sku:/ lu], also comprises just one syllable in English.

It may be helpful to practise hearing and making the difference in pairs such as sport [spɔ:t] vs. support [sɔpɔ:t], scum [skʌm] vs. succumb [sɔkʌm].

6.2.1.3 Phonotactic difficulties

1. Final consonants: A major problem for Kannada learners of English is the fact that English consonants frequently occur in a position from which kannada consonants are excluded, namely at the end of a word or syllable.

All the English consonant phonemes except /h/ can be found in word–final position. Thus we have words such as map [mæp], rub [rʌb], net [net], good [gud], back [bæk], egg [eg], rough [raʊf], love [laʊ], death [dæθ], smooth [smu:θ], face [feis], cheese [tʃiːz], push [pʊʃ], beige [beɪζ], rich [rɪtʃ], edge [eʤ], come [kʌm], pen [pen], sing [sɪŋ], sell [sel].

The ones that is difficult for a Kannada–speaking learner is final [ŋ], as in sing. If it is pronounced annada–style voiced velar plosive[g], it may sound slightly odd but will not cause any problems of intelligibility. The main problem for the learner is keeping the nasal velar. The kannada medium students pronounce sing as siŋ. The other words they tend to pronounce faulty are as follows: rub as [rʌbb], net as [nett], good as [gudd], egg as [egg], rough as [raʊf], death as [dæθ], push as [pʊʃ], beige as [beij], edge as [ej] and come as [kʌm]. Students tend to double the consonant in
word final position in the reading context. In the conversational contexts further 'u' vowel is added to such words in final position. Thus map [mæp] may be rendered as [mæppu], net [net] as [nættu], back [ba:k] as [bakku], good [gud] as [guddu]. After long vowels, consonants do not get geminated, but do get supported by an inserted vowel, thus cheese [tʃiːz] may become [tʃiːzu], love as [lʌvʊ], loop may become [luːpu].

Even when the learner has learnt to suppress the extra vowel as such, it may still remain in his mind, giving an inappropriate coloration to the consonant. It would usually be better, if possible, to imagine a suppressed [a] after the consonant rather than an [u].

English final consonant clusters combine the difficulties associated with single final consonants and those associated with clusters. There are various subtypes. Some involve a lateral. Examples include help [help], belt [belt], milk [milk], health [helθ], else [els]. In English, all these laterals are actually dark, [l]—but the matter of clear and dark laterals is definitely something that can be left to advanced students. For most Kannada learners, the important thing is to achieve a lateral articulation of some kind. All the examples just given are monosyllables, and the Kannada medium students tendency is as always to break up the consonant cluster with a vowel, giving three-syllable results such as [he /I/ pu], [be/ɪ/ tu] . [l] is pronounced as [l] in kannada style by some of the students. This is due to the influence of Kannada [mother tongue influence] the students mix up the English [l] with Kannada [l]

A radical solution which I think deserves consideration for those students (though it may shock some teachers) is to follow the Estuary English habit of vocalizing the lateral, that is replacing it with a vowel of the [o] type. Learners could aim at [heo, beot, moʊk, heoθ, eos].

One advantage of choosing British English (RP) as the model is that this particular difficulty is avoided, since their RP forms are [haːp, kaːt, daːk, kɔːs, noːθ].

Another type of final consonant cluster involves a nasal. Examples include lamp [læmp], month [mʌnθ], hunt [hʌnt], think [θɪŋk], fence [fɛns, fɛnts],
lunch [lʌntʃ, ˈlʌŋʃ]. These are relatively easy for Kannada learners to produce, since the nasal is homorganic with the following consonant, just like the kannada nasal. But it is still important to try to think of each word as consisting of one syllable, not three syllables, and to suppress any added vowel after the final consonant.

In cases such as warmth [wɔːmθ] and length [lɛŋθ] it seems to me to be entirely acceptable for the learner to adopt the easier variants [wɔːmθ] and [lɛŋθ] or [lɛŋθ], which are used by many native speakers. In this way the difficulty of a nasal followed by a non–homorganic consonant can be avoided. However, inflected forms such as tamed [teɪmd], banged [bæŋd], comes [kʌmz], hangs [hæŋz] cannot be avoided in this way: for them the learner must learn to produce an appropriate nasal, bilabial or velar, even though it is not homorganic with the following consonant.

Then there are final clusters involving [f] or [s], for example lift [lɪft], soft [sɔft], wasp [wɔsp], list [lɪst], desk [desk]. Again, the main error to be avoided is that of inserting extra vowels, as in three-syllables [lɪ /f/ tʊ] instead of single-syllables [lɪft]. It may make it easier to practise first words such as lifting [ˈlɪftɪŋ], softer [ˈsoʊtə].

There are other tricky final clusters ending in alveolar fricatives or plosives. Some of these are in morphologically simple words such as lapse [læps], box [boks], next [nɛkt], desks, marks. But the majority arise in inflected forms such as plurals and past tenses: groups [ɡrʊps], cats [kæts], takes [teɪks], laughs [laːfs] (AmE [læfs]), births [bɜːðz], wasps [wɔsps], tents [tents], desks [desks], risked [rɪskt], touched [ˈtʌtʃ]; cabs [kæbs], heads [hedz], dogs [dɒgz], loves [lʌvz], breathes [briːðz], runs [rʌnz], pulled [pʊld], judged [dʒʊdʒd].

In this connection it will be useful to recall the pronunciation rules for regular plurals and past tenses. They depend on the phonetic classification of the last segment in the stem to which they are attached. The plural ending is pronounced

- [s] if the stem ends in a voiceless sound (one of [p, t, k, f, θ]),
- [z] if the stem ends in a voiced sound, but
- [zz] if the stem ends in a sibilant (one of [s, z, ʃ, ʒ, tʃ, dʒ]).
The three types are illustrated in *cats, dogs, and horses*, which are respectively [kæts], [dɒgz], ['hɔːsɪz]. This reflects the fact that from an English point of view final clusters such as [tʃ, θs] and [ɡz, vɔz] are fine, but [ss, dʒz] would be impossible.

The regular past tense ending is pronounced

- [t] if the stem ends in a voiceless sound (one of [p, k, f, θ, s,b,g,v,ð,ʒ]),
- [d] if the stem ends in a voiced sound, but
- [ɪd] if the stem ends in [t] or [d].

The three types are illustrated in *missed, turned, and waited*, which are respectively [mɪst], [tɜːnd], ['weɪtd]. So again we see a connection with the constraints on possible English final clusters: those such as [st, pt] and [nd, dʒd] are fine, but [tt, dd] would be impossible.

### 6.2.1.4 Concatenation, coarticulation:

Beginners can practise word-final consonants by putting them in phrases where the next word begins with a vowel sound. It may be helpful to think of the final consonant as actually belonging to the next word. Thus *step up* [step ʌp] can be imagined as [ste pʌp], *leave out* [li:v aut] as [li: vaut], *end it all* [end ɪt ɔ:l] as [en dɪ tɔːl].

Useful as it may be for elementary students, this technique can however only be a half-way stage, for two reasons:

- first, because native speakers do not actually pronounce final consonants in exactly the same way as initial ones: a *great ape* [greɪt ʌp] is phonetically distinct from a *grey tape* [greɪ tɛip], and *an aim* [ən ə'm] from *a name* [ə 'neɪm]
- and secondly, more importantly, because in real life most word-final consonants are not followed by a vowel-sound at the beginning of the next word.
So word-final consonants also need to be practised both in absolute-final position (before a pause or the end of the utterance) and also in phrases where the next word begins with a consonant.

Examples of phrases for practising this are keep calm [ˈkiːp ˈkaːm], nice time [ˈnaɪs ˈtaɪm], rich food [ˈrɪtʃ ˈfuːd], bad thing [ˈbæd ˈθɪŋ]. In each case there should be no kind of vowel sound - not even a voiceless one - between the last consonant of the first word and the first one of the second word. It may help, too, to try and feel these phrases, mentally, as consisting of two syllables each, not of six syllables (ki-i-pu-ka-α-mu [ˈkiːp ˈkaːm], etc.).

Particular care needs to be taken when the two abutting consonants are ones which tend to be confused. They may, for example, be dental and alveolar fricatives, as in both sides [ˈbəʊθ ˈsɑːdz], with salt [wɪt ˈsɔːlt]; or bilabial plosive and labiodental fricative, as in love bite [ˈlaʊ bɑɪt], they’ve beaten [ˈðiːv ˈbɪːtnt], (I like the) club very (much) [ˈklaub ˈveri], and within the word obviously [ˈɒbviəslɪ].

Where the same plosive is repeated at the end of one word or syllable and at the beginning of the next one, we get gemination. That is to say, there is no audible release of the first, and no audible approach to the second: the two phonemes are realized by a single articulatory gesture, a plosive with a long hold phase. Fortunately, kannada learners have a model for this in the kannada syllabic obstruent, as in pappaya (ˈpæppaːya) 'a kind of fruit called pappaya', in which the articulation is very comparable to that between the first and second syllables of English stop pointing [ˈstoʊp ˈpɔɪntɪŋ]. Examples for the other plosives might be (put the) web back [ˈweɪ bæk], night-time [ˈnaɪt tæm], stood down [ˈstʊd ˈdaʊn], milk crate [ˈmɪlk krep], big gun [ˈbɪɡ ˈɡʌn]. However, unlike other obstruents, English affricates are not geminated, so that each chair [ˈtʃeə] and orange juice [ˈɔːrɪndʒ ˈdʒuːs] should be pronounced with two complete affricates each.

It may also be necessary to emphasize that voiceless plosives are not geminated in English words such as copy [ˈkɒpi], happy [ˈhæpi], atom [ˈætəm], better [ˈbetaɪ], jacket [ˈdʒækɪt].
Repeated fricatives in English are articulated like single ones, except that they last longer. Kannada provides a model for geminated [s] in words such as bassu (b\^s) and for geminated [ʃ] in braʃhu (br\^ʃju) 'brush', but not for other double fricatives. English examples for practice might be rough fight ['rAf 'faı], Faith thinks ['feı\θ 'θıŋks], push shut ['pjuʃ 'ʃuʃ], love visiting ['lAv 'vıziŋtıŋ], with these [wɪd 'ðiːz]. Repeated nasals and liquids, too, are like single ones but longer: the same method [ðæ 'seım 'meθıd], ten names ['ten 'neImz], I feel lazy [aI fi:l 'leızi]. In all such cases it is inappropriate for there to be any kind of vowel or break-and-make of articulation as we pass from one consonant to the next. It may be helpful to do some ear-training and production practice on pairs such as this count ['dııs 'kəʊnt] vs. this account ['dııs ə'kəʊnt], (I'm not going to) rush now ['rAf'nau] vs. Russia now ['rA/a nau].

It is to be remembered that many word-final clusters readily undergo simplification in connected speech through processes of assimilation and elision, which are well described in textbooks of English phonetics. So although it is necessary for the learner to practise next [nekst] with all three of its final consonants present (for use when the word is said in isolation or in phrases such as next item), it is also helpful to be aware that in phrases such as next time, next contestant its last consonant, [t], can confidently be omitted: ['neks taIm], ['neks kan'testant]. Although ten must be pronounced with an alveolar nasal in isolation or in a phrase such as ten answers, it can be allowed to assimilate, eg: in ten boys ['tem 'bɑız] or ten girls ['ten 'g3ı:ls]. But this isn't a problem for Kannada medium students because they pronounce it well.

6.2.1.5 Compound stress: Some students, have good grasp of English pronunciation, but many do not. The latter group strikingly tend to refer to the computer course as [kam'pju:ta: 'kɔ:s(u)]. But in native English it is called a [kəm'pju:ta: ˈkɔ:s] I touched on the reason for this at the beginning of the chapter. It is due to interference from Kannada, in which compound nouns tend to receive a pitch accent on the second element. In English, on the other hand, the majority of compound nouns receive word stress on the first element (early stress).
In general, a few Kannada medium students of English cope pretty well with word stress, but they do tend to err in the stressing of compounds, and the reason is evidently interference from the usual Kannada pattern. The error is made worse by the further pitch feature characteristic of late-accented (or unaccented) Kannada words, namely the non-contrastive step-up in pitch, here shown as [], typically imposed on the second syllable of the word. In the case of computer course, this gives the impression (to English ears) of a pre-tonic stress on the second syllable of computer, which in English of course is wholly unstressed.

This applies equally whether the English compound noun is one of those written as two words, as computer course, or one of those written as one. An example of a compound written as one word is passport ['pæsport], AmE ['pæsport]. It is to be noted that the word stress is located, as expected, on the first syllable. Borrowed into Kannada, however, it becomes [pa,s'portu], and this leads Kannada learners of English to tend to produce something that sounds to English ears like final-stressed [pA's'po:t] rather than the correct initial-stressed [pA's'po:t] passport.

There are thousands of compound nouns in English. The vast majority of them bear early stress. Any good dictionary will supply copious examples. Here are just a few: alarm clock, baby-sitter, bank account, bookcase, bus stop, car park, contact lens, dining room, fairy tale, heart attack, letter-box, pen-friend, police station, post office, swimming pool, washing machine, youth hostel.

Tiresomely, however, not all English compound nouns are early-stressed. The principal exceptions, late-stressed, fall into one of the following categories:

- proper names, including all kinds of street names except those including the word street itself: so, Professor Smith, Richmond Town, Dorset Road, Oxford Square, Kenley Avenue, Cunningham Road;
- compounds in which the first element names the material or ingredient: so plastic fork, silk shirt, (but compounds of cake, juice and water are exceptions, being front-stressed);
- expressions in which the first element names a place or time: so town hall, college premises, kitchen window, Easter Day, autumn leaves.

But... computer course is an exception to this exception. On the one hand, this perhaps means that it is best for the student to consult a dictionary or a native
speaker for the stress pattern of any compound noun falling into these categories; on the other, it means that there is a degree of uncertainty and variability about the stressing of compounds that can only be seen as good news for the learner. Of the different manifestations of phonetic interference at which we have looked, this is the one that has the least impact on intelligibility in practice.

6.3.0 Interference of mother tongue at morphological level:

Learners employ a wide variety of strategies when they speak or write English. These include, among others, avoiding constructions and words they are unsure of, overusing those they are confident about, and taking rules of English they have learnt and applying them in areas where they do not correctly apply (overgeneralizing). But the strategy which we have concentrated on in this chapter is that of consciously or unconsciously resorting to features of the mother tongue when speaking or writing a foreign language.

We have to look at what can happen when a learner who has grown up with one vast body of vocabulary encounters and tries to get to grips with a language which has another, often deceptively similar, vocabulary. Cognates, false friends, and loan words have provided evidence of the role that the mother tongues of learners of English can play in the English those learners produce. We have seen that similarities between words in different languages can lead to false assumptions about shared meaning can entice the learner into sometimes perilous traps. When this happens the errors made are attributable to 'negative transfer', or 'interference'.

**Beyond word meaning:** Language interference can also be seen at work in other areas of language production, beyond the choice of words made by the learner. In the introduction to their book *Learner English*, Michael Swan and Bernard Smith point out that just as the English of a non-native speaker will almost always bear some hint of the accent of their mother tongue, so that we can recognize and talk about someone having a Kannada accent or any other language accent, so too, 'vocabulary, syntax, discourse structure, handwriting and all other aspects of language use are likely to some extent to carry a mother-tongue "accent"'. To what extent, then, can this 'accent' be traced in the errors made by learners of English?

6.3.1 Capitalization: Since English starts all the days of the week and months of the year with a capital letter, a Kannada learner of English is far less likely to write *Monday* or *January* with a upper case initial letter. Conversely, since English starts all nouns with a capital letter, the Kannada learner's to be peppered
with extraneous capital letters. In some cases, where a Kannada learner of English has learnt that they should use capital letters with all nouns, of course, may take this rule too far and omit capital letters in the comparatively rare cases where they are needed. Because there are no capital letters in Kannada. This is a simple example of how a learner's linguistic habits can be carried across from their mother tongue to the new language they are learning, or, indeed, how newly-learnt rules can be over-applied.

6.3.1.1 Error identification:

The high school students were asked to write five sentences. The primary students were asked to write five sentences which were dictated to them. The following errors were identified;

Table : 64 Error identification in the aspects of capitalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.NO.</th>
<th>English sentences</th>
<th>Samples</th>
<th>Capitalization errors due to over-application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>My name is Sharada</td>
<td>My Name is sharada</td>
<td>Name, Sharada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>He walked to the side.</td>
<td>He Walked to the side.</td>
<td>Walked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The rose is beautiful.</td>
<td>The Rose is beautiful</td>
<td>Rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>We have leave on Sunday.</td>
<td>We have leave on sunday.</td>
<td>Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The teacher’s job is to teach children.</td>
<td>The Teachers job is to teach Children.</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Our class teacher teaches us good mannerisms.</td>
<td>Our Class Teacher teaches us good manners</td>
<td>Class Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ramu killed the cat.</td>
<td>Ramu killed the Cat.</td>
<td>Cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sometimes we do mistakes.</td>
<td>sometimes we do Mistakes.</td>
<td>Mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I hear with my ears.</td>
<td>I hear With my ears.</td>
<td>With</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I go to school by bus.</td>
<td>i go to school in bus.</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I heard a voice calling out his name.</td>
<td>I heard a Voice calling out his Name</td>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>My mother sends me to school.</td>
<td>my Mother sends me to school.</td>
<td>my Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Sometimes I play with my friends.</td>
<td>Sometimes i play with my Friends.</td>
<td>i Friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Yesterday I was on leave.</td>
<td>yesterday i was on leave.</td>
<td>yesterday i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.3.1.2 Error explanation:

66% of the high school and 85% of the primary students had applied this strategy while writing sentences. Students linguistic habits were carried across from their mother tongue to the new language they were learning, or the newly-learnt rules were over-applied.

6.4.0 Spelling:

The area of spelling involves similar risk factors. Cognate words present spelling traps which it is very easy for the learner to fall into. Cognates of English *comfortable* are spelt with an 'n' rather than an 'm' in many languages - in the south Indian languages mainly in Malayalam it is pronounced as *comfortable* and the ensuing spelling mistake is fairly predictable. On the other hand, in Kannada, the cognate is pronounced and sometimes spelt as /kamʃˈtɛbdl/, so different spelling errors can be predicted.

Of course, non-native speakers are not the only people to have difficulties with spelling in English, and not all spelling errors can be attributed to language interference. But it is interesting to note that a list of the most commonly misspelled words of English native speakers will have only a small overlap with a similar list of common non-native-speaker spelling errors. One can compare the lists provided by Vivian Cook. Equally, lists of common English spelling errors for learners with different mother tongues will give a very different picture of the problems English spelling poses for learners with different mother tongues. Here, the mother-tongue-specific 'accent' can be heard. For example, Kannada learners, because Kannada does not distinguish between the sounds 't' and 'ḍ', 'f' and 'p', not only say, but also write 'tank you' for thank you, 'tink' for think, 'pan for fan, parmer for farmer.

But language interference in learning English spelling is not restricted to problems of pronunciation being carried over into spelling. Unlike many languages - Kannada, for example - English does not have a high correspondence between sound and spelling. For learners in whose mother tongue this correspondence is greater, it is harder to grasp some of the complexities of English spelling. The vowel sounds of letters 'e' and 'i' are often confused (e.g. *decided, devided*), and *this* and *these* are often confused because the sound-distinction is unclear to learners. Kannada medium students often reduce a double consonant to a single one, hence *atention, opportunity, diferent*. Kannada speakers are also, like most learners with closely related mother tongues, likely to assume spelling correspondence between cognates between their mother tongue and
English, leading to errors like *introduction* and *especial* (for *special*). Other learners whose mother tongues do not feature clusters of consonants including kannada (two or more consonants grouped together, as in *friend* or *government*) will interpose an extra vowel (*governement*), miss out one of the consonants (*goverment*) or rearrange the vowels and consonants available into a configuration which feels more natural to them (*firend*), based on their mother tongue. As with all areas of language interference, spelling is an area in which the less similar the mother tongue and English are to each other the less likely it is that errors are attributable to the influence of the mother tongue.

### 6.4.1 Error identification:

**Interference of mother tongue in spelling:** The students were asked to write 20 words and 5 sentences. The following errors were identified due to the interference of mother tongue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGLISH WORDS</th>
<th>SAMPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 future</td>
<td>futer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Listen,often</td>
<td>Listan, Ofin,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Would,could,should,walk</td>
<td>Wud, cud, shud, wak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Know,knife</td>
<td>No, nif</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Examination,station,tution</td>
<td>Examineson, steson, tusan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Comparison,</td>
<td>Comparition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Tomorrow</td>
<td>Tomaro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Killed</td>
<td>Kiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 decided</td>
<td>dicided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Daddy,manners, letters message</td>
<td>Dady,maners, leters, mesage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 condition</td>
<td>kandition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 thankyou</td>
<td>Tank you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 farmer</td>
<td>parmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 girl</td>
<td>gal, ga:rl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Private,friend,</td>
<td>Pirivat, firend,[pirend]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.4.1.1 Error explanation

The vowel sounds of letters ['e' and 'i'] and ['a' and 'e'] are often confused [Eg; no.2 and 9]. Students often reduce a double consonant to a single one [Eg:no.7,8,10]. The ‘tion’ sounds are confused and written ‘son’ [Eg:no.5]. The
'son' sounds are replaced by 'tion'[Eg;no.6]. All the silent letters are pronounced [Eg;no.2 and 3]

40% of the students had applied this strategy in their writing.

6.4.1.2 Commonly Misspelled Words in English

* "dairy" (diary) * "diary" (dairy)

* "beleive" (believe) * "recieve" (receive)

* "dias" (dais) * "habbit" (habit)

* "continously" (continuously) "pronounciation" (pronunciation)

* "etiquette" is some-what pronounced as "eddi-kaytes"!! and rarely spelled correctly

• "loose" (lose)

6.5.0. Noun countability

Nouns in English divide into two basic types: countable nouns and uncountable, or mass, nouns. Countable nouns are those which refer to individual entities which can be counted, such as coins, fingers and buildings. Uncountable nouns are those which refer to mass entities or to notions, which cannot be counted, such as money or laughter. These two types of noun have distinct grammatical behaviours. Countable nouns must have an article; you cannot say 'coin is made of silver'. Uncountable nouns can stand alone without an article; you can say 'laughter is contagious'. While both types can take the definite article 'the', only countable nouns can take the indefinite article 'a' (e.g. a coin, but not a money). Countable nouns have a plural form, whereas uncountable nouns do not; you can say coins but we cannot say laughters.

Problems arise, when a learner starts to learn a new language and discovers that, rather than being a quality which is inherent in the things denoted by the nouns themselves, countability is something which is written into a language and what is countable in one language can be uncountable in another. If the learner assumes that the same countability applies to a word in English as in their mother tongue, interference errors will be made.
Advice is an uncountable noun in English. You cannot say an advice (you have to say 'a piece of advice' as though it is a mass entity that has to be carved up, like bread), and we cannot say advices. But in Kannada, and many other languages, the word for the concept of advice is countable. It is easy to see, then, why so many learners of English say 'he gave me a good advice' or 'his advices were useful', for example. In fact, when it comes to countability, English is often the exception, running counter to the trend in other languages, leaving learners mystified and making mistakes. Other words which are uncountable in English but often countable in other languages include: information, news, luggage, furniture, weather, equipment, work, and money. The learner who only learns the noun and does not also learn the countability and attendant grammatical behaviour of the noun, will always make themselves understood, but their English will be incorrect. Cross-linguistic differences in countability are the source of such foreign-sounding statements as 'what a lovely weather', 'the money are in my pocket' and 'I have to do my homeworks'.

**Number:** Variable nouns in English have both a plural and a singular form which differ from each other, most often by the addition or subtraction of an 's', though there are, of course, many irregular variable nouns. Invariable nouns in English come in different forms. Some have only a singular form, as is the case with uncountable nouns like furniture and the names of some academic subjects, games and diseases, e.g. mathematics, darts and measles, which look misleadingly like plurals. Others have only a plural form in English, whereas their counterparts in other languages may have singular forms. For example, many objects which are made up of two hinged or joined parts and are symmetrical, such as scissors, scales, secateurs and trousers, have only a plural form in English. To refer to these nouns in the singular, you have to use 'a pair of' or 'some'. If the learner assumes that the number of these nouns is the same in English as in their mother tongue invalid noun forms, like trouser, and incorrect verb-noun and determiner-noun agreement errors, as in 'this trouser is too small' will result. This is all the more confusing since in languages where nouns of this type have been borrowed from English, they are usually given a singular form, regardless of their status in the language they were borrowed from. Similarly, some nouns in English, like sheep, aircraft and offspring have the same form in both the singular and the plural, with only context to help with their interpretation. The learner who has not sufficiently learnt these facts may rely on the assumption that these nouns behave in the same way as they do in their mother tongue.

**6.5.1 Error identification:** Here below are given examples of errors done by students.
Table: 66 Errors in noun countability and number

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>English sentences</th>
<th>Samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sometimes I take leave from school.</td>
<td>Sometimes I take leaves from school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I took leave for two days.</td>
<td>I took leaves for two days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I did all my home work yesterday.</td>
<td>I did all my home works yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have much homework to do.</td>
<td>I have many home works to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Our teacher teaches us knowledge.</td>
<td>Our teacher teach us a knowledge for us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>British were ruling our country.</td>
<td>British was ruling our country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>My mother told me to buy two loves of bread yesterday.</td>
<td>My mother tell buy two breads yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Teachers teach well in our school.</td>
<td>In our school teacher are teaching well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>There are many flowers in the garden.</td>
<td>There is many flowers in garden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I eat rice sometimes.</td>
<td>I ate rices sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>We are five children.</td>
<td>We are five childrens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>My father works in K.E.B.</td>
<td>My father work in K.E.B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>My father bought 2 dozen pencils.</td>
<td>My father bought 2 dozens pencils.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I have two brothers and a sister.</td>
<td>I have two brother and one sisters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I will send a gift to my friend.</td>
<td>I will send one gift for my friend.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The gardens in our country are beautiful.</td>
<td>The garden of our country are very beautiful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.5.1.1 Error explanation:

67% of the high school students and 85% of the primary students had committed these errors in their conversation and writing. 1] The errors have occurred because the students assumed that the same countability applies to a word in English as in their mother tongue.  [Eg.no.4,6,9] 2] Cross-linguistic differences in countability are another source of errors. [Eg.no. 2]

It is clear that learning the English word for something is only the very first hurdle the learner must overcome in the learning process. Even once the different
words or meanings have been grasped and False Friend errors avoided, errors resulting from interference in the areas of spelling, noun countability and number still lurk, waiting to be made, and often are. Learners need to be encouraged to look beyond the definitions in dictionaries to the details of countability, number and grammatical behaviour given in the dictionary labels and example sentences and to learn these along with the meanings. Fortunately, the errors under discussion here are unlikely ever to be a barrier to understanding or a cause of misunderstanding, as False Friends [homonyms in English and they cause problems for learners, and the problem of homonyms between languages – [False Friends.] often are, but they may affect a learner's confidence or reduce their chances of passing an exam.

6.6.0 Syntactic interference: There is no denying fact that the English produced by foreign learners of English often sounds and/or looks undeniably 'foreign' in ways that the English of native speakers, however full of 'mistakes', never does. This is a, perhaps cheap, but certainly common, source of comedy. When portraying non-native speakers, comedians and comic writers do not just rely on the pitfalls of accent for jokes of the 'Shaddap-a-ya-face', ‘this chicken is rubbery’ or ‘peace on you’ variety, but they also mimic the strange, unmistakably foreign constructions produced by different nationalities, creating, for example, an Indian librarian who says ‘Please to be quiet please’. This emphasis on the foreign-soundingness of foreigners’ English did not go out of fashion with TV sitcoms like 'Mind your Language' and 'Alio, Alio', or with classic comic characters like Chico Marx and Inspector Clouseau but is still seen in the comic characters of Harry Enfield, Paul Whitehouse, and Ali G, for example. Foreigners do indeed sound odd or hilarious at times when they speak English (as do the English, of course, when they attempt to speak foreign languages). Most of us will have a favourite example. The authors of articles in airline magazines, stand-up comedians, and after-dinner speakers still get a lot of mileage out of ‘Learner English’.

But as the examples above suggest, if the mother tongue plays such a defining role in the English produced by learners, it is clear that there will be as many varieties of Learner English as there are mother tongues of English learners. It would therefore be more appropriate to talk of French-Learner English, German-Learner English, Japanese-Learner English, Kannada-learner English and so forth. This is where the stereotyping power of foreigners’ English lies. Certainly, there are researchers in ELT or Second Language Acquisition who would boast, Henry Higgins-like, that given a piece of writing by a foreign learner of English, they can identify the mother tongue of the learner who wrote it because it will bear the indelible imprint of that mother tongue.
So what makes a learner’s English sound foreign? What makes a German learner say ‘How much costs the bus?’ or a Kannada learner say ‘I must to do my homeworks’? Learners employ a wide number of strategies when they speak or write English. These include, among others, avoiding constructions and words they are unsure of, overusing those they are confident about, and taking rules of English they have learnt and applying them in areas where they do not actually apply. In addition, the process of interference or transfer as outlined above pervades every area of Learner English – it influences spelling, grammar and vocabulary decisions. When stuck, or without even thinking, a learner will simply translate whole phrases from their mother tongue (as in the examples above) or just take individual words and transform them, where the need is felt, to make them look or sound English to overcome a gap in their vocabulary. This is understandably more common the closer the mother tongue is to English in its orthography and morphology. This resorting to the familiar to make sense of the unfamiliar leads to the creation of that foreign-sounding (in varying degrees) variety of English known as Learner English.

The output from this process of interference is valuable material not just to those looking for easy laughs. It is important for researchers interested in the language-learning process, providing information on what students get right as well as wrong and the facility to compare Learner English with native-speaker English. It is important to teachers for understanding the errors their students make and targeting their lessons to each student’s individual needs, according to their mother tongue or language group. It has also become increasingly important to publishers producing English Language Teaching materials and reference books, including learner dictionaries, since it provides clear evidence of the specific areas of English which would most benefit from further analysis and clarification. All people who come into contact with non-native speakers of English, when traveling or any other time, the awareness of the kinds of mistakes that learners make, why they may have made those mistakes and of what they probably actually meant when they said that foreign-sounding thing will all help towards mutual understanding and may get somebody out of a very tight corner!

The most common errors found among students whom I interviewed are given below:

**Omission of subject:**

This is a very common (and understandable) mistake because, unlike Kannada, a subject is always necessary in English. Students often said: *Is important to do this*, whereas they should say, *It is important to do this*. The word *it* may not refer
to anything in particular, but it is absolutely necessary to make the sentence above grammatically correct.

**Omission of articles:**
Students speakers often deleted articles, *He is teacher; I have not pencil; Does she have bag?* This occurs because they don’t use them in Kannada.

**Pronouns:**
Students usually had trouble distinguishing personal pronouns (he, him), *Did not know who was him* instead of *I did not know who he was*.

**Adjectives:**
Students may know a lot of adjectives, but the main problem is where to place them in the sentence. In Kannada adjectives are generally placed after the noun. *[B.C.A ondu korsu bahala upayogavide.]* but in English it is exactly the opposite *[B.C.A is a very useful course]*

**Double negatives:**
Use of double negatives is another typical error, *I didn't even have no problems.*
In Kannada it is grammatically correct to say: *[nana:ge va:va samasyeyu iralilla.]* [na:nu venu madilla]

**Verbs:**
There is a tendency to use present tense only: *... she come back ; ... the first time I see her.*

There is a tendency to use double past tense---1) *she didn't came yesterday.*

2) *I didn't brought* book yesterday.

3) *I didn't got* paper.

**Word order:**
Students usually used inappropriate word order: *He in class has lunch*, instead of *He has his lunch in the class*; or *Rani is a black beautiful cat*, instead of *Rani is a beautiful black cat.*

**Other/others:**
They often get confused with these two words and they usually say, *I have others*
books, the correct form being *I have other books*. The mistake is also understandable as adjectives can take plural forms in Kannada, unlike English.

**This/These:**
Although *this* is singular, whereas *these* is plural, students often tend to pronounce *this* and *these* the same. Therefore they frequently use only *this* in writing. They don't seem to realize that there is also a plural form. Although the difference may look very obvious, it is still a recurrent problem. Examples: *I think all this problems are related to poverty*, instead of *I think all these problems are related to poverty*.

### 6.6.1 Source of errors

There are admittedly a number of potential pitfalls to watch out for when analysing student-English and the 'errors' it contains. It is difficult, for example, to form a clear idea of what exactly is an error. What sounds 'wrong' or 'foreign' to one researcher may seem quite acceptable to another. Native speakers' intuitions as to what constitutes acceptable English differ greatly. Is it acceptable, for example, to say ‘I had the opportunity of doing something’, or is the correct construction ‘I had the opportunity to do something’? Or are they both right? Few native speakers will be certain when they stop to think. It is also difficult to establish for certain what caused a learner to make a particular error – analysis is usually carried out in the absence of the learner in question and it is not always the case that the analyst is proficient in the learner’s mother tongue. So it is not always easy to establish whether an error is attributable to interference or, for example, simple lack of concentration, classroom misunderstandings, pure accident, or even interference from another, third, language the learner has been in contact with. I think that as long as the analyst is alert to the undeniable subjectivity involved in the error analysis process there is still much to be gained from taking a much closer look at Learner English in all its varieties.

Similarities, or perceived similarities, between languages can exist to varying degrees in the pronunciation and stress patterns of the languages, in grammatical structures of sentences, in word order, tense usage, verb inflections, in their pragmatics and style, and in the way they deal with questions and negatives, to name just a few, as well as in the spelling and morphology of individual words. It is as important to be aware of these similarities when we are learning a language as it is to learn the differences and in some cases these similarities can be capitalized upon to good effect. Where they are not purely coincidental, they are the result of contact between languages, of languages and cultures rubbing up against one another at some point, or many points, in their long evolution.
A glance at the long and complex development of the English language as we know it today and at the many linguistic and cultural incursions made into it over the centuries, coupled with its apparent eagerness to welcome words from other languages into its lexicon, goes some way towards explaining the vast number of traps awaiting the unsuspecting learner of English. And when we consider the variety of different learners with different mother tongues, together with the variety of other forces at work in the language learning process, the task of defining, let alone analysing, Learner English becomes a huge challenge.

Standard English in India is prized and found plentifully in educated circles and higher Indian writing in English. Middle and upper-class Indians, especially those with greater exposure to the West through books, electronic media (such as television or movies) and travel, tend to speak more grammatically-standard English. British English is an official language of central and state governments in India. What is characterized as Indian English is not considered "correct usage" by either government-related institutions (such as offices and schools) or educated Indians who prize 'proper' English. Indian schools still teach grammar from (frequently older) British textbooks like [Wren & Martin] or J. C. Nesfield (1898): the grammar of higher [British English] is considered the only correct one. Efforts by the [Oxford University Press] to publish a dictionary of Indian English were an abject failure since customers in India preferred the 'proper' British dictionary. Spoken and written English in India has not explicitly "forked" away from British English because the labeling of English as a "foreign language" is part of many people's political attitudes: its explicit idealization would devalue efforts to discontinue the widespread use of English in India.

6.6.1.1 Grammar, idiom and usage in Indian English

== Grammar tweaks ==

For the one who is aware of the grammar of Indian tongues like [Bengali language|Bengali], [Hindi language|Hindi], [Malayalam language|Malayalam], and [Tamil language|Tamil], the logic behind quirks of Indian English is quite transparent and readily explicable. However, observation by the perspicacious, in spite of ignorance of [Languages of India|Indian languages], will reveal much that is characterisable in 'rules' and 'tendencies.' [John Lawler] of the [University of Michigan] observes the following anomalies in the [grammar] of Indian English:

* The progressive tense in stative verbs: "I am understanding it." "She is knowing the answer."; an influence of traditional [Hindi] grammar, it is more common in northern states.
* Variations in noun number and determiners: "He performed many charities."
"She loves to pull your legs."

* **Prepositions:** "pay attention on, discuss about, convey him my greetings". Most prepositions of English are direct mental translations of the approximate postpositions of Hindi, but the Hindi-speakers fail to note that there isn't always a one-to-one correspondence.

* **Tag questions:** The use of ""isn't it?"" and ""no?"" as general question tags, as in "You're going, isn't it?" instead of "You're going, aren't you?", and "He's here, no?" ('na' often replaces 'no': another influence of Hindi, this time colloquial, common all across the North, West, and East--the South replaces it with the 'ah' sound, as in "Ready, ah?", an influence of colloquial [[Tamil language|Tamil]] and [[Kannada language|Kannada]].)

* **Word order:** "Who you have come for?" "They're late always." "My all friends are waiting."

* "Yes" and "no" agreeing to the form of a question, not just its content -- A: "You didn't come on the bus?" B: "Yes, I didn't.""

* Use of the indefinite article "a" before words starting with vowels (usually a slip of the tongue).

In addition to Lawler's observations, other unique patterns are also standard and will frequently be encountered in Indian English:

* **The past perfect tense:** used in verbs where international English speakers would use the past simple. "I had gone" for "I went."

* Use of the words "but" or "only" as intensifiers such as in: ""I was just joking but."" or ""It was she only who cooked this rice."" (Influenced by [[Hindi]] syntax)

* Anglicization of Indian words especially in [[Chennai]] by adding "ify" to a local [[Tamil language|Tamil]] word.

* Use of yaar, machaa, abey, arey in an English conversation, mainly by people of native Hindi-speaking origin; 'da' is more frequently used in the South Indian languages.
* Use of the word "ki" ([Hindi]) to mean, loosely, "that", such as in "What I mean is "ki" we should adopt this plan instead." (Seen mainly in the North and West of the country.)

* Idiomatic English for quantification in use of preposition "of", as in ""There is so much of happiness in being honest"."

* Use of the plural "ladies" for a single lady or a woman of respect, as in "There was a "ladies" at the phone."

* Use of "open" and "close" instead of switch/turn on/off, as in "Open the air conditioner" instead of "Turn on the air conditioner."

* Use of "hope" where there is no implication of desire but merely expectation: "We don't want rain today but I hope it will rain."

* Use of "off it" and "on it" instead of "switch it off" and "switch it on."

* Use of "current went" and "current came" for "The power went out" and "The power came back"

* Use of "y'all" for "you all" or "all of you", as used in ([Southern American English]), especially by ([Anglo-Indian])s.

* Swapping around the meanings of "slow" and "soft" as in "I shall speak slower for you" (actually means I will speak softly) or "make the fan softer" (actually means make the fan go slower/ reduce its speed)

* Creation of nonsensical, rhyming double-words to denote generality of idea or act, a 'totality' of the word's denotation, as in "No more ice-cream-fice-cream for you!", "Let's go have some chai-vai (tea, "tea and stuff")." or "There's a lot of this fighting-witing going on in the neighbourhood." (Prevalent mainly in Hindi- and Punjabi-speaking states.)

* Use of ""baazi""/""baaji"" or ""giri"" for the same purpose, as in "business-baazi" or "cheating-giri." (Also prevalent mainly in Hindi-speaking states.)

* Use of word ""wallah"" to denote occupation or 'doing of/involvement in doing' something, as in "The taxi-wallah overcharged me.", "The grocery-wallah sells fresh fruit." or "He's a real music-wallah: his CD collection is huge."
* Use of the word "maane" ([Bengali language|Bengali]) , "Yani" (Urdu) and "matlab" ([Hindi]/[Urdu]) to mean, loosely, "meaning" ("What I mean is..."), as in ""The problem with your idea, "maane", what I feel is missing, is "ki" it does not address the problem of overstaffing." or ""Your explanation, "matlab", your feeble attempt at one, was sorely lacking in cohesiveness."

* Overuse of the words "Generally"/"Actually"/"Obviously"/"Basically" in the beginning of a sentence.e.g "Actually I am not feeling well."

* Use of the word ""since"" instead of ""for"" in conjunction with periods of time, as in ""I have been working since four years"" instead of ""I have been working for four years"" or ""I have been working since four years ago"". This usage is more common among speakers of North Indian languages such as [Hindi] where the words for both ""since"" and ""for"" are the same.

* Use of the word ""gift"" as a verb : You are gifting me a new cell phone?

* Use of other nouns as verbs, such as "Does it pain?" instead of "Does it hurt?"

* Use of ""I can able to cook"" instead of ""I can cook"" - a widespread grammatical error in India.

* **Omission of the definite article**: e.g. "Let's go to city" instead of "Let's go to the city"

* Usage of "out of hundred" instead of percent: "He got hundred out of hundred" instead of "He got a hundred" or "He got a one hundred percent".

* Pronunciation of h and z as "hech" and "ized" respectively

* Use of the Latin word ""cum"", meaning "with", as in "Welcome to the gymnasium "cum" swimming pool building." This was common in the past in British English.

* In South India, phrases such as "that and all", or "this and all" are used roughly to convey the meaning "all of that (stuff)" or "regarding that". e.g: A: "Can I pay you back later? I don't have my wallet." B: "That and all I don't know. I need the money now."

* Use of "the same" instead of "it", as in "I heard that you have written a document on xyz. Could you send me the same?"
==Idioms and Popular Phrases==

* ""Your "good" name please?": "What is your name?", carryover from [[Hindi]] expression.

* "That is besides the point"

* "Hello, What do you want?": used by some when answering a phone call, not perceived as impolite by most Indians

* "Tell me": used when answering the phone, meaning "How can I help you?"

* "What a "nonsense"/"silly" you are!" or "Don't be doing such nonsense anymore.": occasional - idiomatic use of nonsense/silly as nouns (although this is not uncommon in British English).

* "pindrop silence" literally means that such a silence should be maintained that even a pindrop can be heard.

* "back" replacing "ago" when talking about elapsed time, as in "I met him five years back" rather than "I met him five years ago". (Though this too is not uncommon in British English)

* "freak out" is meant to have fun, as in "let's go to the party and freak out".

* "pass out" is meant to graduate, as in "I passed out of the university in 1995".

* "funny" is meant to replace not only "odd"/"strange" but "rude"/"precocious"/"impolite" as well. "That man was acting really funny with me, so I gave him a piece of my mind"

====Titles (of respect; formal)====

* Referring to elders, strangers or anyone meriting respect as "jee"/"ji" (suffix) as in "Please call a taxi for Gupta-ji".

* Use of prefixes "Shree"/"Shri" (Mr.) or "Shreemati"/"Shrimati" (Ms./Mrs.): Shri Ravi Shankar or Shreemati Das Gupta.

* As with Shree/Shreemati, use of suffixes "Saahib/Sâhab" (Mr.) and "Begum" (Mrs.) (Urdu) as in "Welcome to [[India]], Smith-saahib." or "Begum Sahib would like some tea."
* Use of "Mr" and "Mrs" as common nouns. For example, "Jyoti's Mr. stopped by yesterday" or "My Mrs. is not feeling well".

* Use of the English words 'uncle' and 'aunty' when addressing people such as distant relatives, neighbours, acquaintances, even total strangers (like shopkeepers) who are significantly older than oneself. In fact, in Indian culture, children or teenagers addressing their friend's parents as "Mr. Patel" or "Mrs. Patel" (etc.) is considered offensive—a substitution of "Sir/ Ma'am" is also not suitable except for teachers. On the contrary, if a person is "really" one's uncle or aunt, he/she will usually not be addressed as "uncle"/"aunty", but with the name of the relation in the vernacular Indian language, even while conversing in English. For example, if a woman is one's mother's sister, she would not be addressed (by a Hindi speaker) as "aunty" but as "Mausi".

* Use of "Respected Sir" while starting a formal letter instead of "Dear Sir".

--- Interjections and casual references ---

* Casual use of words "yaar" (friend, buddy, dude, man), "bhai" (brother) and "bhaiyya" (elder brother) much as with the [[American English]] 'man' or 'dude', as in "Arey! C'mon, yaar! Don't be such a killjoy!", "Long time no see, bhai." or "Aye, bhaiyya! Over here!" Yaar is the equivalent of mate in Australian and British English. The word "boss" is also sometimes used in this way, among friends but also to male strangers, as in "How much to go to the train station, boss?", or "Good to see you, boss."

* Use of interjections "Arey!" and "acchha!" to express a wide range of emotions, usually positive though occasionally not, as in "Arey! What a good job you did!", "Accha, so that's your plan." or "Arey, what bad luck, yaar!"

* Use of "T-K" in place of O.K. when answering a question, as in "Would you like to come to the movie?" -- "T-K, I'll meet you there later." ("theek hai", literally; actually "meaning" okay)

* Use of "oof!" to show distress or frustration, as in "Oof! The baby's crying again!"

* Along with "oof!", there is also "oh foe!" which is in a more whining voice which kind of means "oh shit". Not many Indians will say this, but it is used widely in Hindi movies or soap operas.
* Use of "Waah" to express admiration, especially in musical settings, as in "Waah! Waah! You play the [[sitar]] so well!"

* Use of "just" and "simply" in a seemingly arbitrary manner in southern India, especially Kerala. e.g. Q:"Why did you do it?" A:"Simply!" or "Just I was telling to [sic] him.

* "Lady's finger" means "Okra" (as in some other English-speaking countries).

* "Hotel" means "restaurant" (as well as specifically "big hotel") in India: "I ate in the hotel". "Lodge" is used to refer to small hotels. Some times Lodge refers to Place where you stay (in rooms) and Hotel refers to a place where you eat.

* "stepney" or "stepaney" refers to a car's spare tyre.

* "specs" means spectacles (as in colloquial UK English).

* "cent percent" means "100 percent" as in "He got cent percent in maths."

* "centum" is also frequently used to refer to 100.

* Overuse of the word "Please" as an interjection, often overstressing the vowel. This could stem from the lack of a separate word for "please" in Hindi (please is implied within the verb conjugation). This could cause speakers to "overcompensate" for this word.

* Use of the verb "sit" in place of "live., e.g. "Where are you sitting?" for "Where do you live?"

<-- Moved from "see also". Classify as required. -->

* "High-End" : (Supposedly) of very high quality (used sarcastically for work and people)

* "n" - Many (He takes n troubles to stay neat)

—— Anomalous Usage ——

* The verb "repair" in southern India is used as a noun for a broken object as in, "The TV became repair." The same word is used for saying when the broken object is fixed: "The TV is repaired and now it is working properly."
* The word "stay" used for "live" or reside at": "Where are you staying?" meaning not "Where are you temporarily lodging" but "Where is your residence?" (though this is normal in [[Standard Scottish English]])

* The word "damn" used as an intensifier, especially a negative one, far more frequently and with far more emphatic effect, than in international English

* The word "healthy" to refer to fat people, in North India in general and in Bihar in particular as in "His build is on the healthy side" to refer to a positively overweight person.

* The expression "my dear", used as an adjective to refer a likeable person. as in "He is a my dear person." Very common in Bihar.

* The word "dear" used as a term address of pleasant (male) companionability equivalent to "mate" in Australian English and presumably used as "yaar" would be in Hindi/Urdu.

* The word "dress" is used to refer to clothes for men, women, and children alike: "She bought a new dress for her son."

* The word "cloth" usually refers only to any clothes or fabrics that are not wearable, like "waste cloth": "Use that cloth for cleaning."

* "Cloth" and "clothe" are used interchangeably. 'Clothe' is sometimes regarded as the singular form of 'clothes'.

* "Shirtings and suitings" used for the process of making such garments

* "'saloon'" instead of salon, as in "'I will visit the hair saloon'".

* "Bath" and "bathe" are also used interchangeably. "Bath" is used as a verb sometimes, as in "He 'bath'd' in the morning."

* Greetings like "Happy Birthday" are used even to say that "Today is my happy birthday"

* Intensifying adjectives by doubling them. This is an influence of the Hindi language. For example: "She has curly curly hair"; "You are showing your hairy hairy legs"; "We went to different different places in the city in search of a good hotel; "You will get used to the humidity slowly-slowly"
* Use of "color" to imply "colorful"; oftentimes doubled in usage as in the previous item. "Those are color-color flowers".

Words unique to or originating in Indian English

Words unique to (i.e. not generally well-known outside [[South Asia]]) and/or popular in India include those in the following by no means exhaustive list:

* "batchmate" or "batch-mate" (Not classmate, but of a schoolmate of the same grade)

* "cousin-brother" (male first cousin) & "cousin-sister" (female first cousin); used conversely is "one's own brother/sister" (of one's parent, as opposed to uncle or aunt; English brother/sister): most Indians live in extended families and many do not differentiate even nominally between cousins and direct siblings.

* "[[crore]]" (ten million) and "[[lakh]]" (one hundred thousand)

* "Dicky/dickey" the boot of a car

* "[[eve teasing]]" (catcalling - harassment of women)

* "[[Wiktionary:funda|funda]]" short for fundamental

* "foot overbridge" (bridge meant for pedestrians)

* "godown" (warehouse)

* "godman" somewhat pejorative word for a person who claims to be divine or who claims to have supernatural powers

* "Himalayan blunder" (grave mistake)

* "nose-screw" (woman's nose ornament)

* "opticals" (eyeglasses)

* "pomfret" (a popular turbot-like fish, derived from its local name, "paplet")

* "prepone" (the opposite of 'postpone')

* "[[scheduled caste]]" (a socially/economically marginalised [[Hindu]] [[caste]], given special privileges by the government)
"[[scheduled tribe]]" (a socially/economically marginalised Indian [[tribe]], given special privileges by the government)

"upgradation" (commonly used in business communication instead of 'upgrade')

"would-be" (fiancé/fiancée)

"arbit" (short for arbitrary. Can be used to mean "vague", "random" or "bad". e.g.: "What an arbit ending that movie had!" Used primarily by college students in Delhi and Mumbai. It is pronounced either as "arbitt" or "arbid", usually with equal stress on both syllables)

"hardcore" ("intense" - can either be positive or negative in connotation. e.g: "Amit was a hardcore rock music fan." or "He's a hardcore computer geek." Also used on college campuses.)

**6.6.1.2 Error identification:**

**Interference of mother tongue at syntactic level:** Here below are given errors occurred due to mother tongue influence at syntactic level. The students were asked to write five sentences. They were also required to answer five questions orally. The following errors were identified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.no.</th>
<th>Correct form of sentences.</th>
<th>Samples from students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>S-----V--------OBJ---adverb of time.</td>
<td>S-----V-----adverb of time---obj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am watching T.V. sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>S------V-----OBJ.</td>
<td>S-----OBJ----V----OBJ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English in the school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>S----V--------OBJ---adverb of place---adverb of time.</td>
<td>Adverb of place—adverb of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I found the new book in the library yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I will send a gift to my friend</td>
<td>I will send one gift for my friend [Literal translation of Kannada phrase]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table : 67
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kannada (Literal Translation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>We should look in front while walking</td>
<td>We should see in front and walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>S-------------V-------------OBJ-------------adverb of time—V---OBJ</td>
<td>All my friends come to play cricket sometimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My all friends sometimes came cricket to play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>We should lend our pen or pencil to our classmates.</td>
<td>We must give some pen or pencil to our classmates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Literal translation of Kannada phrase]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I will come tomorrow.</td>
<td>I will tomorrow come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Literal translation of Kannada]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>My brother and I are in the house.</td>
<td>I and my brother in the house is there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Literal translation of Kannada]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>S---V---OBJ [adverb of time]</td>
<td>Adverb of place—S---OBJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I was on leave yesterday.</td>
<td>Yesterday I was in leave.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.6.1.3 Error explanation:

The students had translated whole phrases from their mother tongue (as in the examples above) or just taken individual words and transformed them, where the need was felt, to make them look or sound English to overcome a gap in their vocabulary. 89% of the high school and 94% of the primary students had followed this strategy in their speech and writing.

### 6.6.1.4 Results:

The total number of students involved in the study were 80. Out of which 45 students are from high school and 35 students are from higher primary. The performance of high school students are compared and contrasted on the basis of the variables chosen such as sex, economic position parental education. The table below shows the overall performance of students with regard to interference of mother tongue in English.
Table: Performance of students in %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>Error types</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Answered correctly</th>
<th>LI</th>
<th>MI</th>
<th>HI</th>
<th>UED</th>
<th>EDU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Phonological Interference</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Morphological Interference</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Syntactic interference</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>76.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M - Male, F - Female, LIG - Low Income Group, MIG - Middle Income Group, HIG - High Income Group, UED - Uneducated, ED - Educated.

The data analysed shows that out of the 45 students of high school 78% of students had phonological interference, 67% had morphological interference 89% had syntactic interference in their speech and writing. Rest 22%, 33%, and 11% of the students had performed fairly good. It was found that these students were coming from educated as well as economically well placed background. As compared to female students the male students had more errors than female. The performance of female students was better than the performance of male students. This might be attributed to the fact that female students experiencing less diversification of time than male students. The students coming from low income, middle income and uneducated group had committed more errors than the others.

Physical and mental expectations vary considerably according to the socio-economic hardships experienced in some families. Educated parents are in a position to offer superior support, and motivation, than that which can be offered by uneducated parents.

6.6.1.5. Conclusion: Mother Tongue Interference is just another problem faced by Kannada medium students in learning English. Suggestions are made and a few tips are given. If the students are monolingual then it is easier to make a contrastive analysis, we have to diagnose the problems and find solutions. The first step is to identify the error. One has to be cautious not to assume that all
errors stem from mother tongue interference. We have to try to identify the most common ones and give these priority. The errors can be classified by type: pronunciation, structural, lexical. For pronunciation we have to look at individual sounds (phonemes): errors might be happening because a specific sound in English does not occur in the mother tongue. In this case the students need to be helped first to actually hear the sound, then they need to be shown how the sound is produced. Mirror can also be made use of to demonstrate ‘this’ and ‘then’. One can give lots of practice in using it. Stress patterns at word and sentence level could be another phonological challenge. The intonation patterns should be examined too. Students will find it easier to produce correct pronunciation of sounds if they know the phonemic alphabet as, unfortunately, English spelling often hinders pronunciation— the classic example is the many different pronunciations possible for “-ough”: cough, although, through, bough, rough, etc. Structural errors occur most often because the student tries to impose the mother tongue patterns on to the target language: this might be word order, use of tenses, difficulty with articles and many more. Once again one needs first to identify the most common problems and then one can highlight the ways in which English differs. With vocabulary we might find a problem with “false friends” or it might be that the mother tongue uses certain expressions that the students translate literally but the expression does not exists in English. An example that comes to mind is a student who used the more colorful expression “blood-guilty” for the English “murderer”. Some words in English such make/do, say/tell cause confusion because their literal translation into Kannada language suggests different uses. There is always no quick fix rule here. It would be helpful if we could give each student a personal analysis so that each one can work on their specific difficulties. It would be helpful also to produce worksheets for common problems.