ENGLISH

The Pronunciation of English by Somali L1 students in Sweden

Testing indications of phonetic transfer through Error Analysis and Contrastive Analysis

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Aim(s): The main aim of the study is to investigate phonemic errors in relation to transfer seen from a didactic point of view.

Method(s): This study was based on a mixed method, being both quantitative and qualitative. Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis was used to predict and identify errors. Contrastive Analysis was mainly used to create a pronunciation test on typical Swedish and Somali difficulties. The extent and the occurrence of transfer are investigated in relation to interview findings and the students' background.

Material(s): The material consists of 10 Somali L1 students' results on a pronunciation test and their answers to some interview questions. Four of the students were born in Sweden and six of them were born abroad.

Main results: The results show that the average Somali L1 student born outside of Sweden made approximately three times as many errors as the average Somali L1 student born in Sweden. The errors made by all students are shown to be related to both Somali, Swedish and the Somali-Swedish interlanguage. The results also show that the Somali L1 students born outside of Sweden were the only ones who made errors that could not be linked to typical difficulties, so called non-typical errors.

Pedagogical implications: The syllabi in English and the curricula for both the compulsory and the upper secondary school, mention the importance of adapting teaching to the student's needs and circumstances. This suggests that the students' mother tongue or native language being important factors to take into consideration when organizing and planning for a class. It is also mentioned that teachers should help the students to become aware of how languages are learned. Therefore, knowledge about transfer could be useful for both teachers and students.

The errors made by students raise the questions of why the errors occur. It is therefore important for teachers to observe and evaluate the errors.

Keywords: Transfer, mother tongue, interlanguage, Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, pronunciation & phonetics, a didactic perspective on errors, the curricula & the syllabi, second language learning

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1. Introduction

In a globalized world, such as ours, people move and travel like never before. In this context, language skills are an essential part of people's everyday life. Basic skills are needed in order to communicate, which is why language is taught and learned in schools. For instance, in Sweden, English and Swedish are taught to and learned by all students. However, in Sweden, a large group of students have another mother tongue than Swedish. The curriculum says that "[t]eaching should be adapted to each pupil's circumstances and needs. It should promote the pupils' further learning and acquisition of knowledge based on pupils' backgrounds, earlier experience, language and knowledge" (Skolverket 2011a: 10). It is therefore important for teachers to take into consideration the effect of a mother tongue when teaching English as a second and/or third language.

An example of a study on the topic is the study "'Swedish' vs. 'Non-Swedish'. Immigrant Background and Cross-linguistic Influence in the Learning of English as a Foreign Language" (Ohlander 2009). One of the aims was to investigate the indications of transfer or influence from a mother tongue or second language. Writing, listening and reading were tested, however, not speaking. The results from 1,431 9th graders from Sweden made up the material of the study. The results indicated that the non-Swedish students, born abroad or having another mother tongue than Swedish, had lower results on the test than the Swedish students, born in Sweden having Swedish as their mother tongue. It also indicated that there were differences within the non-Swedish group. The non-Swedish students born in Sweden had higher results on the test than the non-Swedish students born abroad. The seven most frequent mother tongues, except for Swedish, were Arabic, Spanish, Somali, Farsi/Dari, Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian.

Knowledge about transfer is essential when indications of transfer are being tested. A relevant article on this is "Transfer/cross-linguistic influence" (Benson 2002) which gives a brief presentation of the concept of transfer and the implications in teaching. For instance, two sets of languages which are dissimilar could result in errors. This is called negative transfer or interference. However, two languages which are similar could result in boosting of the learning. This is called positive transfer. The occurrence and the extent of both positive and negative transfer are linked to factors such as the learning setting, type of material being analyzed, the proficiency level of the students and their attitudes. Transfer either occurs consciously or unconsciously, consciously, due to lack of knowledge or unconsciously, as a result of knowledge not being automated. These are probable to be caused by transfer of the interlanguage, which is a mixture of a person's first and second language (Benson 2002: 68-69).

A method used to investigate negative transfer is Error Analysis. It is used to collect samples and then identify, describe, explain and evaluate errors. However, to create a test one needs to know the differences between languages concerning grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. For

pronunciation, for example, the English sounds /dʒ/ in *jeans,* /tʃ/ in *cheese* and /z/ in *zero* are not found in Swedish (Mobärg 2001: 10-13). A method used to find these differences is called Contrastive Analysis, which compares a set of two languages. For instance, English has been compared with Russian (Light & Warshawsky 1974), Somali (Kahin 1997), French (Guilford 1998), and Chinese (Goh, Mohamed & Wan-Rose 2004). One of the aims of such studies is to supply teachers with knowledge and awareness about the differences, since they could have an impact in teaching.

1.1. Aim and scope

The main aim of the present study is to investigate phonemic errors related to transfer seen from a didactic point of view. The participants in this study are ten students having Somali as their first language. This group was chosen because of the indications shown in Ohlander's study (2009) and that Somali is one of the ten most common first languages in Sweden (Statistics Sweden [SCB], 2009).

The material used in this study consists of a pronunciation test and interview questions. The focus on pronunciation in relation to transfer is chosen due to the lack of previous research on the topic (Ohlander 2009: 13). The pronunciation test is divided into two areas: typical difficulties for Swedish learners and typical difficulties for Somali learners. The pronunciation test will then be analyzed using Error Analysis. The analysis could then be used to help teachers to investigate what learners have learned and thereby function as a pedagogical device (Barkhuizen & Ellis 2005: 51). The results will then be categorized into the three areas: vowels, consonants and word stress. The interview questions, however, are being used to investigate the indications of transfer. With this in mind, the research questions for this study are:

- Are the results different between the Somali students born in or outside of Sweden?
- What are the respective indications of transfer from Somali, Swedish, and the Somali/Swedish interlanguage?
- How and why should knowledge about transfer be integrated in teaching?

Important concepts related to this paper will now be explained, viz. L1, L2 and EFL; transfer, cross-linguistic influence and second language acquisition; target language and interlanguage; phonology and phonetics; Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis.

The term L1 is synonymous with a person's mother tongue, first language and native language. The definitions of these terms are as follows "[...] [t]he language first acquired by a child [...]" (Crystal 1995: 108). However, a person's second language is called the L2 and it is not "[...] a

person's mother tongue […] [however, it has some kind of status and] is used in order to meet a communicative need" (Crystal 1995: 108). English as a foreign language, EFL is "English seen in the context of countries where it is not the mother tongue and has no special status, such as Japan, France, Egypt, and Brazil" (Crystal 1995:108).

Cross-linguistic influence, CLI is synonymous with the term transfer. The influence from the L1 in the learning of an L2 is called transfer (Hedge 2000: 147-148). Transfer could be both positive and a negative in the learning of a foreign language. Second language acquisition, SLA is the process of internalizing rules and vocabulary from an L2 (Hedge 2000: 407).

A target language is the subject in a second language classroom e.g. English, German, French, Spanish. An interlanguage is a language produced by a learner that has elements of a person's L1 and L2. The interlanguage is frequently revised by the learner as his/her skills are developed (Hedge 2000: 410).

Dalton & Seidlhofer (1994: 128-129) give a distinction between phonology and phonetics:

> Generally speaking, teachers need an understanding of both how sounds are articulated (phonetics), and what the significant sounds are in the relevant languages (phonology). […] [what to teach] depend[s] on the language background of your students, and hence the differences between their first language and the target language.

Contrastive Analysis, CA is a method used to create a survey of differences between an L1 and an L2, in terms of similarities and dissimilarities. These linguistic differences could then either have a positive or negative effect on the learning of an L2. Another method is Error Analysis, EA, which uses the comparison between a learner's interlanguage and its target language. CA and EA could be used simultaneously to explain the occurrence of errors (Hedge 2000: 170).

1.2. Overview of the study

This study is organized as follows. The second chapter consists of a theoretical background on the topic of teaching and researching the second language classroom. The third chapter illustrates a previous study on transfer as well as two examples of Contrastive Analysis such as between English and Swedish, and English and Somali. The fourth chapter is about the material and methods used in this study. The fifth chapter consists of the results from the pronunciation test and the interview questions. The sixth chapter consists of a summary and a discussion of the results in relation to both the theoretical background and previous research.

2. Teaching and researching in the second language classroom

This section consists an account of transfer; Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis; a didactic perspective on errors; phonology and phonetics; teaching pronunciation; the curricula and the syllabi for English. First, the occurrence of transfer will be discussed. This is followed by a presentation of two methods which can be used to create tests and to analyze the errors. Furthermore, the errors will be seen in relation to teaching followed by a presentation on basic English phonology and phonetics. Finally, the teaching of pronunciation in relation to the didactic and national frameworks will be presented.

2.1. Transfer

Previous language skills are to some degree transferred when learning a new language. This is called transfer and is highly relevant in the study of second language acquisition, SLA. Transfer occurs at the following levels of language: phonology, syntax, lexis, pragmatics, and morphology. However, Benson (2002), in her article "Cross-linguistic influence/transfer", gives an account of the concept in greater detail. She presents the historical perspective, when it occurs, current thinking on the topic and implications for teaching. These aspects will now be presented.

The view of errors made by second language learners, L2 learners has altered over time. In the 1950s, transfer was the dominating explanation of why errors occur. Transfer could result in either positive or negative transfer which implied that a learner's L1 has an influence in the learning of a foreign language. It could be noticed that negative transfer is mostly referred to as interference. Moreover, the errors that occurred were thought to be linked to the dissimilarities between the L1 and the L2, an assumption based on Behaviorism. However, this came to change in the 1970s when transfer was displaced by the view on that an L2 is taught and learned as an L1. Therefore, the errors came to be explained in reference to the learners' development and not as much in terms of transfer (Odlin 1989: 6-24).

A few important factors related to the occurrence and extent of transfer will now be presented. The first factor is linked to the learning setting. For instance, transfer is more likely to occur in a classroom setting as a result of the scarcity of practice outside the classroom. Secondly, the proficiency level of the learner has an impact considering that errors tend to decline with a higher skill level. Thirdly, the style refers to the material being analyzed. For instance, greater difficulties may arise when the material is not suitable to analyze, such as informal speech. Finally, the learner type or profile is related to students' attitude towards the target language. This could either have a positive or a negative impact on the learning process (Benson 2002: 69).

Benson explains that transfer either occurs consciously or unconsciously, i.e. consciously, due to inadequacy of knowledge or unconsciously, as the knowledge learned has not yet been made

automatic. This is caused to the following reasons: First, there is the influence of the interlanguage which is a mixture of a person's L1 and L2. Another reason is that learning is seen as a cumulative process, i.e. that knowledge is stacked over time, which implies that previous knowledge has an impact on learning a new language. The third reason is related to affective factors such as prestige (Benson 2002: 69).

The current thinking on SLA is focusing on both positive and negative transfer as well as additional explanations. The first explanation concerns positive transfer which occurs when there are corresponding elements in the target language and the language one already knows. Thereby, transfer could result in an improvement of learning instead of causing errors. Another reason is that the learner avoids specific structures, which is caused by the lack of corresponding structures in the L1 and the L2. The third explanation concerns the students' different development rates, which are caused by corresponding or non-corresponding structures in the L2. The fourth is that the scarcity of elements in the L1 could lead to more focus being placed on dissimilar structures or forms in the target language which is similar to avoidance. However, this indirectly results in avoidance but directly boosts the learning of another form or structure. The fifth explanation is the overproduction of particular grammatical or lexical elements. An example could be the overuse of formal words which are commonly used in Romance languages (Benson 2002: 69).

The teaching implications related to transfer are as follows. The teaching of similarities between the L1 and L2 could be positive resulting in an improvement of learning. Furthermore, the teaching of the differences could help the students in raising their awareness. Translation texts and sentences could be used to practice identifying errors related to transfer (Benson 2002: 70).

2.2. Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis

Contrastive Analysis, CA and Error Analysis, EA are two useful methods when researching errors in the second language classroom. The aim of these methods is to supply linguists, teachers, and teacher trainees with information about errors found in written and spoken material. However, there is a difference between the two methods. CA compares the "[...] learner's native language and the target language [...]" to predict and explain errors. EA, on the other hand, compares "[...] the learner's interlanguage and the target language [...]" to identify errors (Hedge 2000: 170). These two methods will now be explained and exemplified.

Contrastive Analysis, CA is a method used to systematically present differences between a pair of languages such as between an L1 and an L2. These differences are seen in terms of similarities and dissimilarities (Hedge 2000: 408). These linguistic differences could then either have a positive or negative effect in the learning of an L2. The paper "Contrastive analysis and native language identification" (Dras & Wong 2009) gives examples of studies where CA has been

used to compare English with Russian (Light & Warshawsky 1974), Somali (Kahin 1997), French (Guilford 1998), and Chinese (Goh, Mohamed & Wan-Rose 2004). The aim of these studies was to supply teachers with resources in predicting errors and to help students in their learning of English. However, CA has changed its focus from predicting errors into explaining why the errors occur. An example of this is Kahin's (1997) study *Educating Somali Children in Britain* which has its focus on grammatical and phonetic differences between English and Somali seen from a didactic point of view. Since Kahin (1997: 50) argues that "[...] knowledge of the basic difference in grammar and phonetics can help teachers when they work in withdrawal sessions or individual tuition involving Somali children". This study will be further discussed in the next chapter.

The five steps of how to use EA are explained in the book *Second Language Acquisition* (Ellis 1997). The first step is to collect a sample. Secondly, the errors are identified. The errors could be detected by using CA. Thirdly, the errors are described, followed by the forth step which is to explain the errors. Finally, an evaluation of the errors is conducted (Ellis 1997: 15ff).

2.3. A didactic perspective on errors

Errors in language production will now be presented from a didactic point of view. First, three arguments of why errors are important in teaching will be presented followed by a distinction between the two concepts of errors and mistakes.

The book *Second Language Acquisition* (Ellis 1997) presents three reasons why it is necessary to focus on errors in the context of L2 learning. The first is that errors made by a learner raise the question of why errors occur. Secondly, errors observed by teachers could be helpful in teaching. Lastly, the awareness of errors could help the learners in self-correcting their own errors Furthermore, Barkhuizen & Ellis (2005: 51) state that by focusing on the learner errors the teacher could become aware of what the learners are struggling with and thereby they function as a pedagogical device. In the context of this, errors and mistakes have to be distinguished. Mistakes are caused by random factors which implies they are not caused by lack of knowledge. Errors, however, are caused by lack of knowledge (Ellis 1997: 15-17).

2.4. Phonology and phonetics

The difference between phonology and phonetics is that "[...] [phonology is] the study of the use of distinctive speech sounds (phonemes) in particular languages" and phonetics concern "[...] the study of human speech sounds; describes the wide range of sounds humans can produce" (Dalton & Seidlhofer 1994: 177). These fields consist of elements such as stress and pronunciation of individual sounds. These will now be presented, followed by a presentation of the two major standard accents of English, which are RP and GA.

Phonetics concerns the sounds of a language, which are classified and categorized into vowels and consonants. Furthermore, each specific sound is represented by a particular phonetic symbol, a phoneme. Phonemes are according to Mobärg (2001: 3-4) "[...] the smallest unit[s] of spoken language capable of distinguishing one meaning from another. In *set* and *sat*, for instance, we see that by going from /e/ to /æ/, we acquire a new meaning".

The difference between vowels and consonants is that the air is not obstructed when articulating vowels, but obstructed when articulating consonants. The articulation of vowels could be described using a vowel chart, which illustrates the position of the tongue seen from the side of the mouth. In relation to this, there are three important factors or vowel parameters, which are "[the] *lip position* (unrounded-rounded) [, the] *vertical tongue position* (high-low, or closed-open) [, and the] *horizontal tongue position* (front-back)" (Dalton & Seidlhofer 1994: 15). However, the articulation of consonants differs from the articulation of vowels. There are three important aspect which are the place, manner, and force of articulation. The first two concern where and how the airstream is obstructed, and the latter part refers to the energy produced by the sound in terms how much (Dalton & Seidlhofer 1994: 14-15).

There are two major standard accents of English: Received Pronunciation, RP and General American, GA. Both RP and GA have 24 consonants. RP has 20 vowels and GA has 17 vowels. However, the constants are identical (Mobärg 2001: 1-8).

2.5. Teaching pronunciation

The textbook *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom* (Hedge 2000) has been selected to account for common trends in teaching pronunciation. It has a wide focus on learning and teaching of language. This book will now briefly be presented.

The book partly deals with the questions of how and why to study speaking and pronunciation. For instance, there are examples on how to use the organs to produce sounds. This could be done through raising their consciousness by listening to a variety of words having the students point out the differences and their results could then be discussed in groups (Hedge 2000: 285-286). They could also be given resources to practice pronunciation at home called self-access mode e.g. stress, intonation, consonant and vowel sounds (Hedge 2000: 97). Moreover, there are a few reasons why learners should practice speaking in the classroom. One is to boost the competence in speaking which is useful in exchanging information and knowledge in various situations. Another is to have a good flow in speaking, which refers to pronunciation and intonation (Hedge 2000: 261). One way of practicing this is by listening to samples of pronunciation varieties and to use pronunciation dictionaries as a helpful resource. Thereby, the teacher has to make a decision concerning which accent of English should be taught. Teachers also have to decide if they are going

to have an atomistic or a holistic approach to teaching. The first approach has its focus on the parts of language e.g. grammar, phonology and the holistic approach has its focus on all the features of a language. The needs of students are discussed in Hedge (2000: 270):

> [s]tudent's needs will vary along a number of dimensions, and these will affect the teacher's selection of content in the pronunciation element of a course. A very wide range of features could receive attention: for example, sentence stress and rhythm; linking or concatenation in connected speech (which includes assimilation and elision); vowel sounds; consonants and consonant clusters; and intonation.

What to focus on depends on the group as well as the individual. In a monolingual group, it is preferred to use CA based material to predict and explain difficulties. However, in a non-homogenous group of students, it is preferred to use similar steps of EA starting with collecting student samples. This however, is time consuming, and requires equipment and knowledge. Another factor to consider is the level of the students. Low-level students first need a brief overview of the English language and much practice in speech. The planning and preparation for teaching high-level students are complex. Problems related to interference, lack of input and authentic material and the motivation of the student (Hedge 2000: 270).

2.6. The curricula and the syllabi

This section consists of two main divisions: compulsory school and upper secondary school. Each of these divisions has its own curriculum and a syllabus for each respective subject. These form the basis for the Swedish school system and they answer the questions concerning what, how and why particular elements are important and thereby should be taught. These two sections will briefly be discussed concerning areas of pronunciation, student needs and characteristics of good working forms. The compulsory school, its curricula and its syllabus for the English level 1-4 will first be presented. This is followed by a presentation of the curricula for the upper secondary school and its syllabus for English levels 5-7.

2.6.1. Compulsory school

The syllabus mentions that the student's communicative skills should be developed. The students should be able to express their thoughts and feelings in spoken language, and adapt register and style depending on the situation. In this context, pronunciation and intonation are two of the elements which function to "[...] clarify and enrich communication" (Skolverket 2011a: 34).

The awareness of student' needs, their background, experiences are mentioned in the syllabus and should be taken into consideration in teaching. An important background factor is the previous language/languages that the students master, which suggests that the students' mother tongue or native language are recognized as important factors to take into consideration when organizing and planning for a class. It is also mentioned that the school should be observant on

students having difficulties in reaching the goals (Skolverket 2011a: 10).

Characteristics of good contents and working methods in relation to spoken production are that these should support the students in developing their skills. The characteristics of good contents and working methods could be summarized in saying that the students should develop their skills in relation to their own "[...] experiences, living conditions and interests" (Skolverket 2011a :32).

2.6.2. Upper secondary school

Awareness is also mentioned in the curriculum for the Upper Secondary School such as that "[t]eaching should also help students develop language awareness and knowledge of how a language is learned through and outside teaching contexts" (Skolverket 2011c: 1). In addition, it is also stated (Skolverket 2011c: 9) that

> [the] [t]eacher should: [...] in the education create a balance between theoretical and practical knowledge that supports the learning of students, make clear the scientific foundations, assessments and perspectives that knowledge is based on, and guide students so that they can determine how knowledge can be used […].

It is said about student needs and their background that "[a]ccount should be taken of the varying circumstances, needs and the students' level of knowledge" (Skolverket 2011c: 5). The overall perspective states says (Skolverket 2011c: 7) that

> [b]oth the daily pedagogical leadership of the school, as well as the professional responsibility of teachers are necessary preconditions for the qualitative development of the school. School activities must be developed so that they correspond to the national goals. This requires ongoing review, follow-up and evaluation of results, as well as testing, developing and evaluating different methods.

Characteristics of good contents and working forms are that the planning of teaching should be based on "[...] relevant pedagogical and other research, […] [to] receive support in their language and communicative development" (Skolverket 2011c: 9). Teaching should help the students to achieve "correctness" in their written and spoken production (Skolverket 2011b: 1).

3. Previous research

This chapter consists of three main sections: Transfer and immigrant background; typical Swedish learner difficulties; typical Somali learner difficulties. The first section consists of a study on transfer, which shows indications of differences in results between students born in or outside of Sweden. This is an example of a study in which Error Analysis is used to analyze the errors. The two remaining subsections consist of typical Swedish and Somali learner difficulties both of which are based on Contrastive Analysis.

3.1. Transfer and immigrant background

The study "'Swedish' vs. 'Non-Swedish'. Immigrant Background and Cross-linguistic Influence in the Learning of English as a Foreign Language" (Ohlander 2009) will now be presented. The study is using the results from the survey "The Assessment of Pupils' Skills in English in Eight European Countries 2002" (European Network 2004) as its material. The focus in Ohlander's study is on the results of 1,431 Swedish students from the ninth grade. The assessments or tests have their focus on three of the four skills, which are listening, reading, and writing. The fourth skill, speaking, is usually excluded in research on transfer due to the lack of funds and appropriate methods (Ohlander 2009: 13).

The vast majority of the students performed well on the test. However, a minority of the group, approximately 10%, performed poorly on the test. A large number of these are identified as either being born abroad or not having Swedish as their mother tongue. A group of 142 students are referred to as the non-Swedish group, represented by 35 different languages and 50 different countries of birth. These students were categorized into seven groups excluding all the languages or countries of birth consisting of fewer than seven individuals. However, these groups of immigrants are not homogenous groups in terms of "[...] country of birth, language mainly used at home (henceforth "home language"), structural distance between English and home language […] [and] age of coming to Sweden for those not born in the country" (Ohlander 2009: 14).

The results of the non-Swedish group and the Swedish group are compared as well as the seven subgroups within the non-Swedish group. The aim is to "[...] see to what extent it is possible to determine the role played by cross-lingusitic influence [or transfer] [...])" as well as to investigate the "[...] typological ("contrastive") distance, with regard to a grammatical subsystem, between students' home languages and English, i.e. the likelihood of transfer, positive or negative, from different first languages (L1), but also from Swedish as a second language (L2) [...]" (Ohlander 2009: 15). Ohlander (2009: 27) says that " […] transfer is not always easy to prove – or indeed to falsify – in individual cases". However, he does say that "[...] such influence exist [...]" (Ohlander 2009: 27). Furthermore, he states that the number of participants as well as the test format are

critical factors to be considered when researching transfer.

3.2. Typical Swedish learner difficulties

Table 1: Pair of phonemes on the left, followed by examples.

Typical Swedish difficulties	
Vowels	**Examples**
/e/ - /æ/	set - sat, bed - bad
RP: /uː/ - /əʊ/ GA: /uː/ - /oʊ/	blue - blow, shoe - show
Consonants	**Examples**
/j/ - /dʒ/	yet - jet, use - juice
/ʃ/ - /tʃ/	she's - cheese, sheep - cheap
/v/ - /w/	vet - wet, vine - wine
/s/ - /z/	sue - zoo, ice - eyes
/ʃ/ - /ʒ/	dilution - delusion
/d/ - /ð/	dough - though, den - then
Stress	**Examples**
first-syllable	captain, system, balance
third syllable from the end	elephant, democracy, barometer
shift	athlete, athletic

There are many accounts of typical Swedish learner difficulties such as Johansson & Rönnerdal (2005) "English Pronunciation: a workbook: British version". Another account of this is found in the compendium "Basic English Phonetics for Short Courses" (Mobärg 2001) used at the language department in Gothenburg. The major differences between Swedish and English are explained concerning areas such as vowels, consonants, and word stress. Some examples of this are seen in Table 1. The compendium also gives an account of the two major accents of English as well as typical phonemic difficulties for Swedish learners of English. Some of the difficulties in pronunciation and word stress are presented in Table 1.

3.3. Typical Somali learner difficulties

Table 2: Pair of phonemes on the left, followed by examples.

Typical Somali difficulties	
Vowels	**Examples**
/i/ - /e/	bit - bet, sit - set
/æ/ - /aː/	bat - bar, cat - star
'oo'	foot, door, blood, mood
Consonants	**Examples**
/b/ - /p/	bay - pay, b - p
/f/ - /v/	fan - van, off - of
/ʃ/ - /ʒ/	shoe - vision, wash - measure
/s/ - /z/	price - prize, bus - buzz
/dʒ/	jeans, jury, job, Jacob
/θ/	thought, theme, thursday, think
/ð/	this, that, this, those
/k/	quick, quiz
Word stress	**Examples**
consonant cluster	film, speed
first-syllable	pupil, pupils, a somali, somalis

The study named *Educating Somali children in Britain* (Kahin 1997) points out the main differences between Somali and English. These differences will be explained briefly followed by some illustrations.

Contrastive Analysis was used "[...] as one means to contribute towards an overall and successful teaching of English to Somali children. Certain errors made by Somali learners of English can be traced to L1 influence, while others are attributable to over-generalisation, simplification or communication-based errors" (Kahin

1997: 50). The study is seen from the perspective of Somali children who have immigrated to Britain. Mainly, four aspects are covered which are pronunciation, grammar, spelling and style/register. In Somali, the spelling and pronunciation of words are similar. This might cause difficulties as English is seemingly irregular or "chaotic" (Kahin 1997: 52).

The most common sound system of Somali consists of 21 consonants, 10 vowels and 5 diphthongs. The consonants differ between English and Somali. English and Somali have the following consonants in common /b/, /d/, /f/, /g/, /k/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /r/, /s/, /o/, /j/ and /w/. However, /p/, /t/, /k/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /z/, /ʒ/ and /dʒ/ do not exist in Somali. Furthermore, the are some consonants in Somali which are not used in English: /ɖ/, /ɢ/, /ʔ/, /χ/, /ħ/ and /ʕ/ (Kahin 1997: 45-62). The differences are in terms of realisation and articulation. It is mentioned in the study that these differences sometimes can cause "phonological interference" (Kahin 1997: 49).

3.4. A comparison of the consonant sounds in English, Swedish & Somali

Table 3: A comparison of the phonetic inventories in English, Swedish and Somali

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p　b			t　d		ɖ		k　g	ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m			n				ŋ			
Trill				r							
Tap or Flap											
Fricative		f　v	θ　ð	s　z	ʃ　ʒ			χ		ħ　ʕ	h
Affricate					tʃ　dʒ						
Lateral fricative											
Approximant							j	w			
Lateral approximant				l							

Legend: all three | only Eng | only Som | Swe & Eng | Som & Eng

Table 3 shows the similarities and dissimilarities in terms of consonants between English, Swedish and Somali (Weinberger 2013). A comparison of the vowels has been left out because the vowels are very similar in the three languages.

4. Method and Material

Ten Somali students were chosen as participants in this study. They were divided into two groups: Swedish born Somalis or non-Swedish born Somalis. The participants were students at a upper secondary school in the Gothenburg area. Students were randomly asked if they had Somali as their first language, and Swedish and English as either their second or third language. The participants were thereby chosen based on their linguistic background. However, no regards where made in reference to gender and age. The book *Researching Second Language Classrooms* (McKay 2006) has been used in planning and structuring this section. The methods used in this study are critically discussed in section 6.4. These are the sections of this chapter: method; material; reliability and validity.

4.1. Method

The pronunciation test was based on previous studies on the contrast between English and Swedish, and English and Somali. First, students were recorded using a dictaphone. Secondly, the tests were analyzed using the five steps of Error Analysis which are to collect samples, identify, describe, explain and evaluate the errors (Ellis 1997: 15ff). EA was used since it compares "[...] the learner's interlanguage and the target language [...]" to identify the errors (Hedge 2000: 170). The answers to the interview questions were written down by hand. The interview questions were created to investigate the reason of transfer based on the article "Transfer/Cross-linguistic Influence" (Benson 2002). This was tested by asking the students relevant questions regarding birthplace, mother tongue(s), what language(s) they speak, when they started to learn English and for how long they have been in Sweden. The occurrence and the extent of both positive and negative transfer are linked to factors such as the learning setting, type of material being analyzed, the proficiency level of the students and their attitudes. For this reason, they were asked on a scale from zero to ten how much they use English outside of school, how good they think they are in English and if they like English. Some interview questions were used to ask how pronunciation is practiced in the classroom and if they think that teachers should take the students' linguistic background into consideration.

This study was based on a mixed method, being both quantitative and qualitative. The idea of quantitative research is that "[reality, such as phoentics] can be broken down and parts studied" with the purpose to "[...] generalize, [and] to predict [errors] [...]" (McKay 2006: 7). Also, that the results were analyzed systematically to identify errors. It was also qualitative, since the errors and the interview findings were analyzed in detail.

4.2. Material

The material consists of two sections: a pronunciation test and some interview questions (see Appendixes A & C). The pronunciation test was used to test both typical Swedish and Somali difficulties in terms of pronunciation of vowels, consonants and word stress. These areas were chosen since they are essential parts of pronunciation and the lack of previous studies on phonetic transfer (Ohlander 2009). Information about typical Swedish difficulties was found in "Basic English Phonetics for Short Courses" (Mobärg 2001) and typical Somali difficulties was found in *Educating Somali Children in Britain* (Kahin 1997).

The test was first tried out on one student as a pilot study. Some changes were made regarding the scales and the interview questions as a result of the pilot. The scales for the interview questions were numbered in order to organize the results more conveniently. The students were classified either as non-Swedish born in Sweden or non-Swedish born abroad. 6 students were born outside of Sweden and 4 in Sweden. The students were informed about the use of the material and that the study was anonymous.

4.3. Reliability and validity

"Reliability relates to the extent to which someone else analyzing the same data [or similar data] would come up with the same results" and validity is achieved "[...] by carefully recording and analyzing all of the data gathered and presenting it in a fair and unbiased manner" (McKay 2006: 13).

In order to achieve reliability, the study had to be repeatable. Therefore, a few requirements had to be achieved. First, the students had to live in Sweden, speak Swedish and have Somali as their mother tongue. Second, two types of participants had to be distinguished. They had to be born in or outside of Sweden. Third, the level of the students had to be comparatively equal (Hedge 2000: 270). Fourth, a pronunciation test on typical Swedish and Somali difficulties had to be created. Fifth, interview questions were needed to investigate the extent and occurrence of transfer. Six, the results had to be analyzed a number of times to verify its reliability. Moreover, the dictaphone used in this study was assumed to be reliable.

However, in order to achieve reliability, the study also had to achieve validity. The pronunciation test was valid since it consisted of typical Swedish and Somali difficulties, which were based on Contrastive Analysis. CA, is a method used to predict and explain difficulties in monolingual groups (Hedge 2000: 270). The analysis of the pronunciation test was based on Error Analysis. A method used to identify errors (Hedge 2000: 170). Moreover, the interview questions were designed in relation to the knowledge about the extent and occurrence of transfer (Benson 2002: 69).

5. Results

This chapter consists of four main sections: the overall results, typical Swedish difficulties, typical Somali difficulties and interview findings. The second and the third sections are divided into four subsection: overall results, vowels, consonants and word stress.

The students are categorized into three groups: Whole group, Swe-born and Non-Swe-born. The results are presented in two different types of tables. The first type of table has its focus on the results from each of the four subsections. The number of students (n), the average number of errors (mean) and the average percentage of errors (%) are presented. The second type of table has a more specific focus on each phoneme. In these, the focus is on the nature of the error. The typical errors are predicted to occur and the non-typical errors are not predicted to occur. The third type of table has a more specific focus on each phoneme or task. In these, the focus is on the total number of students making at least one error.

5.1. Overall results

Table 5.1 shows the overall results from the test. The test consisted of 89 tasks.

Table 5.1: Overall results – number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	17.3	8.25	23.34
%	19.4	9.3	26.2

Table 5.1 shows that the average student made 17.3 errors. The average Swe-born student made 8.25 errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 23.34 errors.

5.2. Typical Swedish difficulties

Table 5.2.A shows the overall results on the typical Swedish difficulties. It consisted of 41 tasks.

Table 5.2.A: Typical Swedish difficulties – number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	8.5	4	11.5
%	20.7	9.8	28

Table 5.2.A shows that the average student made 8.5 errors. The average Swe-born student made four errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 11.5 errors.

Table 5.2.B shows the overall results on each phoneme on the typical Swedish difficulties excluding the word stress.

Table 5.2.B: Typical Swedish difficulties – overall results – typical/non-typical errors

Phonemes	Swe-born % Typical errors	Swe-born % Non-typical errors	Swe-born n:example Typical errors	Swe-born n:example Non-typical errors	Non-Swe-born % Typical errors	Non-Swe-born % Non-typical Errors	Non-Swe-born n:example Typical errors	Non-Swe-born n:example Non-typical Errors
/e/	0%	0%			0%	100%		1: /əæ/
/æ/	0%	0%			0%	100%		1: /a/
/u:/	0%	0%			0%	100%		2: /ɔ/
/əʊ/ or /oʊ/	0%	0%			0%	100%		3: /aʊ/, 1: /ɔ/
/j/	0%	0%			0%	100%		1: /aʊ/
/dʒ/	0%	0%			50%	50%	2: /j/	1: /dj/, 1:/tʃ/
/ʃ/	0%	0%			0%	0%		
/tʃ/	100%	0%	4: /ʃ/		50%	50%	4: /ʃ/	4: /dʒ/
/v/	0%	0%			33%	66%	1: /w/	1: /f/, 1: /fv/
/w/	100%	0%	1: /v/		100%	0%	2: /v/	
/s/	0%	0%			0%	100%		1: /ts/
/z/	100%	0%	2: /s/		86%	14%	6: /s/	1: /ts/
/ʃ/	100%	0%	1: /ʒ/		0%	0%		
/ʒ/	100%	0%	2: /ʃ/		83%	17%	5: /ʃ/	1: /s/
/d/	0%	0%			66%	33%	2: /ð/	1: /t/
/ð/	0%	0%			28%	72%	2: /d/	4: /θ/, 1: /s/

Table 5.2.B shows that all the errors made by Swe-born students are typical errors. Some examples of this are: /tʃ/ was replaced by /ʃ/ four times, /z/ was replaced by /s/ twice, /ʒ/ was replaced by /ʃ/ twice.

The Non-Swe-born students made both typical and non-typical errors. Some examples of typical errors are: /dʒ/ was replaced by /j/ twice, /tʃ/ was replaced by /ʃ/ four times, /w/ was replaced by /v/ twice, /z/ was replaced by /s/ six times, /ʒ/ was replaced by /ʃ/ five times, /d/ was replaced by /ð/ twice, and /ð/ was replaced by /d/ twice.

Some examples of non-typical errors made by the Non-Swe-born students are: /u:/ was replaced by /ɔ/ twice; /əʊ/ or /oʊ/ was replaced by /aʊ/ three times and /ɔ/ once; /tʃ/ was replaced by /dʒ/ four times; /v/ was replaced by /f/ and /fv/ once each; and /ð/ was replaced by /θ/ four times and /s/ once.

5.2.1. Vowels

Table 5.2.1.A shows the results on vowels from the typical Swedish difficulties section. It consisted of eight tasks.

Table 5.2.1.A: Typical Swedish difficulties - Vowels - number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	0.8	0	1.33
%	10	0	16.7

Table 5.2.1 shows that the average student made 0.8 errors. The average Swe-born student made zero errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 1.33 errors. The number of errors made by each of the Non-Swe-born students were: 0, 0, 0, 0, 3, 5 errors.

Table 5.2.1.B shows the results on each specific vowel sound from the typical Swedish difficulties section. It consisted of four phonemes.

Table 5.2.1.B: Typical Swedish difficulties - Vowels – errors on each specific phoneme

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
Phonemes / n	10	4	6
/e/	1	0	1
/æ/	1	0	1
/uː/	2	0	2
/əʊ/ or /oʊ/	2	0	2

Table 5.2.1.B shows the number of students that made at least an error. The Swe-born students made zero errors. One out of six (17 %) of the Non-Swe-born students made at least one error on /e/ and /æ/, and two out of six (33%) made at least one error on the /uː/ and /əʊ/ or /oʊ/.

5.2.2. Consonants

Table 5.2.2.A shows the results on consonants from the typical Swedish difficulties section. It consisted of 22 tasks.

Table 5.2.2.A: Typical Swedish difficulties - Consonants – number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	5.1	2.5	6.83
%	23.2	11.4	31.1

Table 5.2.2.A shows that the average student made 5.1 errors. The average Swe-born student made 2.5 errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 6.83 errors. The number of errors made by each of the Swe-born students were: 1, 2, 3, 4. The number of errors made by each of the Non-Swe-born were: 4, 6, 7, 7, 8, 9 errors.

Table 5.2.2.B shows the results on 12 consonant sounds on typical Swedish difficulties.

Table 5.2.2.B: Typical Swedish difficulties - Consonants – errors on each specific phoneme

Phonemes ⟍ n	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
	10	4	6
/j/	1	0	1
/dʒ/	4	0	4
/ʃ/	0	0	0
/tʃ/	8	3	5
/v/	3	0	3
/w/	2	1	1
/s/	1	0	1
/z/	8	2	6
/ʃ/	1	1	0
/ʒ/	8	2	6
/d/	3	0	3
/ð/	6	1	5

Table 5.2.2.B shows that four out of ten students (40%) made at least an error on /dʒ/, six out of ten (60%) on /ð/ and eight out of ten (80%) on /tʃ/, /z/, and /ʒ/. Two out of four (50%) Swe-born students made at least an error on /z/ and /ʒ/, and three out of four (75%) on /tʃ/. However, three out of six (50%) Non-Swe-born students made at least an error on /v/ and /d/, four out five (67%) on /dʒ/, five out of six (83%) on /tʃ/ and /ð/, and all six student (100%) on /z/ and /ʒ/.

5.2.3. Word stress

Table 5.2.3.A shows the results on word stress from the typical Swedish difficulties section. It consisted of 11 tasks.

Table 5.2.3.A: Typical Swedish difficulties – Word stress – number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	2.6	1.5	3.33
%	23.6	13.6	30.3

Table 5.2.3.A shows that the average student made 2.6 errors. The average Swe-born student made 1.5 errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 3.33 errors.

Table 5.2.3.B shows the results on each specific task on the words stress from the typical Swedish difficulties section. It consisted of three tasks.

Table 5.2.3.B: Typical Swedish difficulties – Word stress – errors on each task

Tasks ⟍ n	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
	10	4	6
1st syllable	5	0	5
3rd syllable from the end	10	4	6
shift	2	1	1

Table 5.2.3.B shows that five out of ten students (50%) made at least an error on the 1st syllable, and

all ten students (100%) made at least an error on the 3rd syllable from the end. None of the Swe-born students made an error on the 1st syllable, and all four students (100%) made an error on the 3rd syllable from the end. Five out of six (83%) Non-Swe-born students made at least an error on both the 1st syllable and six out of six (100%) on the 3rd syllable from the end.

5.3. Typical Somali difficulties

Table 5.3.A shows the overall results on the typical Somali difficulties. It consisted of 48 tasks.

Table 5.3.A: Typical Somali difficulties – number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	8.8	4.25	11.83
%	20	9.7	26.9

Table 5.3 shows that the average student made 8.8 errors. The average Swe-born student made 4.25 errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 11.83 errors.

Table 5.3.B shows the overall results on each task on the typical Somali difficulties excluding the word stress.

Table 5.3.B: Typical Somali difficulties – overall results – typical/non-typical errors

Phonemes	Swe-born				Non-Swe-born			
	%		n :example		%		n :example	
	Typical errors	Non-typical errors	Typical errors	Non-typical errors	Typical errors	Non-typical Errors	Typical errors	Non-typical Errors
/i/	0%	0%			0%	0%		
/e/	0%	0%			0%	100%		2: /ae/
/ae/	0%	0%			25%	75%	1: /aː/	1: /aɪ/, 1: /ɔ/, 1: /a/
/a/	0%	0%			0%	100%		1: /ə/, 1: /ɔ/, 1: /ʌ/
< oo >	1: /u/, 1: /aː/				3: /uː/, 2: /oʊ/, 2: /ɔ/, 1: /aʊ/, 1: /ʊ/, 1: /ər/, 1: /ʌ/, 1: /ə/, 1: /a/			
/b/	0%	0%			100%	0%	1: /p/	
/p/	0%	0%			0%	0%		
/f/	0%	0%			0%	0%		
/v/	100%	0%	3: /f/		100%	0%	6: /f/	
/ʃ/	0%	0%			0%	0%		
/ʒ/	100%	0%	2: /ʃ/		50%	50%	4: /ʃ/	2: /z/, 1: /sj/, 1: /s/
/dʒ/					4: /tʃ/, 1: /j/			
/s/	0%	0%			0%	0%		
/z/	100%	0%	3: /s/		100%	0%	4: /s/	
/θ/					1: /dz/, 1: /d/, 1: /t/, 1: /s/, 1: /ð/			
/ð/	4: /θ/, 3: /d/				8: /d/, 4: /θ/, 2: /t/			
/k/					1: /ð/			

Table 5.3.B shows that all the errors made by Swe-born students are typical errors. The examples of this are: /v/ was replaced by /f/ three times; /ʒ/ was replaced by /ʃ/ twice; and /z/ was replaced by /s/ three times.

The Non-Swe-born students made both typical and non-typical errors. Some examples of

their typical errors are: /v/ was replaced by /f/ six times; /ʒ/ was replaced by /ʃ/ four times; and /z/ was replaced by /s/ four times. Some examples of non-typical errors are: /æ/ was replaced by /aɪ/, /ɔ/, and /a/ once each; /a/ was replaced by /ə/, /ɔ/, and /ʌ/ once each; /ʒ/ was replaced by /z/ twice, /sj/ and /s/ once each.

The typical difficulties <oo>, /dʒ/, /θ/, /ð/ and /k/ have no specific or typical errors associated to them. Some of the Swe-born students replaced: /ð/ by /θ/ four times and /d/ three times. Some of the Non-Swe-born students replaced: <oo> by /u:/ three times, /oʊ/ and /ɔ/ twice each, /aʊ/, /ʊ/, /ər/, /ʌ/, /ə/ and /a/ once each; /dʒ/ was replaced by /tʃ/ four times and /j/ once; /θ/ was replaced by /dz/, /d/, /t/, /s/ and /ð/ once each; and /ð/ was replaced by /d/ eight times, /θ/ four times and /t/ twice.

5.3.1. Vowels

Table 5.3.1.A shows the results on vowels from the typical Somali difficulties section. It consisted of eight tasks.

Table 5.3.1.A: Typical Somali difficulties –Vowels - number of errors on the eight tasks

	whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	0.9	0	1.5
%	11.3	0	18.8

Table 5.3.1.A shows that the average student made 0.9 errors. The average Swe-born student made zero errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 1.5 errors.

Table 5.3.1.B shows the results on <oo> from the typical Somali difficulties section. It consisted of four tasks.

Table 5.3.1.B: Typical Somali difficulties – <oo> - number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	1.5	0.5	2.17
%	37.5	12.5	54.2

Table 5.3.1.B shows that the average student made 1.5 errors. The average Swe-born student made 0.5 errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 2.17 errors.

Table 5.3.1.C shows the results on each specific vowel sound from the typical Somali difficulties section. It consisted of five phonemes.

Table 5.3.1.C: Typical Somali difficulties – vowels – errors on each specific phoneme

Phonemes \ n	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
/i/	0	0	0
/e/	1	0	1
/ae/	3	0	3
/a/	2	0	2
< oo >	8	3	5

Table 5.3 shows that three out of ten students (30%) made at least an error on /ae/, in which zero were Swe-born and three were Non-Swe-born. Furthermore, eight out of the ten students (80%) made at least one error on <oo>. Three out of four (75%) were Swe-born made this error, and five out of six (83%) Non-Swe-born students.

5.3.2. Consonants

Table 5.3.2.A shows the results on consonants from the typical Somali difficulties section. It consisted of 30 tasks.

Table 5.3.2.A: Typical Somali difficulties – Consonants – number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	6.3	3.75	8
%	21	12.5	26.7

Table 5.3.2.A shows that the average student made 6.3 errors. The average Swe-born student made 3.75 errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 8 errors. The number of errors made by each student were: 0, 3, 4, 4, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 15 errors. The Swe-born students had these results: 0, 4, 4, 7 errors. Furthermore, the Non-Swe-born students had these results: 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 15 errors.

Table 5.3.2.B shows the results on 12 consonant sounds on typical Somali difficulties.

Table 5.3.2.B: Typical Somali difficulties – Consonants – errors on each specific phoneme

Phonemes n	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
	10	4	6
/b/	1	0	1
/p/	0	0	0
/f/	0	0	0
/v/	8	2	6
/ʃ/	0	0	0
/ʒ/	5	1	4
/dʒ/	2	0	2
/s/	0	0	0
/z/	5	2	3
/θ/	4	0	4
/ð/	8	3	5
/k/	1	0	1

Table 5.3.2.B shows that four out of ten (40%) of the students made at least one error on /θ/. Zero of these were Swe-born and four out of six (67%) of the Non-Swe-born students made this error. Furthermore, five out of ten (50%) students made at least one error on /ʒ/ and /z/. One Swe-born and four Non-Swe-born students made an error on /ʒ/. Two Swe-born students and three Non-Swe-born students made at least one error on /z/. Moreover, eight out of ten (80%) students made at least one error on both /v/ and /ð/. Two Swe-born and all six Non-Swe-born students made an error on /v/. Three Swe-born students and five Non-Swe-born students made at least an error on /ð/.

5.3.3. Word stress

Table 5.3.3 shows the results on each specific task on word stress from the typical Somali difficulties section. It consisted of six tasks.

Table 5.3.3: Typical Somali difficulties – Word stress – number of errors

	Whole group	Swe-born	Non-Swe-born
n	10	4	6
mean	0.1	0	0.17
%	1.7	0	2.8

Table 5.3.3 shows that the average student made 0.1 errors. The average Swe-born student made zero errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made 0.17 errors.

5.4. Interview findings

Four out of ten students were born in Sweden and six out of ten were born abroad. Five of these six were born in Somalia and one in the Netherlands. All of the students had Somali as their mother tongue and two also had Arabic as a second mother tongue. The average age when the students started learning English was 10.4 years old. The average among the Swe-born students was 10 and 10.67 among the Non-Swe-born students. The number of years the Non-Swe-born students had been in Sweden varied between 3 and 13. However, the average was 6.3 years.
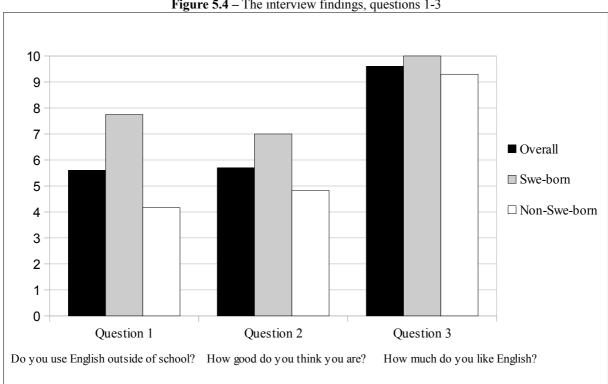
Figure 5.4 – The interview findings, questions 1-3

The first three interview questions were scaled from zero to 10. Figure 5.4 shows the following: The first interview question investigated if the students use English outside of school. The overall result was 5.6 in average. The average for the Swe-born students was 7.75 and the Non-Swe-born students' average was 4.16. The overall average on the second question was 5.7. This question investigated how good the students think they are in English. The Swe-born students answered an average of 7 and the Non-Swe-born students answered 4.83 on average. The third question investigated if the students like English. The overall average was 9.6. The average among the Swe-born students was 10, and 9.3 among the Non-Swe-born students.

The last two interview questions concerned how pronunciation is practiced in the classroom and if they thought that the students mother tongue is an important factor in teaching pronunciation. A revised version of the answers is given since some of the answers were given in Swedish. The answers have therefore been translated into English. The findings from the second to last questions will now be presented: 'How is pronunciation practiced in the classroom?'.

Student 1a: 'Not so much'

Student 2a: 'Through writing, reading and talking'

Student 3a: 'Talking in couples of two as well as through reading out load'

Student 4a: 'Almost never, sometimes group discussions on different topics'

Student 5a: 'Discussions, if someone gets stuck they will get help'

Student 6a: 'By watching TV, we are not doing this very often though'

Student 7a: 'Reading out loud, discussions and pronunciation tests'

Student 8a: 'Some pronunciation in relation to glossaries. Not so much though'

Student 9a: 'Discussions about a particular movie. Reading out loud'

Student 10a: 'Sometimes, reading out loud, discussions'

To sum up, pronunciation is practiced through: reading out loud, discussions in groups/ couples, reading glossary, pronunciation tests and input such as watching TV.

Below are the findings from the last question which was: 'Do you think your mother tongue is an important factor when your teacher is planning for the teaching of pronunciation? How and why?'.

Student 1b: 'After the class, we talk about the difficulties'

Student 2b: 'The teachers think about the things that are hard such as with /p/ and /b/'

Student 3b: 'Just broadly speaking, not specifically'

Student 4b: 'A little, a few sounds. I would like to get some extra guidance. For instance, in Swedish, we practiced /ä/, /å/, and /ö/. I know these a little better because of this practice. I rather start practicing in school and then at home'

Student 5b: 'Well, it is the same for everyone. The mother tongue could play a role'

Student 6b: 'No, there were more important things to study like grammar and such'

Student 7b: 'No, usually not a problem since most students are good with pronunciation'

Student 8b: 'There is an expectation that most students should be able to handle it. However, how one pronounces words depends on one's mother tongue, everyone has an accent'

Student 9b: 'Hard to say'

Student 10b: 'A little. Pronunciation is not the most important thing'

To sum up, some students say that teachers are to some extent considering their mother tongue in the planning of teaching. However, it is hard tell. Difficulties are practiced to some extent.

6. Discussion

The discussion consists of the following sections: summary of the results, indications of transfer, pedagogical implications, discussion on the methods and material, and further research.

6.1. Summary of the results

The overall results on the pronunciation test show that the average Non-Swe-born student made approximately three times as many errors as the average Swe-born student. That approximate ratio of errors is also noticed on the typical Somali and Swedish difficulties.

The results from the section on typical Swedish difficulties show that at least half of all the students, regardless if they were born in outside of Sweden, made errors regarding /z/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/ and 3rd syllable from the end. Furthermore, at least half of the Non-Swe-born students made at least an additional error on /v/, /d/, /dʒ/, /ð/ and 1st syllable stress. All the errors, on this section, made by the Swe-born students were typical errors predicted to occur. However, the Non-Swe-born students made both predicted, typical errors and non-predicted, non-typical errors.

The results from the section on typical Somali difficulties show that at least half of all the students, regardless if they were born in outside of Sweden, made an error on <oo>, /v/, /z/ and /ð/. However, at least half of the Non-Swe-born students made at least one additional error on /æ/, /ʒ/ and /θ/. All the errors, in this section, made by the Swe-born students were typical errors. However, the Non-Swe-born students made both typical and non-typical errors. Both groups of students made errors on the typical difficulties that have no specific or typical error related to them. The average Non-Swe-born students made more errors on these tasks, in comparison to the average Swe-born students. Neither of the groups had issues with word stress in this part of the test.

The results from the first part of the interview questions are as follows. All ten students had Somali as their mother tongue. The average Swe-born student started studying English at age 10 and the average Non-Swe-born student also started about the age of 10. The average Non-Swe-born student had been in Sweden for about six years. The numbers of years varied from the range of three to 13. Next, the average on how much the students use English outside of school is 7.75 among the Swe-born and 4.16 among the Non-Swe-born. Futhermore, the average on how good the students think they are in English is seven among the Swe-born students and 4.83 among the Non-Swe-born students. Moreover, the average of how much the students like English is 10 among the Swe-Born students and 9.3 among the Non-Swe-born students.

The results from the second part of the interview questions are as follows. The students answer that pronunciation is practiced through reading out loud, discussions in groups/pairs, reading glossary, pronunciation tests and input such as watching TV. Moreover, the students said that teachers are to some extent considering their mother tongue. Some examples of this are that

[student 2b] [t]*he teachers think about the things that are hard such as with /p/ and /v/,* [student 4b] […] *For instance, in Swedish, we practiced /ä/, /å/, and /ö/. I know these a little better because of this practice* […], [student 5b] […] *The mother tongue could play a role,* [student 8b] […] *However, how one pronounce words depends on one's mother tongue, everyone has an accent.*

6.2. Indications of transfer

The overall results show that all students made errors ranging from two to 42. The results also show that the average Non-Swe-born student made approximately three times as many errors as the average Swe-born student. That the errors occurred is a fact, but why did they occur?

The following steps will now be used to investigate transfer. First, a brief evaluation of the errors in relation to the typical difficulties. Second, an investigation on the cause of the errors, if they are caused by mistakes or lack of knowledge (Ellis 1997: 15-17). Third, an analysis of the errors in relation to the influence of the interlanguage and the learning process (Benson 2002: 68-69). Fourth, an investigation of the occurrence and the extent of transfer. Important factors related to this are the learning setting, the proficiency level of the learner, the learning style and the learner profile (Benson 2002: 69).

The pronunciation test will be discussed in relation to the first three steps starting with the Swe-born students followed by the Non-Swe-born students. The following section will compare the results of the two groups, investigate the fourth step and discuss the interview findings. Finally, a discussion of the results in relation to current thinking on SLA, second language acquisition.

6.2.1. The Swe-born students

The Swe-born students have Somali as their mother tongue and Swedish as their L2. It is therefore relevant to examine the errors in relation to Somali, Swedish and the Somali-Swedish interlanguage. At least half of all the Swe-born students made at least one error on the typical Somali difficulties <oo>, /v/, /z/, and /ð/ as well as on the typical Swedish difficulties /z/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/ and 3ʳᵈ syllable from the end. These errors were all predicted to occur. However, Table 3 shows that the sounds /θ/, /ð/, /z/, /ʒ/ and /dʒ/ do not occur in either Swedish or Somali. This could be why the students are having difficulties with some of these phonemes, difficulties, which could be reinforced by both Swedish and Somali. Moreover, the sounds /ʃ/ and /tʃ/ only occur in Somali and were shown to be difficult for the Swe-born students even though they have Somali as their mother tongue. All the errors mentioned above, were predicted to occur based on the dissimilarities between Somali and English (Kahin 1997) as shown in Table 1, and Swedish and English (Mobärg 2001) as shown in Table 2.

That the errors occurred is a fact, but, what are the causes of them? Ellis says that they could be caused by random faults, mistakes or by lack of knowledge, errors (1997:15-17). The students may have made some random mistakes, but this is hard to verify. However, I would argue that the

answer could be teased out by testing students on a multiple number of similar tasks to exclude uncertainty. A wider range of information would most likely give a more accurate picture of the situation.

Benson uses similar terms as Ellis as she says that errors either occur consciously, due to lack of knowledge or unconsciously, that the knowledge learned has not yet been automated. These errors are said to be related to the influence of the interlanguage and the learning process (Benson 2002: 68-69). Transfer from the Swe-born students' interlanguage, the mix between Somali and Swedish, may be illustrated by the errors on /z/ that at least half of them made on both parts of the test. This could be caused by the fact that /z/ is not a sound in either Somali or Swedish. This might therefore result in negative transfer caused by the interlanguage. This, is due to the lack of corresponding elements in Somali and Swedish.

6.2.2. The Non-Swe-born students

At least half of all the Non-Swe-born students made at least one error on the typical Somali difficulties /æ/, /z/, /ʒ/, /θ/, /ð/ and /v/. Furthermore, at least half of the Non-Swe-born students made at least an error on the typical Swedish difficulties /v/, /d/, /dʒ/, /tʃ/, /ð/, /z/ and /ʒ/ and 1st syllable stress.

That the errors occurred is a fact, but, what are the causes of them? That the students lack knowledge might be illustrated by all the non-typical errors that the Non-Swe born students made. All the typical errors were predicted to occur, however, not the non-typical errors.

At least half of all the Non-Swe-born students made at least one error on /v/, /z/ ,/ʒ/ and /ð/ on both parts of the test. The occurrence of these errors is more likely to occur among the Non-Swe-born students since their learning of English is most probably more influenced by Somali than Swedish. English and Swedish are cognates so Swedish has more corresponding elements in English than Somali does. In Somali, the spelling is very regular in relation to pronunciation. This might cause difficulties as English is seemingly irregular or "chaotic" (Kahin 1997: 52).

Most of Non-Swe-born student have Somali as their mother tongue, English as their L2 and Swedish as their L3. However, two of the students have Arabic as a second mother tongue. These languages might be mixed with Somali and/or English and have an impact on the results. However, this will not be investigated further, in this study.

6.2.3. A comparison between the Swe-born and the Non-Swe-born students

This section will include the following areas: the overall results in relation to Ohlander's study (2009) and a discussion on why there are differences between the groups.

The overall results show that at least half of all the students, regardless if they are born in or

outside of Sweden, made at least one error on the typical Swedish difficulties /z/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/ and 3rd syllable from the end as well as on the typical Somali difficulties <oo>, /v/, /z/ and /ð/. All students, regardless if they are born in or outside of Sweden, had difficulties with the phoneme /z/ in both parts of the pronunciation test. These are indications that the students have varying difficulties with pronunciation. It also indicates that there are differences within the groups. These results are similar to the results found in Ohlander's study (2009). Ohlander's results show that there are differences within the groups of students having another mother tongue than Swedish. However, he was investigating written production, unlike this study, which is on spoken production. My study shows that phonemic transfer occurs among the students and that there are differences between students born in or outside of Sweden; the average Non-Swe-born students made approximately three times as many errors as the average Swe-born students. It also shows that the Non-Swe-born students made all the non-typical errors. However, the average Swe-born student made zero non-typical errors and the average Non-Swe-born student made more than six non-typical errors, on the test. There are major differences between the groups, which can not be denied. However, the cause of these are uncertain. It could be caused by mistakes or lack of knowledge resulting in guessing. This could be further investigated by having the students take the test again to see if the same results are shown.

The extent of the errors are shown, but why do they occur more frequently among the Non-Swe-born students? It could be a result of the fact that the average Non-Swe-born student had only been in Sweden for about six years, whereas the Swe-born students had been in Sweden their entire lives. Students having Swedish as their L2 are more privileged since there are more corresponding elements in Swedish than in Somali as shown in Table 3. Furthermore, the mother tongue of the students should not have too much of an impact on the results since all of ten students have the same mother tongue. However, the interlanguages are different. The Swe-born students had difficulties with /z/. This could be caused by their Somali-Swedish interlanguage. However, most of the Non-Swe-born students have English as their L2. Therefore, it is not as relevant to investigate the influence of the interlanguage in their case. Furthermore, the skill level of the students in their mother tongue has not been verified and thereby not taken into consideration.

The average age when the students started to learn English is the same, about 10 years. However, there is a significant difference. The Swe-born students were taught in Sweden and the Non-Swe-born students were mostly taught abroad. Their teachers might have totally different perspectives on how languages should be taught and learned. However, it is complicated to compare the students' educational background, but it might have an impact.

It is also interesting to notice that the average Swe-born student had 7.75 (out of 10) on the question of how much they use English outside of school. The average Non-Swe-born students

answered a 4.16 on the same question. This could be a very important factor to take into consideration, since less practice could generate more errors in the classroom. Furthermore, the average Swe-born student had a seven on the questions of how good they think they are in English. The Non-Swe-born students had a 4.83 in average. It is very important for the students to be confident. Lack of confidence might be a reason why some of the errors occurred. Moreover, the average of how much they like English was 10 among the Swe-born students and 9.3 among the Non-Swe-born students. This verifies that all students are motivated to learn English.

6.2.4. The results in relation to current thinking on SLA

Transfer could either be both positive or negative (Odlin 1989: 6-24). Negative transfer has been discussed above, and now positive transfer will be discussed.

Current thinking on SLA not only focuses on negative transfer, but also positive transfer. Positive transfer could result in an improvement of learning instead of errors, which is likely to occur when the target language is similar to the language one already knows (Benson 2002: 69). This could be the reason why the Swe-born students did better on the test compared to the Non-Swe-born students, since Swedish and English are more similar than Somali and English. This difference could also cause the Non-Swe-born students to avoid certain structures, because of the non-corresponding elements in Somali. This could be why the majority of the Non-Swe-born students made more errors on average than the Swe-born students. Furthermore, the errors could also be caused by different development rates such as that the Non-Swe-born students need more time to acquire knowledge. This could also be due to the differences between Somali and English. However, all students are motivated to learn English and therefore it should not be the major reason why the errors occurred.

The lack of corresponding elements in Somali could also result in a boosting of learning. An example of this is found in answers from the interview questions […] *For instance, in Swedish, we practiced /ä/, /å/, and /ö/. I know these a little better because of this practice.* An additional effect of could be the overproduction of particular elements. This is something that will not be considered due to lack of time.

6.3. Pedagogical implications

The pedagogical implications related to errors, transfer, CA, pronunciation and phonetics will now be discussed.

Barkhuizen & Ellis (2005: 51) argue that errors made by students raise the question of why the errors occur. It is therefore important for the teacher to observe and evaluate the errors. The errors could have an impact on the learning and should therefore be dealt with in teaching. Errors could be focused on in teaching to help the students to achieve "correctness" in their written and spoken production (Skolverket 2011b: 1). The students could be given resources to practice pronunciation at home using self-access mode activities on e.g. stress, intonation, consonant and vowel sounds (Hedge 2000: 97). I would argue that students should be taught the differences between basic phonemes, because, this will help them to improve their receptive and productive skills. I would also argue that it is important for the students to understand the relation between how a word is written and pronounced.

Knowledge about transfer is something that could be very useful for both teachers and students, especially when the students have a mother tongue deviating from the majority. The syllabi in English and the curricula for both the compulsory and the upper secondary school, mention the importance of adapting teaching to the student's needs and circumstances. This means that the students' mother tongue or native language are important factors to take into consideration when organizing and planning for a class.

A test could be created to test the extent and occurrence of transfer. It could be based on material on typical difficulties and interview questions. CA is a method that has been used to compare English with Russian (Light & Warshawsky 1974), Somali (Kahin 1997), French (Guilford 1998), and Chinese (Goh, Mohamed & Wan-Rose 2004). The analysis could then be used to help teachers to investigate what learners have learned and thereby function as a pedagogical device (Barkhuizen & Ellis 2005: 51). However, teaching seen from the perspective of the students should also be considered, as teaching should "[...] help students develop language awareness and knowledge of how a language is learned through and outside teaching contexts"(Skolverket 2011c: 1). I would argue that how languages are taught is closely related to transfer, which is why the teachers should help the students to become aware of it. This could be done by raising their consciousness through listening to a variety of words having the students point out the differences and their results could then be discussed in groups (Hedge 2000: 285-286). Or as Kahin (1997: 50) argues that "[...] knowledge of the basic difference in grammar and phonetics can help teachers when they work in withdrawal sessions or individual tuition involving Somali children".

6.4. Discussion on the methods

This study has mostly covered the area of transfer. However, the study of transfer should not be done without a critical mind. Ohlander (2009: 27) says that "[…] transfer is not always easy to prove – or indeed to falsify – in individual cases". However, he says that most people would agree that "[...] such influence exist [...]" (Ohlander 2009: 27). It might be an advantage of not analyzing the individual, but the errors made by a group of students.

But how do we decide if the results from the present study are valid and reliable? McKay (2006: 13) says that " [i]n qualitative research, internal validity depends on what is referred to as credibility and external validity to transferability. A researcher can achieve *credibility* or internal validity by carefully recording and analyzing all of the data gathered and presenting it in a fair and unbiased manner". I would argue that the internal validity of the results from the pronunciation tests are solid, since I have analyzed the materials several times, especially if there was doubt as to the results. However, one of the tests lacked the results from the 29th task, which was on /b/ and /p/. This might have a small effect on the overall results, not very much though.

The focus on pronunciation in relation to transfer has not been researched much before, due to the lack of methods and economic resources (Ohlander 2009: 13). This was the gap I was looking for, but how do I motivate the usage of CA and EA? I would argue that both CA, which was used to make the test, and EA, which was used to to analyze the pronunciation test, are valid and reliable. These are both relevant to use in the context of researching transfer. Hedge mentions that CA and EA could be used in researching in the second language classroom. As she says that CA could be used to compare the "[...] learner's native language and the target language [...]" and EA to compare "[...] the learner's interlanguage and the target language [...]" (Hedge 2000: 170). Hedge (2000: 170) says that "[e]rror analysis has provided teachers with insights into the main problems which learners seem to have with English, and there are useful descriptions of these available". However, current thinking on SLA is that transfer is not only negative and that there are additional reasons why the errors occur.

The generalizability of this study concerns to what extent the findings could be used in other contexts. An example is given that this could be achieved by relating the findings to the theoretical framework (McKay 2006: 14). Moreover, "[...] [i]n order to achieve dependability, qualitative researchers need to provide comprehensive details about their procedures and catalogue their data in such a way that others could retrieve and review the evidence they provide in their research reports" (McKay 2006: 14). I would argue that the details of this study are solid and clear. This will make it much easier for future researchers to make a similar study on phonemic transfer.

The survey, i.e: the interview questions, are important to consider as well. McKay (2006: 41) says that "[i]n designing a survey, as in all research, it is essential for researchers to strive for

reliability. In order to assure the reliability of a survey, several measures can be used". Two ways to verify the consistency could be to have the students take the same test twice or by analyzing similar questions in a survey, in order to verify the consistency of the students.

6.5. Further Research

The results of this study indicate that there are differences within and between the groups of Somali students. A more extensive study could be done in the future to either verify or falsify the results of this study. The non-typical errors made by the Non-Swe-born students are one of the things that could be studied in more detail. Another interesting aspect to cover in future research could be to investigate phonemic transfer for the students having either Arabic, Spanish, Somali, Farsi/Dari or Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian as their mother tongue.

There are tools to make tests in order to investigate transfer. Moreover, there are good platforms on the Internet where people could access a multitude of speech samples and phonetic inventories. The speech accent archive (www.accent.gmu.edu) is an example of this. This could work as a helpful resource to teachers working with students having another mother tongue than Swedish.

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Appendix A

Part 1 (1-21) and part 2 (22-47).

1	set	sat	**9**	vet	wet	**16**	captain	system
2	bed	bad	**10**	vine	wine	**17**	balance	
3	blue	blow	**11**	sue	zoo	**18**	elephant	democracy
4	shoe	show	**12**	ice	eyes	**19**	barometer	diplomat
5	yet	jet	**13**	dilution	delusion	**20**	athlete	athletic
6	use	juice				**21**	history	historical
7	she's	cheese	**14**	dough	though			
8	sheep	cheap	**15**	den	then			

22	bit	bet	**32**	fan	van	**40**	thought	theme
23	sit	set	**33**	off	of	**41**	thursday	think
24	bat	bar	**34**	shoe	vision	**42**	this	that
25	cat	star	**35**	wash	measure	**43**	those	with
26	foot	door	**36**	jeans	jury	**44**	quick	quiz
27	blood	mood	**37**	job	Jacob	**45**	film	speed
28	bay	pay	**38**	price	prize	**46**	pupil	pupils
29	B	P	**39**	bus	buzz	**47**	a Somali	Somalis

Appendix B

Part 1 (1-21) and part 2 (22-47).

	/e/	/æ/		/v/	/w/		stress	stress
1	set	sat	**9**	vet	wet	**16**	captain	system
2	bed	bad	**10**	vine	wine	**17**	balance	
	/uː/	/əʊ/ - /oʊ/		/s/	/z/		stress	stress
3	blue	blow	**11**	sue	zoo	**18**	elephant	democracy
4	shoe	show	**12**	ice	eyes	**19**	barometer	diplomat
	/j/	/dʒ/		/ʃ/	/ʒ/		stress	stress
5	yet	jet	**13**	dilution	delusion	**20**	athlete	athletic
6	use	juice				**21**	history	historical
	/ʃ/	/tʃ/		/d/	/ð/			
7	she's	cheese	**14**	dough	though			
8	sheep	cheap	**15**	den	then			

	/i/	/e/		/f/	/v/		/θ/	/θ/
22	bit	bet	**32**	fan	van	**40**	thought	theme
23	sit	set	**33**	off	of	**41**	thursday	think
	/æ/	/aː/		/ʃ/	/ʒ/		/ð/	/ð/
24	bat	bar	**34**	shoe	vision	**42**	this	that
25	cat	star	**35**	wash	measure	**43**	those	with
	'oo'	'oo'		/dʒ/	/dʒ/		/k/	/k/
26	foot	door	**36**	jeans	jury	**44**	quick	quiz
27	blood	mood	**37**	job	Jacob	**45**	film	speed
	/b/	/p/		/s/	/z/		word stress	word stress
28	bay	pay	**38**	price	prize	**46**	pupil	pupils
29	B	P	**39**	bus	buzz	**47**	a Somali	Somalis

Appendix C

Birthplace (country):	_____
Mother tongue(s):	_____,_____, _____
What other language(s) do you speak:	_____,_____, _____
At what age did you start to learn English:	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (years)
For how long have you been in Sweden:	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (years)

NO   YES

Q1: Do you use English outside of school?   < 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 >

Q2: According to you, are you good in English?   < 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 >

Q3: Do you like English?   < 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 >

Q4: How is pronunciation practiced in the classroom?

_____

_____

Q5: Do you think your mother tongue is an important factor when your teacher is planning for the teaching of pronunciation? How and why?

_____

_____

_____