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of EFL Speaking Skills in Algeria: The Case of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Years  
of Aoudiai Mohamed Secondary School (Ait Aissa Mimoun)  
in Tizi-Ouzou.**

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## *Dedications*

*To my beloved family,*

*My father Mouloud, my mother Ourida*

*To my only brother Menad*

*To my two sisters kamilia and Liza*

*To my grandfathers Ahmed and Rabah*

*To my grandmothers Dahbia and Fadma*

*To my uncles Said, Smail and Brahim and their wives*

*To my aunt Samia and her husband Mouloud and their sons*

*Massilva, Redouane, Fazia. To Boudjemaa, Sami, Mostafa Thileli*

*To my dear friend Thileli*

*To all my friends in the English department*

*Special thanks go to my husband Rafik for his encouragement*

*during all this work.*

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## Abstract

*The present work deals with the problem of the learners' mother tongue interference in the acquisition of EFL speaking skills in Algeria. This study seeks to investigate how the first language of the learners, Arabic and Berber, interferes with learning FL when speaking in the EFL classrooms. Two theories were used in this study in relation to language transfer: the first one is the Behaviorist learning theory and the second one is Contrastive Analysis theory (CA) in order to compare between some elements of the target language structure (phonology, morphology, grammar) with the same elements in the learners' MT. The purpose is to know the differences that lead to the negative interference of the learners learning English language while acquiring speaking skills, and to know whether teachers' give feedback to their learners to overcome the interference of their MT. In this research study, two data collection tools were used: Eight classroom observation sessions were conducted on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Aoudiai Mohamed (Ait Aissa Mimoun) in Tizo-Ouzou and a questionnaire, which was submitted to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school teachers of English in (Tizi-Ouzou) The gathered data were analysed by using computer program called social package for social sciences (SPSS) and the qualitative data were presented referring to discourse analysis (DA). Using all these tools, results were reached related to the questions asked in the General Introduction: 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school English learners make errors due to the interference between English and their mother tongues (Arabic and Berber) when they speak English at various levels such as Syntax, Grammar, Phonology, Lexis and Pronunciation. At the end of this work, some recommendations were made in order to reduce the mother tongue interference.*

Key words: mother tongue interference

## *List of Abbreviations*

**MT** -Mother Tongue

**NL**-Native Language

**FL**-Foreign Language

**TL**-Target Language

**SLL**- Second Language Learning

**CA** -Contrastive Analyses

**EA** -Error Analysis

**EFL**-English as a Foreign Language

## **List of Tables**

➤ Table 01: Teachers' Age.....	29
➤ Table 02: Work Experience .....	29

## List of Diagrams

- Diagram 01: The learners' English level.....30
- Diagram 02: The skills in which learners face difficulties.....30
- Diagram 03: The learners' speaking skills level.....32
- Diagram 04: The teachers' criteria in assessing the learners' speaking skills.....32
- Diagram 05: Opportunities offered to learners to express themselves.....34
- Diagram 06: The occurrence of errors when learners speak English.....35
- Diagram 07: The influence of L1 on English language learning.....36
- Diagram 08: The areas of language in which the interference between L1 and L2 occurs when the learners are using L2.....36
- Diagram 9: Learners' reaction when facing difficulties while speaking.....37
- Diagram 10: Teachers' attitudes towards learners' difficulties while speaking English.....38
- Diagram 11: Factors that generally cause L1 interference with FL.....39

# Content

## General Introduction

Statement of the Problem.....	1
Aims and Significance of the Study .....	2
Research Questions and Hypotheses.....	2
Research Tools and Methodology.....	3
Structure of the Dissertation.....	3

## Chapter one: Review of the Literature

Introduction.....	5
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### Section One: Definition of concepts

I.1. Definitions and Background.....	5
I.1.1. Mother Tongue.....	5
I.1.2. Foreign Language.....	5
I.1.3. Transfer (Interference).....	6
I.1.4. Types of Transfer.....	6
I.1.5. Factors Causing Language Transfer.....	7

### Section Two: speaking skills

I.2.1. Definition Speaking.....	7
I.2.2. The Importance of Speaking in Learning a Foreign Language.....	8
I.2.3. Speaking Difficulties in Foreign Language Classroom.....	8

### Section Three: The Behaviorist Learning Theory in Relation to Language Transfer

I.3. Definition of Behaviorism.....	9
-------------------------------------	---

I.3.1. The Notion of Habits.....	10
I.3.2. The Notion of Errors.....	10
I.3.3. The Behaviorist View on Foreign Language Learning.....	11
I.3.4. Behaviorist View of Language Interference.....	11
I.4.1. Contrastive Analysis.....	13
I.4.2. The Psychological Aspect.....	15
I.4.3. The Linguistic Aspect.....	15
I.4.4. Contrastive Study of Arabic/Berber and English .....	15
Conclusion .....	21

## **Chapter Two: Research Design**

Introduction.....	23
II.1. The Context of the Study.....	23
II.2. The Participants.....	24
II.3. Procedures of Data Collection.....	24
II.3.1 Classroom Observation.....	25
II.3.2. Questionnaire.....	25
II.4. Procedures of Data Analysis.....	26
II.4.1. Qualitative Content Analysis.....	26
II.4.2. Descriptive Statistical Method.....	27
Conclusion.....	27

## **Chapter three: Presentation of the Findings**

Introduction.....	28
III. Presentation of the Results of the Findings.....	<b>vii</b> 28

III. 1 The Results of classroom observation .....	28
III.2 The Results of teachers questionnaire.....	31
Conclusion .....	41

## **Chapter Four: Discussion of the Findings**

Introduction .....	42
IV.1 Discussion of the Findings of Classroom Observation .....	42
IV.2 Discussion of the Findings of Teachers' Questionnaire. ....	51
Conclusion.....	58
<b>General Conclusion</b> .....	60
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	64

## **General Introduction**

### **Statement of the Problem**

Language as a social phenomenon is closely related to human beings since it is a means for communicating thoughts, ideas, feelings and desires. Nowadays, English has become the language of communication and globalisation. Because of this worldwide character, it enables people to get in touch with each other, and it is used in business, diplomacy, sciences and Media. English opens up opportunities and enhances the chance to boost one's professional career and gives access to knowledge, to latest discoveries and inventions, to high specialised training and education, and to the world culture, arts, film, music, and books. For this reason, the Algerian educational system adopted English as a second foreign language after French.

The aim of foreign language teaching and learning is to enable the learners to communicate in the target language. However, it is not an easy task to achieve because of the differences that exist between the native language and the target one at various levels such as Syntax, Grammar, Phonology, Lexis and Pronunciation.

Many works have been conducted all over the world by different scholars and researchers on the exploration of mother tongue interference with learning English as a Second or Foreign language. In regard one can mention Alonso's research (1997) where he conducted a study in order to investigate the interference of Spanish language when learning English as foreign language by the beginner Spanish students. The author found that phonetic, orthographic, morphological, syntactic features between the FL and MT were problematic issues for Spanish students due to the most mistakes caused by transference from Spanish to English. As a result the current study therefore attempt to investigate the issue of mother

tongue (Berber language) interference in learning English as FL. Indeed, we therefore intend to focus our attention on one precise area which is the speaking skills

### **Aims and significance of the study**

The main aim of this study is to investigate the interference of the learners' mother tongue in learning English as a foreign language, which is one of the major problems that the learners face and affect their learning process in the secondary school year 1 and 2. In this research, two data collection tools were used: classroom observation sessions and questionnaire, in order to notice the interference of the mother tongue and to identify the elements of language in which the interference occurs, and whether it interferes negatively or not while learners speak English. Then, to know if teachers help their learners to reduce this problem of interference.

### **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

To investigate the mother tongue interference with learning English foreign language as regarding the speaking skill, the current study seeks to answer the following questions:

**Q1:** In which elements of language does the learners' L1 interfere in English as a foreign language (EFL)?

**Q2:** Does the L1 of the learners, Berber or Arabic, interfere negatively or positively with learning English in secondary school 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year while speaking?

**Q3:** Do teachers help their students to overcome the transfer of their L1 in learning the target language while speaking?

In an attempt to predict the results, the following hypotheses are advanced:

**H1:** There are various elements in which the learners' L1 interferes with learning English language such as Grammar, Morphology and Phonology.

**H2:** The learners' L1 interferes negatively in speaking English as a foreign language.

**H3:** The teachers help their learners to overcome the interference of their L1 while learning the target language (TL).

**H4:** The teachers do not help their learners to overcome the interference of their L1 in learning the target language (TL).

### **Research Tools and Methodology**

In this study, a mixed method approach is adopted, which means that the research uses both Qualitative and Quantitative research methods. This research aims to shed a light on the interference of mother tongue in Learning English as a foreign language speaking skill. The data for this research are collected through classroom observation of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school learners in Aoudiai Mohamed in Ait Aissa Mimoun (Tizi-ouzou) and questionnaires submitted to secondary school teachers in order to collect more data for our topic. The data are going to be analysed, using two data analyses: a social package for social sciences (SPSS) and discourse analysis (DA).

### **The Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation follows the traditional complex structure including a General Introduction, Four chapters and a General Conclusion. The Introduction deals with the statement of the problem, the research questions and hypotheses, the aim and significance of the study, research techniques and methodology and the structure of the dissertation. The first chapter is called "Review of the literature". It reviews the important concepts and different definitions related to our topic of investigation, provided by various scholars, and it also

consists in reviewing the theoretical framework, from what, two theories are chosen: Behaviorist learning theory in relation to language transfer and Contrastive Analyses (CA). The Second chapter is “Research Design and Methodology”. It starts by presenting the research tools, which consist of questionnaire addressed to teachers and Classroom Observation in secondary school 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year, and also explains the instruments of data collection. The Third chapter, namely “The Presentation of the Findings”, displays the gathered data from the research tools. The last chapter is the “ Discussion of the Findings”, which interprets and discusses the results of the research tools in relation to the framework in order to provide answers to the research questions set in the Introduction. Finally, the “General Conclusion”, provides a summary of the main points discussed throughout the dissertation.

## **Introduction**

The present chapter is devoted to the review of the literature that accounts for the major works related to the mother tongue interference on learning a foreign language. This chapter consists of three sections. The First section comprises different definitions and background of the main terms that are used in this study ‘Mother tongue’, ‘foreign language’, ‘transfer’. Then, the second section is composed of speaking skills. The third section contains the first theory used in this investigation which is the behaviorist learning theory in relation to language transfer. In addition, another important theory named “contrastive analysis” (CA) is exposed in this work with the view that errors derive from first language interference.

## **Section I: Definition of concepts**

### **1. Definitions and background**

#### **1.1 Mother Tongue**

Mother tongue is termed by different names such as native language, first language and primary language. It is not the language of child’s mother as wrongly defined by some people. Mother in this context means the source and origin. Ashworth (1992:5) views mother tongue as “*The language which a person acquires in early years and which normally becomes her natural instruments of thought and communication*”. In other words, it is the first language of a child which he or she has to learn and use as a means to communicate his or her thoughts.

#### **1.2 Foreign Language**

According to (Richards & Schmidt R. 2002 :206), foreign Language is “*a language which is not the native language of large numbers of people , in a particular country or region, is not used as a medium of instruction in schools, and is not widely used as a medium*

*of communication in government, media*”. By way of illustration, many countries around the world adopt English as a foreign language, such as Algeria.

### **1.3 Transfer (Interference)**

Different studies have been conducted on language interference, and many definitions are proposed since transfer is a reality in the process of second language learning. According to Wardhaugh (1970:50) “*transfer is a tool used to account for or explain the errors which actually occur*”. He further argues that transfer “is the basis for predicting which patterns in (L2) will be learnt more readily and which will prove more troublesome” (ibidem). Dually et al (1982:77) define interference as “*the automatic transfer, due to habit of the surface structure of the first language into the surface of the target language*”. This means that the learners of (FL) refer to their first language rules while they attempt to use the target language.

#### **1.3.1 Types of transfer**

Ellis (1986) argues that language transfer is the influence of L1 grammatical rules into the L2. Those rules of the first language are fixed in the brain and interfere with second language, giving birth to two kinds of interference: positive and negative.

**Positive transfer** is when the grammatical structures of both languages are similar and, hence the structure of one another can be applied into the other. This kind of interference facilitates the learning process to the learners.

**Negative transfer** is when different units or structures of both languages interfere in the learning of L2. This type impedes and has negative influence on the target language. The learners take the structures and rules belonging to their L1 in order to construct messages in the foreign language, and this will lead to make errors because there are differences between the two languages.

### **1.3.2 Factors causing language interference**

According to Weinreich (1982:64-65), there are many factors that contribute to interference. First, *Speaker bilingualism background*. Bilingualism is one of the main factors of interference as the speaker is influenced by both the source and the target language. Second, *Disloyalty to target language*. This type will cause negative attitude because the learners use uncontrolled structure of their first language elements to output to the target language. Third, *Limited vocabularies of TL mastered by a learner*. The more vocabularies someone has the better he masters the target language and when the learner cannot find the word of TL he deliberately uses his L1. Fourth, *Needs of synonym*. Synonym plays a basic role in language learning and contributes to interference by adoption and borrowing of new words from L1. Fifth, *Prestige and style*. The usage of unfamiliar words (foreign words) during a communication practice aimed to get a pride and interference will appear as there are some words that even the receiver cannot grasp the meaning.

## **Section II : Speaking skill**

### **1.2.1 Definition of Speaking**

Classroom is the milieu where the use of a foreign language especially speaking should be encouraged. Through speaking, the learners make connection between what they know and what they are learning. Speaking is considered as a complicated process of sending and receiving information through the use of both non-verbal signs (gestures, facial expression) and verbal expression. Bygate (1987:1) says that “*speaking is the medium through which much language is learnt, and which for many is particularly conducive for learning*”. That is to say, speaking is a means of learning a language.

### **I.2.2 The importance of speaking in learning a foreign language**

With the rising of the new way of teaching which is communicative approach, oral communication in general and speaking in particular become the aim of each foreign language class because of the importance of this speaking in communication. Murcia (2001:103) explains that by saying: “*The ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of communication*”.

### **I.2.3 speaking difficulties in foreign language classroom**

Foreign language learners face difficulties while they attempt to speak in the target language. According to Ur (2000) there are four constraints in getting learners speak in L2 classroom. First of all, ***Inhibition*** or the feeling of shyness and fear of making mistakes especially if the learners speak to critical audience causing learner’s inhibition to speak in the TL. Second, ***Nothing to say*** is the expression used by learners when they are obliged to speak in classroom as result of lack of motivation. The poor practice of the TL can cause such problems and teacher should make the learner an active participant. Third, ***Mother tongue use*** since it is the language through which the learners feel more comfortable and use it outside and even inside the classroom. This influence of MT leads to the incorrect use of the target language. Fourth, ***Uneven participants***. During the lesson there are various students, some tend to be dominant; others prefer to speak only when they have the right answer and some others remain silent or do not participate.

## **Section III: the behaviorist learning theory and language transfer**

Language is one of the most impressive aspects of mankind which enables humans to communicate. As it is a very complicated system of communication, it attracted the attention

of scholars for generations, they tried to understand and explain the complexity of the process of first language acquisition, and how the child within his first years master subconsciously the complex rules of the language. If the mother tongue learning is a very complex process for scholars, the foreign language learning is a difficult process too, because when it comes to learn a new language, the tendency is to rely on the previous knowledge of the mother tongue.

Among these scholars, behaviorists explained that a habit formation is related to some stimuli and responses during the learning of a new language, there is a transfer of knowledge from a first language. The notion of transfer is related to behaviorism as it is mentioned in the foreword To Lado's 1957 linguistics across cultures where Fries writes:

*Learning a 2<sup>nd</sup> language, therefore, constitutes a very different task from learning the first language. The basic problems arise not out of an essential difficulty in the features of the new languages themselves but primarily out of the special "set" created by the 1<sup>st</sup> language habits (...) Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture.*

The Behaviorist learning theory believed that old habits of the L1 interfere with the learning of new habits of L2.

### **I.3 Definition of Behaviorism**

Behaviorism is a systematic approach to understand the human and animal behavior. The behaviorist approach was the dominant one in the 1950s – 1960s and it was popular among common psychologists and linguists like Skinner, Watson, Lado and Bloomfield; who claimed that a learning process can be seen in the view of habit formation through stimuli from the environment (Ellis 1997:138). *"The behaviorist approach based on learning through imitation, practice, reinforcement and habit formation"*. (Spada and Lightbown 1999.p.35). For the good behavior a reinforcement will occur and a punishment for a bad one.

In order to understand the interference of the mother tongue in learning, it is important to understand the contents of behaviorist learning theory and its influence on learning a new

language .it was the dominant theory of psychology at the end of 1960s with its two notions of habits and errors that appear in the transfer of learning a foreign language through habit formation.

### **1.3.1 The Notion of Habits**

A behaviorist learning theory associates the response of any behavior with specific stimuli constituting a habit. *The American journal of psychology* **1903** defines a habit from the stand point of psychology as “*a more or less fixed way of thinking, willing, or acquired through previous repetition of a mental experience*”. According to the behaviorist theory, the habits as an automatic process are produced spontaneously without thinking and with a lack of awareness about a new one which is a difficult task to prevent.

The learning of habits occurs through imitation of the same stimulus behavior automatically. The establishment of the habits can resulted through the reward of the positive reinforcement and the punishment of the negative one as cited in (Demirezen 1988:137).

### **1.3.2 The Notion of Errors**

According to Lennon 1991 “an error is a linguistic form or combination of forms which in the same context and under similar conditions of production would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the native speakers’ counterparts”. The idea of errors has been especially supported by behaviorism being considered as an impediment to language learning. The behaviorists viewed errors as a result of ineffective teaching or as evidence of failure which have to be remedied by providing the correct forms. The behaviorists tried to explain errors in language happening when there is tendency to transfer from previous knowledge ‘first language’ to learn a foreign one. According to the behaviorist theory the errors appear when old habits are used to learn a new one. Ellis (1986) argued that language transfer in a behaviorist theory in which the old habits of the mother tongue is involved in the way of a

new language producing interference. Ellis *proactive inhibition* (1986) is when the previous language inhibits the learning of new habits. The learner makes transference of knowledge from his/her mother tongue to the foreign language when speaking and those differences between both languages create errors.

It's important to note the difference between errors and mistake .a mistake is a deviation in a learner language caused by memory or concentration lapses, slip of tongue or any other processing problems. An error in the other hand, is a deviation in learner language which results from lack of knowledge of the correct rule (Corder cited by Ellis (1994)).Corder(1993) considered that learners can correct their mistakes but they can't correct their errors because they don't have enough knowledge of the correct rule.

### **I.3.3 The Behaviorist View on Foreign Language Learning (FLL)**

Behaviorist theory attempted to offer perspective about how learning occurs and to explain how learners can get the more difficult aspects of L2 when they are dealing with the differences between the languages. (Cooter & Reutzler, 2004)

The behaviorist believed that foreign language learning consists of imitating, rewards and of developing habits in the FL by routine practice (Cooter & Reutzler, 2004). According to behaviorists, the process of second language learning was about setting new habits. Learners rely on their first language knowledge they recognize in the L2. The first language was believed to help the learning of second language if the structures of both languages were similar (positive transfer), and the learning would be difficult if the structures of both languages were different (negative transfer) (Lightbown & Spade, 2006).

### **I.3.4 Behaviorists View on Language Interference**

The linguistic interference or language transfer is the influence of one language on another. To Odlin (1989), it refers to the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between L1 and any other language that is not perfectly acquired.

The behaviorist view of language transfer was reduced to habit formation. Ellis (1994 :299-302) pointed out that according to behaviorists, the main obstacle to the learning was the interference coming from prior knowledge, this interference was the result of what was known as proactive inhibition which happened when the previous formed habits became an impediment and prevent the learning of new habits .

The Behaviorist theories of L2 learning made stand out the idea of difficulty that the learner has to deal with to learn L2 patterns. The degree of difficulty depended on how much the L1 and L2 patterns are different or similar. There are impediments when there are differences between L1 and L2 patterns, which due to negative transfer lead to error which occurred when there is a different response to the similar stimuli, while on the other hand the similarities facilitate the learning throughout positive transfer .To explain this behaviorist view point Mitchell and Myles (2004: 31) illustrate how a language could be facilitator for one language and inhibitor for another they took this example:

*“ English as first language) learner, learning French as a second language, and wanting to say I am twelve years old which in French is realized as j’ai douze ans (=I have 12 years). Now consider the same learner learning the same structure in German, which is realized as ich bin zwölf jahre alt (=I am twelve years old)”.*

For behaviorists, the process of L2 learning is very different from that of L1 learning. While L1 is a formation of habits through the process of creating stimulus-response associations through imitation or reinforcement, the L2 is a formation of new habit and replacement of the old one. Mitchell and Myles (ibid) explained their viewpoint when they

claim that: “When learning a first language, the process is relatively simple: all we have to do is to learn a set of new habits as we learn to respond to stimuli in our environment. When learning a second language, however, we run into problems: we already have a set of well-established responses in our mother tongue. The SLL process therefore involves replacing those habits by a set of new ones. The complication is the old first- language interferes with the process either helping or inhibiting it”.

The direct result of the applying of behaviorists’ beliefs is to look for method in order to overcome and predict the errors due to the differences between L1 and L2 patterns .The learning and teaching of the L2 would focus on comparing the language in order to identify the areas of difference: this known as Contrastive Analysis theory.

In the last decade, an important interest had been given to the development of research in linguistic analysis, in order to find out the causes of the problems that Students learning a foreign language face when dealing with its sound system, vocabulary, structure and other features and apply them in language teaching. Consequently, Linguists propose contrastive analysis.

#### **I.4.1 Contrastive Analysis (CA)**

Contrastive Analysis (CA) was pioneered in the late 1950s by Robert Lado in his book *Linguistics across Cultures* (1957). (CA) was developed to investigate the differences between pairs of languages with the view to identify their similarities and differences (Fries, 1945: 9). Contrastive Analysis was first developed by Fries who explained it as: “*The most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner*”. (Fries, 1945: 9)

Horn (1980:205) defines (CA) as “*one in which the similarities and differences between two (or more) languages at a particular level are explicated in the context of a chosen theoretical framework*”. The aim has been to provide better descriptions and better teaching materials and providing input to translation studies. It was under-pinned linguistically and psychologically by structuralism and behaviorism respectively, at the time of the (CA), behaviorism and structuralism (structural linguistics) had prevailed in the field of language learning.

The importance of language comparison extends beyond the practical applications. It reveals all the aspects of the compared languages which are important both for the understanding and studying of the languages. In practice, contrastive analysis was considered as predictor of error with assumption that errors derive from of the first language interference. This assumption (that the native language plays a role in learning a second language) is the main idea for (CA) applied to language teaching. Mother tongue influence is sometimes very obvious, e.g. in the case of foreign accent in what non-native English speakers tend to carry the intonation, phonological processes and pronunciation rules of their mother tongues to English making their English accent revealing where they come from even for non-connoisseurs. Lado (1957:2) pointed out that the influence from the mother tongue is not just negative considering the assumption is that the similarities will facilitate learning while the differences will cause difficulties in learning: “*We assume that the student who comes in contact with foreign language will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him and those elements that are different will be difficult*”

Interference or the idea of positive and negative transfer requires a profound examination of the two languages to identify their similarities and differences and where FL learners would face problems. By examining the languages and identifying these problems,

teaching could then predict the elements of negative transfer and correct them. It is in this way that behaviorism, structuralism, and (CA) all worked together to help learning languages proficiently.

One of the most questions in contrastive analysis is the problem of equivalence. We should know what to compare and it is not always correct to contrast the same because what it is expressed in one language, could be expressed in other languages in quite different ways (ex: modal verbs in English are expressed differently in a lot of other languages). Contrastive Analysis has two aspects: psychological and linguistic.

#### **I.4.2 The psychological aspect of CA**

It is based on transfer theory related upon the behaviorist theory of psychology which claims, that human and animal behavior should be studied in a psychological process only. Learning according to behaviorist theory of learning is a product of habit formation through the repeated association between some stimulus and some response.

#### **I.4.3 The Linguistic aspect of CA**

It is based upon structuralist linguistics; it is an approach to linguistics which stresses the importance of language as a system of form a units such as sounds, words, and sentence (Bloomfield,1933)

#### **I.4.4 Contrastive study of Arabic/Berber and English languages**

English, Arabic and Berber belong to different language families. Arabic and Berber belong to the Semitic language that belongs to afro-Asiatic language families, while, English is a member of the Indo- European language family. For that reason and due to the complete difference between the languages in many aspects: morphology, grammar ,syntax and phonology .

## **Script and Writing**

The English language has (26) letters in its alphabet to represent the (24) consonant phonemes and (20) vowel phonemes, but Arabic has (28) consonant phonemes and (8) vowels phonemes, it is the reason why Arabic is a consonant-heavy language. Berber is as Arabic a consonant-heavy language with more consonant phonemes (39) and (4) vowel phonemes.

Another obvious difference between Arabic and English is the way the languages are written: English uses the Latin alphabet which is written and read from left to right unlike Arabic cursive script which is written and read from right to left. Additionally there are no upper-and-lower-case letters in Arabic and Arabic speakers don't actually write most inflections "vowels". Berber is written in Latin, Arabic and Tifinagh script.

## **Phonology**

### **a- Vowel Sounds**

The English language has 20 distinctive vowel sounds. The word "bed," for instance, includes a vowel sound distinct from "bad", "bade ", " bud", "bod. " while The Arabic alphabet has eight vowels, However, these vowels only make one sound each. That means English has almost three times as many vowel sounds as Arabic and five times as Berber. It causes to Arabic/Berber speaking learners of English significant troubles distinguishing some of the words they hear like "sheep" and" Ship" and they have difficulties to saying them correctly.

### **b- Consonant Sounds**

There are important differences separating the consonant sounds that are common in English and Arabic. English completely lacks six different phonemes present in Arabic and much more in Berber. Arabic and Berber are consonant-heavy languages but English words

have 3 or 4 consonant clusters while Arabic and Berber may have 2 consonant clusters. The problem for some Arabic speaking learners of English is to swap “b “for “p “and “f “for “v “ and to insert short vowel sound between consonant clusters; so they say ‘spilite’ instead of ‘split’.

### **c-The word**

The Arabic and Berber pronunciation and stress of words are regular which is not the case in English in which the words are pronounced and stressed randomly. Arabic/Berber speaking learners of English have troubles dealing with the seemingly random nature of English pronunciation- stress patterns like making the difference between the noun ‘record ‘ and the verb ‘ record ‘and how to know that ‘ yesterday’ is stressed on the first syllable but ‘tomorrow’ on the second.

### **d-Elision:**

Elision can be defined as the "omission of sounds in connected speech (Crystal,2003: 158" ).The elision which doesn’t exist in Arabic/Berber and is so common in spoken English is so problematic for Arabic speaking learners of English (AbdAli Nayif . 2012).

Arabic/Berber speakers have difficulties understanding elided words like: Fifth /fiθ/, him /im/, never /ne’er/ and elided sentences like: I don’t know/I du no/ and what do you want to do? /wa da ya wanna do? /

### **1.8.3.3 Morphology**

#### **Noun**

##### **a-Gender**

There is no neutral gender in Arabic and Berber because of this lack, Arabic/Berber speakers use she /he for it:

Native speaker says: “I took my car to the mechanic because **it** broke down”.

Arabic/Berber speaker may say:”I took my car to the mechanic because **she** broke down”

أخذت سيارتي إلى الميكانيكي لأنها كانت عاطلة

## **b- Determination**

Like in English the noun can be definite or indefinite, in Arabic the definite noun has the prefix article ‘Al ‘, there are two differences: there is no indefinite article in Arabic but suffixed ‘n’ after the case inflexion.

Al hissanu hissanun

The horse الحصان - a horse حصان

There is no definite or indefinite article in Berber.

## **c- Number**

Arabic nouns have three numbers: singular, plural and dual. Berber like English has just singular and plural. The plural in Arabic and Berber made differently and there are a lot of plural patterns.

## **d-Case**

Arabic nouns have three cases: nominative, accusative and genitive with different endings that are also found in broken plural, while in English and Berber in the same cases there are no changes depending on the cases.

**Nominative:** ending in “U”, subject in both verbal and equational sentences and predicate in and equational sentence, in Arabic: المبتدأ, اسم الفاعل, الفاعل

**Accusative:** ending in “A”, in Arabic: المفعول به

**Genitive:** ending in “I”, it can be subject of preposition or second noun in a noun\_noun phrase, in Arabic: اسم مجرور, مضاف اليه



The peasant took the mare to the vet.

### Verb

	English	Arabic	Berber
I	took	أَخَذْتُ:akhdh <u>tu</u>	<u>i</u> wiy
you		أَخَذْتَ:akhadh <u>ta</u>	<u>tu</u> wid
You(feminine)		أَخَذْتِ:akhadh <u>ti</u>	
He		أَخَذَ:akhadha	<u>y</u> wi
She		أَخَذَتْ:akhadh <u>at</u>	<u>ti</u> wi
It		–	–

In English language, verbs are not completely inflected either for number or for gender. Only the present third person singular is marked for number, while the inflection in Arabic and Berber is more important and marks almost all personal pronouns.

Here example of the verb “to take” in the past simple conjugated with singular pronouns shows how important the inflection is in Arabic and Berber comparing to English

### a-Particles

In English they show some forms in number of agreements while in Arabic and Berber the agreement is in number and gender.

### 1.8.3.4 Grammar

The Arabic and Berber grammars are very different from English. Arabic/Berber speaking learners of English make errors of interference when they speak or write English.

Here are some differences:

- Arabic has no verb 'to be' in the present tense, no 'auxiliary' and no 'modal verbs'. Moreover, there is a single present tense in Arabic, contrary to English, which has the simple, perfect, and continuous forms.
- No auxiliary, no model verbs and no perfect and continuous forms in Berber.
- The indefinite article does not exist in Arabic and Berber, leading to its omission when English requires it.
- Arab/Berber learners have problems with genitive constructions such as "the boy's dog". In Arabic/Berber this would be expressed as "Dog the boy", which is how such constructions may be conveyed into English.
- Adjectives in Arabic and Berber follow the nouns they qualify and take the mark of gender and number, Arabic/Berber speaker may say: "the houses whites".
- Differently from English pronouns show distinctions of person, number, gender in Arabic and Berber.
- Arabic and Berber conditional sentences are different enough from English to have different names.
- Difference in relative clause in the fact that English and Berber relative pronoun is an integral part of it. Arabic relative clause is syntactically complete without relative pronoun.  
Arabic speaker may say: where is the officer whom you know him.
- The infinitives are expressed differently, Arabic/Berber speaker have trouble dealing with « to », and he may say «I asked him stay».

- There are no tag questions in Arabic and Berber and yes-no questions are expressed differently (with interrogative pronoun *hal in Arabic*).
- Number of gerund construction like « motor running » and « wheel turning » don't exist in Arabic and Berber Ex ": « I got the motor running » Arabic/Berber speaker may say : “ I started the running of the motor “.
- Arabic has causative verbs which contain the idea of making someone do something.
- There are no phrasal verbs in Arabic and Berber.

## **Conclusion**

The chapter has laid out the review of literature of previous works related to our subject of investigation which is concerned with the interference of mother tongue on speaking foreign language in classroom. This is presented in three sections which are definitions of main terms, the behaviorist learning theory in relation to language transfer and contrastive analysis. In the next chapter we are going to deal with research design where we will present the data collection tools and the data analysis that will be used in this work.

## **Introduction**

This present chapter covers the methodological section and the research design of our study. It highlights the techniques used to answer the research questions asked in the General Introduction. First, it describes the context of the investigation and presents the subject of the study. This chapter contains two sections: the first one named data collection tools which consists of a questionnaire submitted to secondary school teachers of English, and classroom observation; the second one deals with data analysis method using of statistical package for social sciences (spss) program to analyze the close-ended questions for quantitative data, and discourse analysis in order to analyze the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the classroom observation sessions.

In the previous chapter (Review of the Literature) we brought up the issue of interference in general to point out a global aspect and a general view of the theories (Behaviorist theory and Contrastive Analysis). Henceforward, in this chapter we will focus only on the interference on speaking skill to stick to the subject of the study.

### **II.1-Context of the study**

The present research is carried out in a concert context in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year in (Aoudiai Mohamed) secondary school Ouagenoun in the Wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou. This research work seeks to explore the L1 interference when learning English language, for this reason we have made eight classroom observation sessions and this was between 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May in order to observe the students L1 interference with L2 while speaking, and we have also submitted a questionnaire to their teachers of English language to know the reasons behind this interference.

## **II.2-Participants**

The participants included in this study are divided into two groups: the first one involves twenty teachers of English five questionnaires distributed in Aoudiai Mohamed in Ait Aissa Mimoun (Ouagenoun), five in Ait Bata School in Timizart(Ouagenoun) and the rest we have sent them via facebook to different secondary schools in the Wilaya of Tizi-Ouzou. The second group consists of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school learners'. We distributed questionnaires to the teachers in order to answer the questions concerning the reasons behind the learners' L1 interference. Then, we have made a checklist to observe eight classes between scientific and literary stream and this with a purpose to know the learners when, where and why their mother tongue interferes with learning L2 while speaking.

Teachers and students forming these two groups are Berber-speaking but their first academic language is Arabic, it's why our study investigates the impact of the interference of both languages: Arabic and Berber with English on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school English learners.

## **II.3-Procedures of data collection**

In order to investigate and understand better the L1 interference with FL while speaking. A questionnaire for teachers and a checklist to observe the learners L1 interference on FL are needed to conduct this research. In addition to a mixed method approach, qualitative and quantitative methods are used to gather and analyze the data. It is used to explore the learners' L1 interference when learning FL, and also to analyze the answers of the teachers' questionnaire. So both methods are needed in this research study.

### **II.3.1- Classroom observation**

It is one of the important tools of gathering data. We have chosen this tool because it is the appropriate one for our research study in order to observe the students when they speak English language and to notice their L1 interference when learning EFL. Classroom observation *“is the purposeful examination of teaching and learning through the processes of data collection”* Bailey ( 2001 ) and it is also a process by which the observer takes a seat in classes to observe and record the instructor’s teaching practice and students actions, then at the end to discuss the observations points. When doing a classroom observation the observer uses an observation checklist, as a list of questions that allows to observe and record information quickly about the topic of the study. Before using observation checklist we need to know the information we need to gather for our study and how to use it. In this work a total of eight classroom observation sessions have been conducted.

### **II.3.2- Questionnaire**

Generally speaking a questionnaire is one of the research tools with a list of questions and it is one of the most used tools because it is easy, cheap, fast and less time consuming to gather information. It allows the researcher to collect a statistical data, that is to say a qualitative data with a non-restricted number of participants. The questionnaire was invented by the statistical society of London in (1838). According to Brown (2001: p.6) *“questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers”*.

A questionnaire could be open-ended format question in which the participants are asked to answer the questions in a free way and answer in their own word and close-ended question takes the form of a multiple-choice question where the teachers are expected to choose one of the responses that have been suggested.

In this research study we have used a questionnaire which is divided into four sections the first is the teachers' profile, the second is English as a foreign language learning, the third one is teachers' evaluation of their learners' speaking skill, and the last one is errors resulting from L1 interference. The questionnaire was submitted to twenty(20) English language teachers' in secondary school, five in Ait Aissa Mimoun and five Timizart and others(10) to different teachers' from different secondary school in Tizi-Ouzou through facebook and all the questionnaires have been received by the end . The aim of using this tool is to obtain qualitative and quantitative data, to gather information concerning our research subject

## **II.4-Procedures of data analyses**

The procedures of data analyses of the collected information from observing students classes, and the questionnaire submitted to the teachers of English language in secondary school level, to be analyzed with a mixed method approach that combine the qualitative and quantitative method of analyzing data.

### **II.4.1-Discourse analysis**

Discourse analysis is a method used in this research in order to analyze the classroom observation sessions and the open-ended questions of the questionnaire. Slembrouck and Collins (2005:1) provide a broad definition that the term discourse analysis refers mainly to the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring connected speech or written discourse.

In this study the analysis of the classroom observation sessions and the open-ended questions is based on discourse analysis which is the relevant tool to interpret the errors made by the learners due to their mother tongue interference and the answers of the teachers' questionnaire.

## **II.4.2-Descriptive statistical method**

Statistical method is used to analyze the findings of closed-ended questions that deal with numerical data to get the teachers answers about the causes that lead the students L1 interference when acquiring speaking L2. The data collected are based on statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) that is a computer program used in the description of the statistical analysis in order to make the result visible in the form of percentages. In this study, the analysis of closed-ended questions is based on (SPSS) which is the appropriate method to make the results visible in the form of percentages.

## **Conclusion**

In Order to know why L1 interferes with l2 while learning and speaking, we have dealt in this chapter with the procedures of data collection tools which consist of a questionnaire and classroom observation. Then we have procedures of data analysis tools used for the analysis of the gathered data. The first one is (SPSS) which is a numerical statistical method to provide percentages result at the end of the analyzed data that have been collected through questionnaire and classroom observation. The second one is DA to analyze the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the classroom observation sessions. The purpose of these tools in this research is to discover the interference of MT when learning a FL in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school students.

## **Introduction**

This chapter deals with the empirical data gathered from the two research tools that have been used (classroom observation and questionnaire). Twenty five questionnaires (20) had been distributed to the secondary school teachers of English (five to Aoudiai Mohammed in Ait Aissa Mimoun secondary school teachers, five others to Ait Bata, Timizart secondary school teachers in Tizi-Ouzou, the rest of the questionnaires we send them through facebook. Concerning the second data collection tool we have made eight classroom observation sessions, with the aim to observe the learners' mother tongue interference with learning L2 while speaking English, to know the reasons behind this interference.

The results of the questionnaire are presented in percentages which are described by using pie charts and bar charts, (since the present work is based on two different research tools). This chapter is divided into two sections, the first one deal with the results of teachers' questionnaire to know the reasons behind the mother tongue interference on learning L2. The second section of this chapter is classroom observation devoted to observe the learners' when they learn L2 and their mother tongue interference while speaking.

## **III. Presentation of the Findings**

### **III.1 Presentation of the classroom observation results**

This section analyses the data gathered from classroom observation sessions conducted on the first and second year learners of Ait aissi Mimoun secondary school in Ouaguenoun (Tizi-Ouzou). In fact, a checklist was to be filled in during each session (see appendix 01) by checking the essential points required in our study. Through the items contained in the checklist, we were able to observe learners' mother tongue interference with learning English language.

**Question 01:** Do learners make errors when they speak English language?

Through classroom observation, we noticed that a big number of the learners always made errors while speaking English. These errors appeared at the level of sentence structure (grammar) and pronunciation

**Question 02:** Do learners interfere with their mother tongue while learning English language?

During the observation session, we noticed that the majority of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school learners of Ait aissi Mimoun interfered with their first language while speaking English. This occurs when they tried to express themselves in the classroom. For example, in our observation session of 1<sup>st</sup> year scientific stream (1S4) we noticed that more than one learner every time when speaking to their teacher they used the vocative particle of Berber “A” .for instance one of them said, “*a miss please can I change the place*”. This vocative style which doesn’t exist in English is a habit transfer from Berber to English.

**Question 03:** Do learners make a direct translation from their mother tongue into the target language?

During the classroom observation, we noticed that a lot of learners were often used to making a direct translation from their L1 to the target language leading to numerous mistakes because of the fact that what can structurally and grammatically be correct in one language might be incorrect in another language. This results from the differences between languages (CA). For example, when the teacher in 1st year scientific stream (1S2) asked her students about accidents happening to children, one of them answered:

Children play in the road or when they cut the road, instead of Children play on the road or when they cross the road (literal translation from Berber and Arabic to English).

Another said, “He became yellow” instead of “he turned pale” (literal translation from Berber).

**Question 04:** Do learners of English face difficulties at the level of phonology, syntax, and morphology caused by their NL?

Through the observation sessions, we concluded that the majority of the English foreign language learners' first and second year secondary school of Aoudiai Mohamed in Ait Aissi Mimoun (Tizi-Ouzou) always faced difficulties at the level of phonology (pronunciation, intonation, stress) morphology (number, case, gender) and grammar (final 's', the use of articles, subject verb order) caused by the interference with their mother tongue.

**Question 05:** Do foreign language learners try to correct their mistakes when their L1 interferes with the L2?

Based on the observation sessions, we concluded that most of the learners of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Aoudiai Mohamed in Ait Aissi Mimoun secondary school rarely tried to correct their mistakes when their L1 interferes with the target language (English). Since they were not aware of the mistakes they committed, most of the time it was the teacher who corrected these mistakes. For example, in one of the sessions we conducted with second year (2S3), one of the students wrote on the board the word 'plaisir' instead of 'pleasure' and it was the teacher who corrected the mistake.

**Question 06:** Do teachers give feedback to their learners while the interference occurs?

From the observation session, we concluded that the teachers often gave importance to the feedback they gave to their learners while the interference happened, and this was done through the correction of the mistakes made by their learners such as providing the correct pronunciation. For instance, when we conducted a session with 2<sup>nd</sup> year math stream, the unit entitled 'no man is an island' (p: 119) when discussing the vocabulary related to the new unit. The teacher asked all the learners to read the word (reported, exploded, asked...) we noticed that

the majority of the learners did not succeed to get the right pronunciation and the teacher corrected them.

**Question 07:** is the interference of L1 a hindrance for learners to learn English as a foreign language?

During the observation sessions, we noticed that most of the learners were often impeded by their MT while speaking in English; this sometimes led learners to face difficulties while speaking English such as (inhibition, nothing to say, mother tongue use and uneven participants). The learners are afraid of making mistakes, for this reason they preferred to remain silent. For example: the mispronunciation of lacking vowel sound in Arabic and Berber like / æ/, / ʌ/, / ɜ:/, /ɒ/.

### III.2 Presentations of the Results of the Teachers' Questionnaire

#### III.2.1 The Results of Section One: Teachers' Profile

The first section of the questionnaire deals with the information concerning the respondents. The first question about the teachers' age, the second one is concerned with the teachers' work experience.

##### III.2.1.1 : Age

Teachers age	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45
respondents	8	6	4	2
Percentage	40%	30%	20%	10%

**Table 1: Teachers' Age**

As it is mentioned (in diagram 1) above, the age of the participant teachers in this questionnaire is ranges from 25 to 45.

### III.2.1.2 Work experience

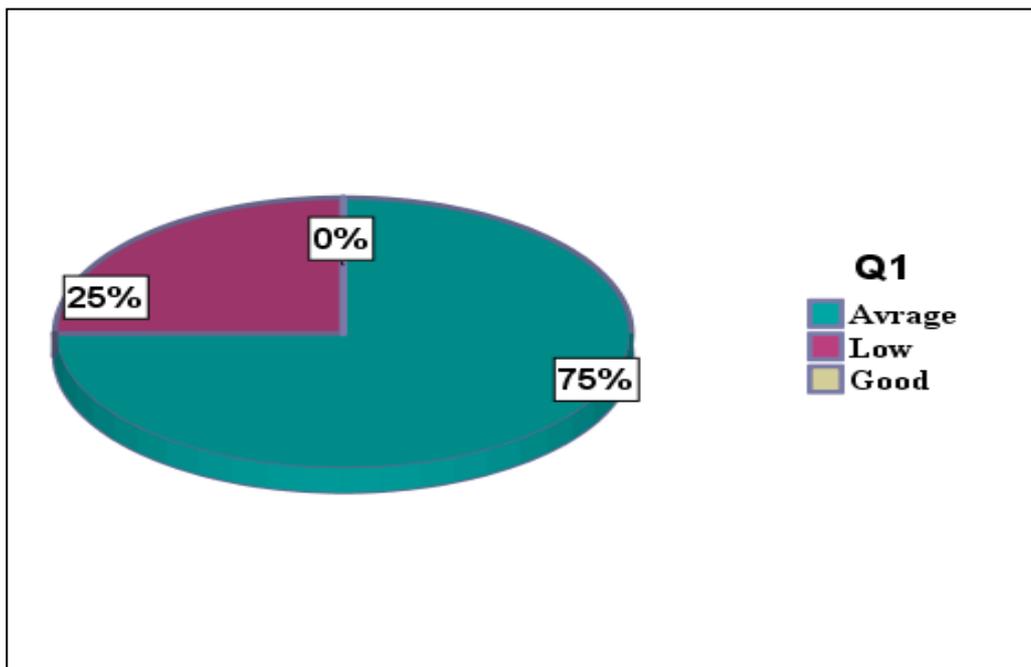
Teaching experience	Teachers	percentage
2-5	9	45%
6-12	8	40%
+12	3	15%

**Table 2: The teachers' work experience**

The work experience of those teachers varies from one teacher to another starting with teachers experience from two years to 17 years of work experience in teaching English language in secondary school.

### III.2.2. The result of section two: English foreign language learning

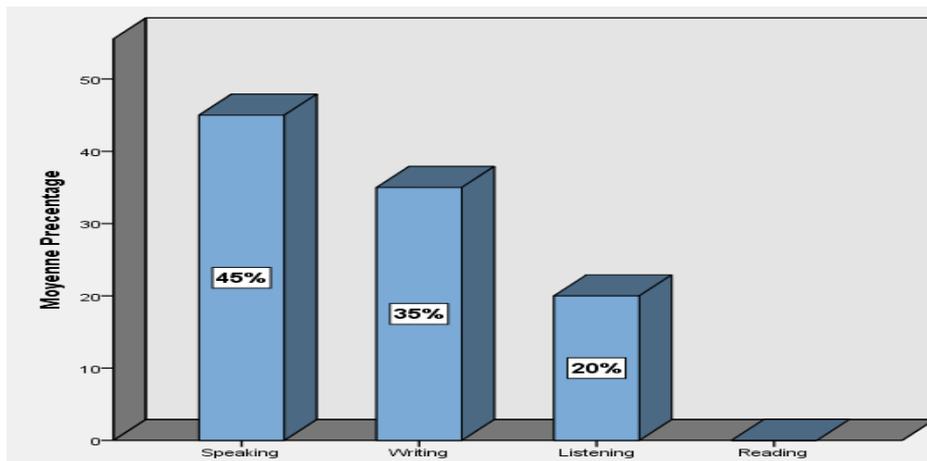
#### III.2.2.1 Q1: How do you evaluate the English level of the learners?



**Diagram 1: The learners' English level**

The majority of the teachers consider the level of their learners in English language as average, and 25% as low and no one evaluate their level in English as good, teachers claimed that their learners' face difficulties to learn English language in the four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking).

### III.2.2.2 Q2: In which skill do they face most of their difficulties?



**Diagram 2: The skills in which learners face difficulties**

45% of the teachers said that the skill in which the learners face most of their difficulties is the speaking skill. 35% of them said they face difficulties in writing skill .and 20% in listening skill. And no one said it is reading skill.

### III.2.2.3 Q3: What are the difficulties that hinder your learners from learning English?

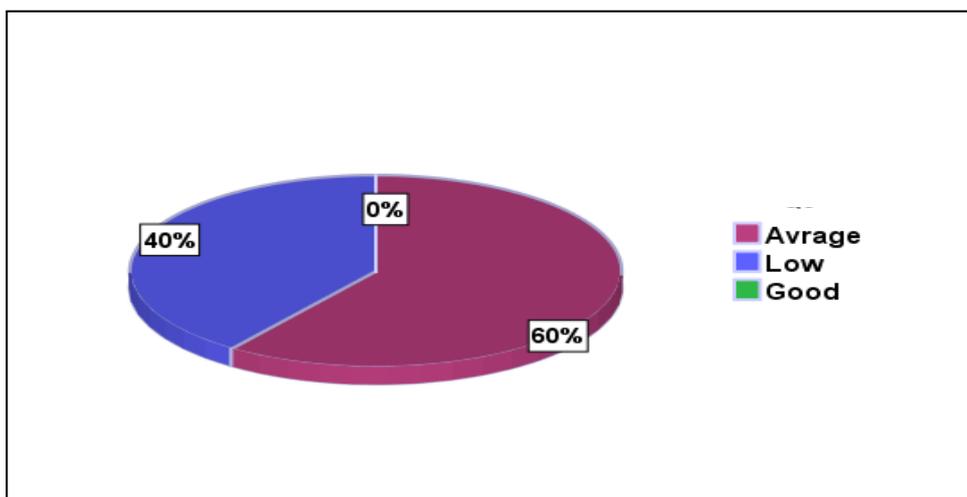
According to the teachers, the difficulties that hinder the learners from learning English as a foreign language is, first of all, the lack of the basic rules of grammar, vocabulary and lack of practice. The second thing relates to the fact that they are afraid and shy to speak in front of their classmates in English. The third one is the role of their mother tongue interference through the direct translation from L1 to L2.

#### **III.2.2.4 Q4: What are the solutions you suggest to overcome the learners' English learning difficulties?**

The solution suggested by the teachers to overcome the learners' English learning difficulties are: using games to learn English language as a fun rather than a nightmare, giving more instructions in grammar, encouraging the learners to speak and write in English most of the time and this can be realized through reading books, short stories and to encourage them to love the target language.

### **III.2.3 Section three: speaking skill**

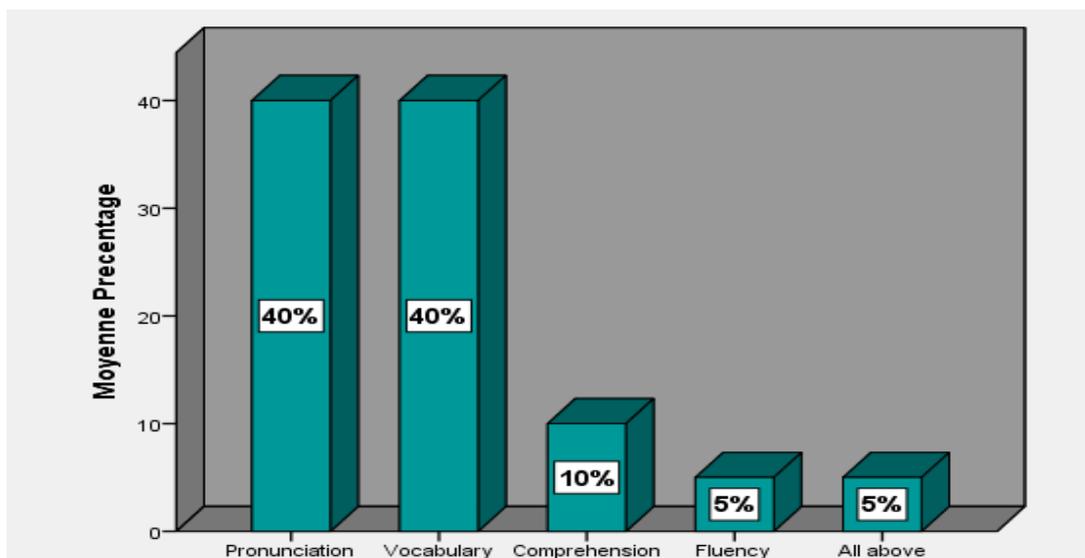
#### **III.1.3.1 Q5: How do you evaluate the learners' speaking skill level?**



**Diagram 3: The learners' speaking skill level**

60% of the teachers said that learners speaking skill level is average and 40% of them said that their speaking English level is low. No one said it is good.

### III.2.3.2 Q6: What are the criteria you consider in assessing the learners' speaking skill?



**Diagram 4: The teachers' criteria in assessing the learners' speaking skill**

The majority of the teachers answered that the criteria considered in assessing the learners' speaking skill is pronunciation 40% and vocabulary 40% , some of them said it is comprehension 10% and a few of them said it is fluency and all above 5%.

Some teachers added some other criteria that they consider important in assessing the learners' speaking skill as: the body language gestures that give meaning more than words, some others proposed good awareness of the grammatical rules.

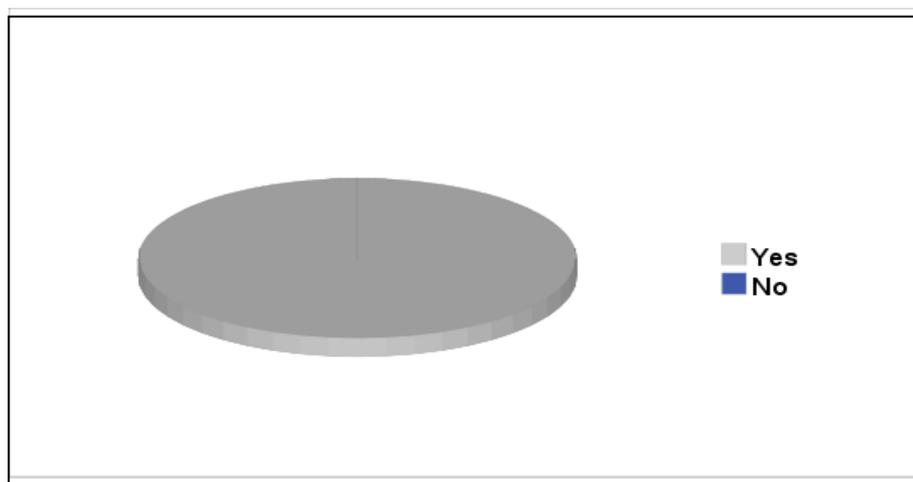
### III.2.3.3 Q7: What is the most common speaking problem you noticed in your learners?

The most common speaking problem that learners face is the lack of vocabulary that makes them having difficulties to express their ideas, their bad pronunciation of the words and also their weak grammatical level. There are also some teachers who answered that the common speaking problem is shyness, and some others refer it to the problem of the learners' mother tongue interference.

#### **III.2.3.4 Q8: What problems do you face in teaching speaking skills?**

The problems that teachers face is that their learners don't like to speak in the classroom and most of the time they keep silent because of their poor level and knowledge in the English language, so they refrain from speaking or participating. This observed generally when teachers ask learners to come to the board or when they ask them to speak.

#### **III.2.3.5 Q9: Do you give a chance to your learners in order to express themselves in the EFL classroom?**



**Diagram 5: Opportunities offered to learners to express themselves in the EFL classroom**

All the teachers answered this question with “yes,” they always give a chance to their learners to express their ideas and give their opinion freely in order to be active participants.

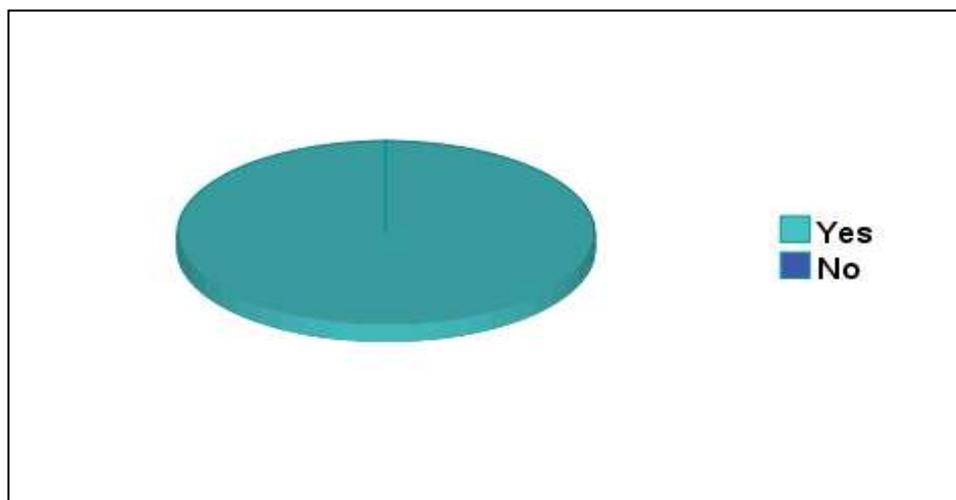
#### **III.2.3.6 Q10: What are the solutions or strategies you can suggest to overcome learners' speaking skill difficulties?**

The strategies given by the teachers to overcome English learners' speaking skill interference with MT vary from one to another, the students should learn more vocabulary and this is through practice, for instance read books, watch TV programs, listen to English songs,

implement laboratories especially for speaking foreign languages and to encourage the learners to express their ideas even if they make mistakes and this is to help them to get rid of the problem of shyness and fear of English language. To motivate the learners, teachers should give the learners a topic of interest in order to motivate them to speak.

### **III.2.4 Section four: Errors resulting from L1 interference**

#### **III.2.4.1:Q11: Do errors occur when your learners speak English in EFL classrooms?**



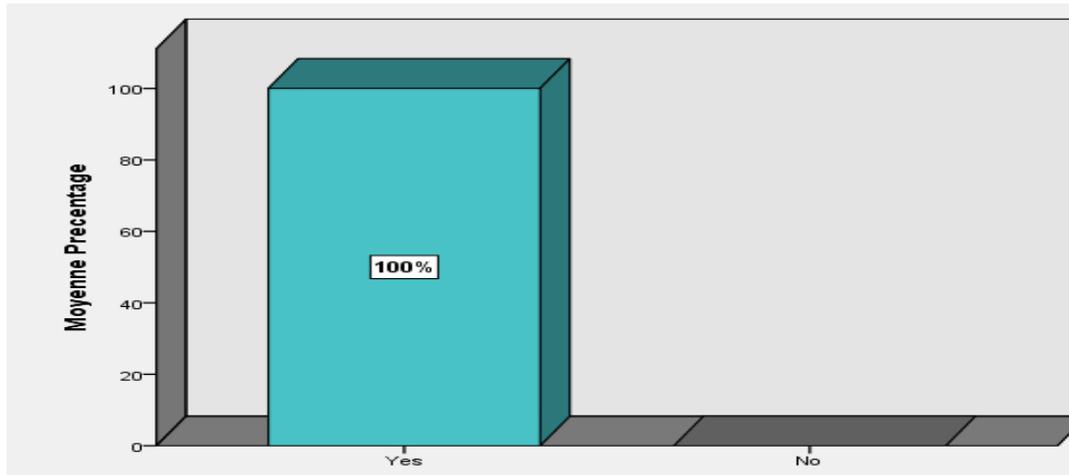
**Diagram 6: The occurrence of errors when learners speak English in EFL classroom**

All the teachers answered that many errors occur when the learners speak English in the EFL classroom.

#### **What types of errors do they make?**

According to the questioned teachers, the types of errors made by the learners when speaking are: grammatical errors such as the mixture of tenses overused, they forget the 's' in the third singular person and omit 'ed' in the past tense. In addition to the pronunciation errors, there is a lack of a good English accent, vocabulary errors, and very often they produced interlingual errors and this is due to their L1 interference.

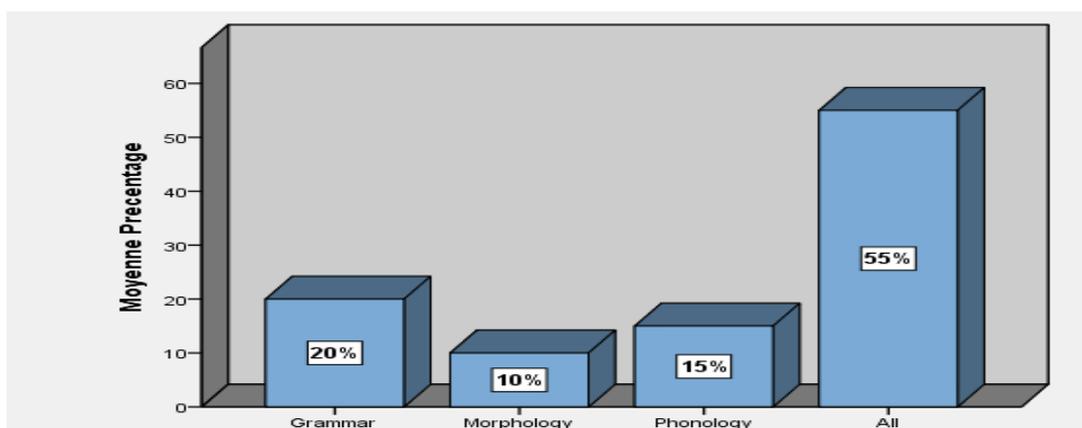
**III.2.4.2 Q12: Do you think that L1 influences your learners to learn L2? If so, is this influence positive or negative?**



**Diagram 7: the influence of L1 on English learning**

All the teachers said that L1 always influences L2. According to them this influence is always negative.

**III.2.4.3 Q13: In which areas of language does your learners' L1 interfere with L2 while the learners are speaking L2?**



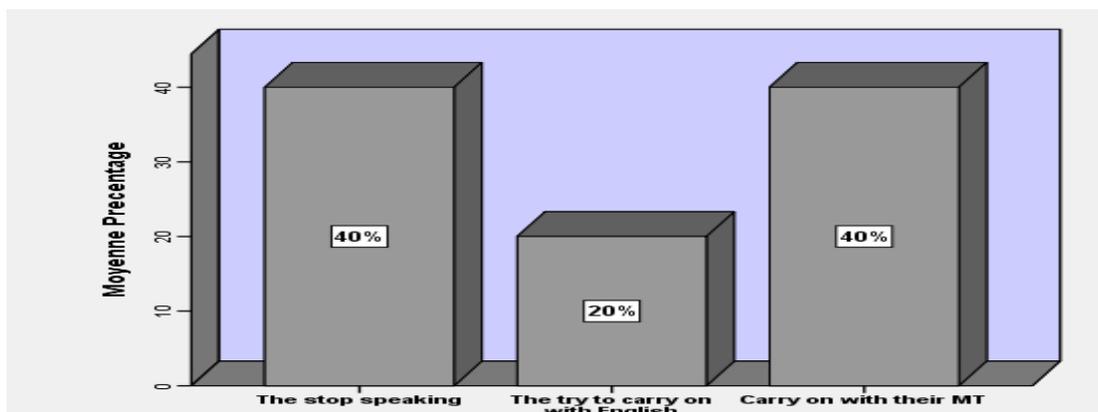
**Diagram 8: the areas of language in which the interference between L1 and L2 occurs when the learners are speaking L2**

Most of the teachers (55%) said that the interference between L1 and L2 when speaking occurs in all the three mentioned areas (grammar, morphology and phonology) (20%) of them said that the influence occurs at the level of grammar and (15%) at the level of phonology, and a few (10%) of them said that it occurs at the level of morphology.

### III.2.4.4 Q14: What are the most common grammatical errors that interfere learning the English language?

The most common grammatical errors according to the teachers are the use of tenses, they mix them in a random way present, past, past continuous due to the differences between their L1 and L2. Also they mentioned the problem of sentence structure (word order, adjective, noun), the misuse of articles.

### III.2.4.5 Q15 what do your learners do when they face difficulties while speaking English?

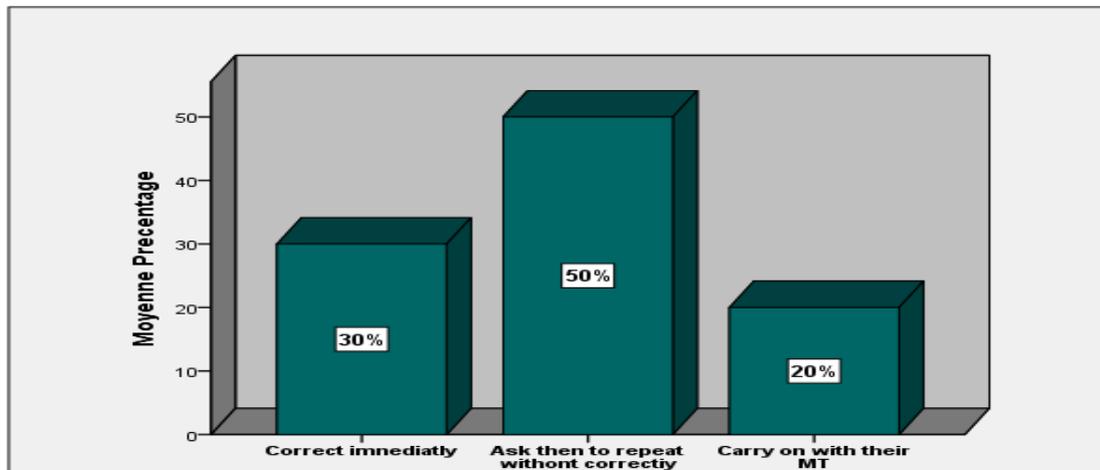


**Diagram 9: learners' reaction when facing difficulties while speaking English**

The majority of the teachers answered that (40%) of the learners carry on speaking using their first language when they face difficulties while speaking English. (40%) of them said that their learners stop speaking completely when they are unable to speak in English.

A few of them (20%) said that they try to carry on speaking with English language despite, the errors produced when speaking.

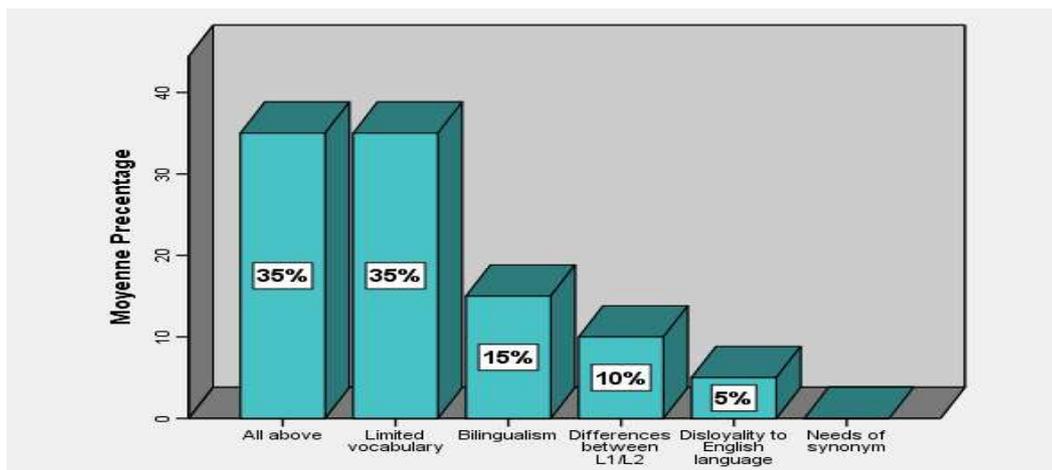
### III.2.4.6 Q16: How do you deal with such interference?



**Diagram 10: teachers' attitude towards learners 'difficulties while speaking English**

Half of the teachers (50%) answered this question by asking learners to repeat in order to make them notice their mistakes. And some of them (30%) said that they correct the errors immediately. Some other teachers (20%) said that they carry on without correcting the mistakes.

### III.2.4.7 Q17: According to you what are the factors that generally cause L1 interference with L2?



**Diagram 11: factors that generally cause L1 interference with L2**

Some teachers said that the major factor that causes L1 interference on L2 is the learners' limited vocabulary and the problem of bilingualism. Some others said it is the factor of disloyalty towards the English language; others refer to the problem of the differences between L1 and L2 in terms of sentence construction. No teacher considered that need of synonym as factor leading to the interference.

Few teachers said that even the similarities between the languages can lead to the interference.

## **Conclusion**

The present work is aimed to investigate mother tongue interference on the foreign language (English) learners' speaking skill. The results of this chapter are conducted through classroom observation to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school learners of Ait Aissa Mimoun and also a questionnaire to teachers of English of the same level. The presentation of the results is in form of (histograms, tables, pie charts). The results provided in this chapter are going to be discussed in the next chapter

## **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the results of the study in relation to the research questions. The findings emanated from classroom observation and teachers' questionnaire are analyzed and discussed separately, even though both research tools treat the same questions and aim to reach the same purpose, in order to better lay stress on the answer of each question asked to teachers and point up each checked item of classroom observation in order to better highlight the results. A total of 20 teachers were questioned and 8 classrooms observed in order to determine the interference of the mother tongue Arabic /Berber language on English speaking skill. The results are then discussed and interpreted in relation to the literature review presented in chapter one. This chapter comprises two major sections, each section aims to provide an answer to the research questions asked in the introduction. The first section deals with the discussion of the result of teachers' questionnaire. The second section discusses the results of the classroom observation sessions.

### **IV.1. Discussion of the results of the classroom observation**

#### **IV.1.1. Learners' errors when they speak English as a foreign language**

From our observation sessions of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year learners of Aoudiai Mohamed secondary school, we noticed that the majority of the learners always make errors when speaking English language at various levels such as grammar and pronunciation (spelling of the words, intonation, stress), they tended to pronounce the word in the wrong way. For example during the observation session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year math stream on the eight of may,2017 at eleven, we noticed that while the teacher was asking the learners to pronounce a list of words related to the Unit (6) "No man is an island" p. 119 'island, reported, asked', the majority of the learners did not succeed to get the right pronunciation of the word 'island', they tended to pronounce the letter 's' even though it is a silent letter. The learners also did not give importance to the stress pattern, for

instance in the word 'reported', they put the stress on the first syllable instead of the second one. And they mispronounced the final 'd' in the word 'asked' which is pronounced 't' instead of 'ed' ( a:skt ). The reason of those mispronunciations is the fact that learners' native language is quite distinct from the English language since both Arabic and Berber, contrary to English, have a regular pronunciation stress, and spelling systems. Learners are not used to dealing with their native language (old habit formation) with such inconsistency of English pronunciation stress and spelling (new habit formation) and find it very hard to assimilate Nneka (2008).

#### **IV.1.2. Learners' interference with their mother tongue while learning English language**

In our observation session conducted with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year learners of Aoudiai Mohamed secondary school, we aimed from the observations of many classes such as the 2<sup>nd</sup> year literary stream (2 L4) on nine may 2017 at 2 p.m to determine whether their mother tongue interference while learning English language. In fact, we concluded that the learners tended to rely on their first language (Arabic/Berber) when they came to speak, write or read in English. Thus, when they faced difficulties to express their ideas, sometimes they go back to their previous knowledge related to their mother tongue to surmount their lack of proficiency and sometimes, as being unaware of the differences between L1 and L2, they tended to apply their MT knowledge and patterns to English. To illustrate this, we picked up some examples of learners from different classes with errors due to the interference with their mother tongue:

The errors of pronunciation were the most committed when they spoke and read, for instance learners mispronounced the following words:

record [rɪ'kɔ:d] pronounced [rekɔrd], desert ['dezət] pronounced [dezert] ,cough [kɒf] pronounced like through [θru:] pattern [ku:] :due to the inconsistency of the stress pattern and spelling system of English and French language influence

Luck [lʌk] pronounced [la: k] and bag [bæg] pronounced [ba: g] due to the lack of /ʌ/ and in /æ/sound in Arabic and Berber and their replacement by the closer sound (/a/ French sound).

Because of the inconsistency of spelling system of English and the confusion in spelling the vowels' sound lacking in Arabic and Berber and because of French influence which was very recurrent, learners committed numerous spelling errors like when they wrote: to leave spelt to live, call spelt coll Bird spelt berd, knife spelt nife, to lock spelt loc, cock spelt coq.

For both speaking and writing, the grammatical errors due to the interference with mother tongue were legion; this will be treated further thoroughly.

#### **IV.1.3. Learners making a direct translate on from their L1 to L2**

From the observation session that we attended in Aoudiai Mohamed secondary school we noticed that the learners often translated directly their messages from their MT to the TL. This is what we noticed in the first year scientific stream (1s1) on ten may 2017 at 3 pm.

For instance, one of the learners said the example: “the door of the house” instead of “the front door” a literal translation from Berber, another said “, the hand of the cup “instead of “the handle” a direct translation from Berber and Arabic. A third one said: “he gives him the right” instead of “he agrees that somebody is right” a literal translation from Berber and Arabic.

The direct translation which is word by word translation without conveying the meaning, is a result of the lack of English learners proficiency, especially lack of vocabulary (syntactic structure, idioms, compound nouns, metaphor.) obliging the learners to rely on their previous knowledge and proceed to word by word translation to overcome their lack of vocabulary leading to interference between L1 and L2. Newmark (1991:78).

#### **IV.1.4 The learners' difficulties at the level of phonology, morphology and grammar caused by their L1**

From the observation session that we attended in the secondary school of Ait Aissa Mimoun, we conclude that the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> year learners faced many difficulties at various levels such as phonology, (pronunciation, intonation, voiced, voiceless, stress), morphology (number, case, gender) and grammar (final 's', the use of articles, subject verb order).

##### **In phonology**

###### **a- Sound pronunciation:**

we noticed that the learners have problems in the pronunciation of some English sounds, for consonants: [ŋ] pronounced [ng], [l] pronounced like French L, [r] pronounced like Spanish ruled 'R' and for vowels they mixed up between different vowel sounds by generalization from pronunciation pattern they already knew, and they substituted the vowel sounds that don't exist in L1, with other sounds which are close to them e.g. they replaced /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɔ:/ by Arabic "Alef" sound or French 'A' in the following words: at, cut, ball, and saw.

It was also observed that learners did not differentiate between some vowel sounds which have more than one possibility of pronunciation and they made interference with French vowel pronunciation especially English-French shared words, we heard learners saying [blu:d], [wa:ter], ['kɔ:nfirans]. These difficulties are caused by the inconsistency of English pronunciation. To be removed

O'Connor, (2003) reported that it is not simple to know the exact sounds the letters stand for or represent in a certain word. For instance, in the words city /siti/, busy /bizi/, women /wimin/, pretty /priti/, village /vilidʒ/. The letters y, u, o, a, e, all of them stand for the same vowel sound /i/. The mispronunciation of the above sounds is the result of the over practice of the first language, a process of fossilization which refers to the incorrect language become a

habit and cannot be easily corrected. The main problem of English pronunciation is to build a new set of sounds corresponding to the sounds of English, and to break down the arrangement of sounds which the habits and the systems of the learners' L1 have been strongly built up.

### **b-word pronunciation:**

Learners had also a problem with the pronunciation and the stress of the words which are regular in their L1 but not the case in English in what the words are pronounced and stressed randomly. Moreover, the French influence is very recurrent, so the words: position - [pə'ziʃn], society - [sə'saɪəti], forgotten - [fər'gɒtn], desert - ['dezərt] were pronounced:

[P ɔ: ziʃn] - [səsɹəti] - [fərgətn] - [dezert].

Some learners had difficulty with consonant clusters in English. They tended to insert a vowel to these clusters when they pronounced them such as childeren, opened, sepring. (Alkhuli, 1983) explained this problem in learning English pronunciation as resulting from the differences in the sound system of English and the native language.

### **c- Influence of Spelling on Pronunciation**

We noticed also that a lot of learners who learnt words from reading, committed errors in the pronunciation: we heard learners that mispronounce the words village ['vɪlɪdʒ] ] pronounced [vɪlɑ:dʒ], write [raɪt] pronounced [wraɪt] beginning [bɪ'gɪnɪŋ] pronounced [bɪgɪnɪŋ], receipt [ri'si:t] pronounced [riceɪpt], affect [ə'fekt] (verb) pronounced affect [ɑ:fekt], island ['aɪlənd] pronounced ['aɪslənd]. This problem is due to the spelling system in English language, many words in English have letters, which are not pronounced and each letter can have many sounds and one sound can be spelt with many letters (Yule, 2001). Moreover, some words which are spelt in the same way (homographs) are pronounced differently. For example lead (the front position) which is pronounced /li: d/, lead (chemical element) pronounced /led/.

## **In Grammar**

It was observed that learners committed a lot of both intralingual and interlingual grammatical errors when speaking; this confirms what was said by teachers about the learners' grammatical weakness and their unawareness of English structure.

Here are some grammatical errors due to interference with the learners' L1 we picked up during the classroom observation sessions.

### **a. Preposition Errors**

The prepositions pose a major problem for a number of reasons such as: number of prepositions in English and a big number of prepositions that have the same function, like the prepositions 'in', 'at' and 'on', the complexity of preposition system, the mismatch between the L1 and L2 and lack of rule of usage in the most cases (Abdulmoneim 2011). Therefore, for Learners who usually found themselves unable to choose the appropriate prepositions, the only way they had, was giving a literal translation which led to a lot of errors because of the differences between L1 and L2.

Examples:

- I speak over the course: I speak about the course
- I told you on everything: I told you about everything
- We did it in last Monday: We did it on last Monday
- I am waiting him: I am waiting for him

### **b .Article Errors**

The misuse of articles was found to be the most recurrent grammatical error in learners' speaking. The main reason that led to the occurrence of this type of errors is the mother tongue

(Arabic/Berber) interference because the learners are confused due to differences in the use of articles between (Arabic/Berber) (see chapter one).

Examples:

Teaching is important responsibility - teaching is an important responsibility:

I don't have pen - I don't have a pen

There are a books - there are books

### **c.word order errors**

Because of the difference in the order of constituents of the sentence in the Arabic/Berber and English, the learners made numerous errors due to the transfer related to the word order. These errors show that learners are still influenced by their L1 word order system. They tended to make the noun follow the verb and the adjective follow the noun contrary to what should be in English.

Examples:

Like said the teacher - Like the teacher said.

Guitar playing is very difficult – it is very difficult to play a guitar

The work difficult - the difficult work.

### **d.verb tense and form errors**

Verb tense is very complex and different to what is done in Arabic/Berber, it was observed that learners struggled in order to use the appropriate verb tense and form of the verb. In Some cases when students wanted to express the present, they usually put the present form of the verb to be + the intended verb conjugated at the present. They also faced difficulties dealing

with continuous and perfect tenses, and conditional form, also tended to conjugate the verb after 'to' of the infinitive.

#### **e. Auxiliary Errors**

The learners displayed confusion when dealing with English auxiliaries. The misuse of auxiliaries is the result of absence of auxiliaries in Arabic/Berber or expressed differently. To overcome that learners relied on their L1 or they proceeded by literal translation leading to errors especially in producing negative and interrogative sentences. These errors occurred in students speaking because of the absence of auxiliaries such as 'do', 'be', and 'have' in Arabic and Berber language.

Examples:

What you do? What do you do?

Go he to school? - Does he go to school?

The kid is plays not -The kid is not playing

I always playing - I am always playing

#### **IV.1.5 The interference of the learners' mother tongue as a hindrance to learn English language**

Through our classroom observation sessions, we noted that the learners committed a lot of errors because of the interference between L1 and L2 caused by the transfer of L1 grammatical structure, spelling system, sound into the L2 leading to numerous errors which are a hindrance to learning English, the pronunciation and the accent are the most obvious hindrance of the mother tongue to learning English (Clyne 1994).

#### **IV.1.6 The EFL learners' correction of their mistakes when their L1 interferes with L2**

From the observational sessions, we noticed that 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year learners' of Ait Aissa Mimoun secondary school rarely tried to correct themselves. This was due to the learners' unawareness of the mistakes they committed and it was the teachers who corrected them. Another reason perhaps they were not accustomed to correct each other or by themselves.

In all the sessions we observed, we counted only three times in which learners corrected themselves. In the first one, it was the learner who corrected himself directly after committing the error when he said "Pression" instead of "pressure", this was a slip of their tongue and the learner was aware that there was a mistake resulting from French interference with English.

In the second and the third time, it was the teachers who asked the learners to correct themselves. In the second one, the learner mispronounced "opened" by to insert a /e/ sound [ˈəʊpened] instead [ˈəʊpənd], the teacher told him that she used to correct this kind of errors, consequently the learner corrected himself. In the third one, the learner made a mistake using an inappropriate verb tense expressing the future with a verb in the present: "I bring it tomorrow", the teacher dropped a hint about it, consequently the learner corrected himself.

We noticed that even if the learners assimilated the English grammatical and phonological rules, the lack of practice is one of the problems leading them to commit errors. To overcome that situation, we noticed that teachers tended to repeat the rules studied previously.

#### **IV.1.7 The teachers' feedback to their learners when the interference occurs:**

During our observation sessions, we conducted with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of Aoudiai Mohamed secondary school. We noticed that the teachers often gave feedback to their learners in order to avoid the great amount of their L1 interference when learning L2. We noticed that most of the time teachers corrected the learners' mistakes and they had different ways of doing that. Sometimes they corrected the mistake and explained the rule especially in grammatical errors, other times they just gave the correction without explanation mostly in mispronunciation, some teachers used to drop a hint to help their learners to find the mistake and to correct it and from this observation we confirm the third hypothesis which says teachers help their learners to defeat the transference of their MT on learning the TL.

According to Harmer (1998) correction helps students to clarify their understanding of the meaning and construction of the language. Teachers should be concerned with how to correct students as one way may be appropriate for one but may not be appropriate for another. Sometimes students can correct themselves when the error is just a slip. Again, students sometimes need a help of the teacher.

## **IV.2 Discussion of the Findings of Teachers' Questionnaire**

### **4.2.1. Teachers' evaluation of learner's general level in English**

The analysis and interpretation of the teachers' questionnaire revealed many facts about the learners' mastery of English language. Our conclusion is that all teachers were not satisfied by their learners' level of English. They assumed that the learners were deficient in the basic

language skills, and faced difficulties in learning English at various levels and with different skills.

Teachers affirmed that learners found it difficult to express themselves adequately: Unity, consistency, order and coherence are obviously lacking in their writing. Teachers considered that most common flaws in the written products of the learners was their tendency to rely on their MT to translate whole sentences from Arabic/Berber into English to make up their deficiency. They also noted that the most basic characteristics of a good text were absent in the learners' writing productions, thing they explained by learners' weakness in both grammar, vocabulary, and their unawareness of English structure. These findings confirm Al-Khsawneh (2010) view that Arabic English learners struggle in performing a good writing production. This was explained by (Benson and Heidish, 1995) by the fact that writing in second or foreign language seems to be the most difficult language skill for language learners to acquire in academic context because writing is a complicated task involving brainstorming, planning, outlining, organizing, drafting, and revising. Moreover, Hadifield (1992) noted that the problem is English lack of proficiency thus, learners suffering from linguistic difficulty is the same as in writing and the other skills.

Teachers said that the learners had difficulties dealing with English vowels and used to transfer Arabic reading strategies to English by focusing more on consonants .This led to difficulties with orthography and phonological processing. They affirmed that the learners found themselves victims of spelling, sound inconsistency and differences between Arabic/Berber and English in script, spelling, sounds and this aspects they were not used to in their MT whether Arabic or Berber, which are consistent in script , spelling and sound. These findings therefore confirm Mourtaga (2000) views' that Arab English learners are poor readers, and often demonstrate exceptional difficulties reading in English. Other Researches go along with this, and suggest that Arab English learners have difficulties processing English vowels,

leading to further difficulties with word recognition and phonological processing and suggest that in their L1, native Arabic speakers rely on consonants alone for word recognition (Panos & Ružić, 1983). This is because of a unique feature of Arabic orthography - most vowels are not normally included in text. This is especially relevant because L2 learners often transfer their L1 reading strategies to learn L2 (Koda, 2007).

Teachers when assessing English learners' listening level said that the learners struggled to understand spoken English and faced difficulties in the listening skill as well. They explained that by English learners' small size vocabulary, this fact hindered their listening-comprehension of teachers' words. So, teachers were obliged to explain these words in other languages (Arabic, Berber, and French). Two teachers who used to give extracurricular activities like (videos, songs, documentary and cartoons). They said that the listening-comprehension of learners to English native speakers was very weak. This findings confirms what Hamouda (2013) emphasized that comprehending English speech is a very difficult activity for Arabic Learners. They face a lot of problems when they listen to English language. According to Azmi Bingol, Celik, Yidliz, and Tugrul Mart (2014), there are a lot of difficulties that learners may face: cultural differences, accent, unfamiliar vocabulary, length and speed of listening.

#### **4.2.2. Teachers' evaluation of learners speaking skill level**

After we have analysed the results obtained from the teachers' questionnaire, in Aoudiai Mohamed, Ait Bata and those submitted via facebook, we noted that more than half of the teachers evaluated their learners speaking level as average and no one considered it as good. Even if the teachers took no account of fluency which goes hand in hand with the mastery of the language as explained by Murcia (2001:103) (see chapter one). Learners struggle when speaking because of the lack of vocabulary which make them having difficulties to express their ideas, their bad pronunciation of the words, and their weak comprehension. Few teachers from both secondary schools added other criteria in assessing learners' speaking level which is the body

language (gestures, facial expression) which could give more meaning to the words. According to the teachers, all these criteria should be taken into consideration in order to be a good English speaker, and this can be realized through the suggestions provided by the teachers to avoid some common speaking problems like the lack of vocabulary, shyness, bad pronunciation of words, and weak grammatical level. Some others referred to mother tongue interference, which is caused by English mastery deficiency: proficiency of FL and interference are inversely proportional (Poulisse & Bongaert,1994),could lead to the speaking difficulties such as *inhibition, nothing to say, uneven participants, mother tongue use* as it is stated in Ur (2000). All that made the process of teaching speaking skill a difficult task for teachers, for the reason that the learners are reluctant to speak because of their mastery of language deficiency, fear of committing mistakes and lack of opportunities to communicate both inside and outside class, lack of social and cultural background (Rabab'ah 2001).

(45%) of teachers considered that the skill in which the learners struggle to perform and face most of their difficulties is the speaking skill. This finding is likely to be explained like previously said in the teachers' evaluation of their students' speaking skill, by the fact that learners were afraid of making mistakes and of the problem of shyness that made them passive participants. Teachers affirmed that the learners were used to committing some basic and irritating errors in pronunciation, spelling, morphology and Syntax. Moreover, they couldn't express themselves efficiently either when dealing with academic topics or common everyday topics. According to the entire teachers' the majority of learners found it difficult to communicate because of English learners' lack of vocabulary, their bad pronunciation of the words, and also their weak grammatical level and lack of confidence resulting from the limited language proficiency, refrain them from speaking. Moreover, teachers noted that the learners' major difficulties arose from the fact that they couldn't use English correctly and appropriately. In addition to this learners' other difficulties were experienced like mother tongue interference, and the fact that the learners are not aware of the English language structure and its use. A lot of

authors and researchers go along with the causes behind learners' speaking skill difficulties mentioned by the teachers. (Alyan, 2013) said that Arabic English learners did not have sufficient vocabulary; they were not able to participate or speak inside the class using their English because they did not have the words to express their thoughts. According to Rabab'ah (2005) Speaking is one of the skills Arab learners struggle to perform, feel shy or nervous to try to use the language inside the classroom.

Therefore, teachers came up with different solutions to overcome the learners' difficulties in English like using games, encouraging them to speak and write in English through reading books and short stories. For the same purpose, teachers suggested that learners should make more efforts to understand the English language structure and to be aware of the differences and similarities between languages, as it is mentioned in the Review of the Literature by Fries (1945: 9). Teachers also suggested some solutions to overcome the learners' English speaking skill difficulties. According to them, the learners should have more English vocabulary and this through reading books, watch TV programs such as (BBC, CNN), listen to English songs, and implement laboratories for speaking English foreign language and encouraging the learners to express their ideas even if they make mistakes.

(Ferris, 1998) said that, teachers should encourage their students to speak and avoid any kind of interruptions when they communicate with their classmates as this will motivate them to participate frequently inside the classroom.

Some teachers considered the learners' accent, which is the prominent manifestation of the interlingual transfer Moyer (2013), as an issue and some of learners may not be understood especially by English native speakers. The learners' accent follows the Arabic /Berber sounds system, and intonation and rhythmic patterns inherited from MT learning as old habits formation. Skinner theory of accent: Whiten, W (2004) psychology themes and variations.

In order to overcome all the learners' problems when speaking, teachers on their part said that they were used to helping their learners and this through offering them the opportunities to take part in the classroom in order to express themselves. That is to say, the teachers encouraged their learners to be active participants and this can be realized through expressing their opinions, sharing their ideas, participating in different tasks like the speaking ones in English language. In this respect Baygat (1987:1) claims that "*speaking is the medium through which much language is learnt, and which for many is particularly conducive for learning*". From this we could answer the second question asked in the General Introduction and to refute the hypothesis that says teachers do not help their learners to overcome the interference of their MT on learning a target language.

#### **4.2.3. Learners' errors resulting from the interference of their mother tongue**

According to the result of the questionnaire, all the teachers said that errors occurred in the learners' speaking English language in EFL classes. The teachers mentioned some errors such as the grammatical errors like the mix of tenses, the word order, and the lack of vocabulary. In addition to the pronunciation errors such as the learners' lack of good English accent as mentioned previously. According to the teachers, learners always produced intralingual errors and this is due to the differences between the Arabic /Berber and English languages at the level phonology, morphology and grammar, leading the learners to make different types of errors. This answers the first question asked in the General Introduction, and confirms the hypothesis which claims that there are various elements of language in which the interference occurs. Thus, all the teachers agreed to say that the learners' L1 interferes on their L2 in a negative way (Ellis 1986). From this, we confirm the hypothesis claiming that the learners' L1 interferes negatively when learning English foreign language. Behaviorists considered this interference as the unconscious and unaware use of a previous learned behavior in order to produce new responses Odlin (1989.p:7). For this reason, the learners should be familiar with English language through

giving more importance to the differences between their native language and the target one, concerning grammar, phonology and morphology in which the learners face all their difficulties. All this can be explained by the fact that the learners rely on their old habits to learn a foreign language; this is termed by Ellis (1986) *proactive inhibition* mentioned in the first chapter. Teachers said that the most common grammatical errors that resulted from the learners old habits (L1) are the inappropriate use of tenses, mix between the tenses, the word order, and lack of mastering of sentence structure (verb, noun, adjective), the misuse of articles,( see chapter one).This is due to the fact that these errors result from the differences that exist at the level of the structure between the languages, which makes learners face difficulties impeding them from performing a good English speaking. As a result of this problem teachers claimed that (40%) of the learners were most of the time used to carry on speaking using their first languages and some others preferred to stop speaking completely and a few of them tried to carry on speaking using English language. This is due to the difficulties in making complete coherent sentences. Since the learners were not aware of the grammatical rules of the English language and if they were, the lack of practice is a hindrance to perform good English speaking. for this reason, the learners when expressing their ideas they struggled in finding the appropriate words, found themselves obliged to turn to their mother tongue in order to overcome their deficiency, this is how the interference occurs. Therefore, (50%) of teachers generally remedy to that by asking their learners to repeat in order to make them review their errors. And (30%) of teachers correct them if they failed to do that. Teachers should correct learners' mistakes to make them aware of the errors produced in such interference.

When teachers were asked about the factors that caused L1 interference with L2, teachers were not unanimous. Some of them considered all the factors mentioned by Weinreich (1982:64-65) as the cause of L1 interference with L2 (see chapter one). Some others tended to choose the limited vocabulary of the target language (35%),few of them the problem of bilingualism (15% ) ,others they chose the differences between L1 and L2 (10%) and others disloyalty to English

(5%). There are some teachers who added that even the similarities between L1 and L2 can lead to the interference. The lack of coherence and unanimity in teachers' answers confirms a lot about some teachers, especially the less experienced, awareness of interference issue which can be explained. First, by their lack of global vision of the problem shown in their limitation of the causes of interference between L1 and L2 in one factor, and in their lack of unanimity, and second by the lack of assimilation of linguistic theories, and being unaware of linguists studies related to interference between L1 and L2, Weinreich, Lott (1983), Albert and Obler (1978), Selinker (1979).

## **Conclusion**

This third chapter confirms that first and second secondary school English learners commit numerous errors caused by the interference with their MT, considered as one of the biggest problems they face in their efforts to achieve a satisfactory proficiency level in speaking English. The data collected from teachers' responses and classroom observation sessions have answered the question asked in the General Introduction. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> secondary school English learners face difficulties dealing with the negative transfer resulting from the interference between their mother tongue and English in different levels of Grammar, Morphology, and Phonology.

To sum up, these English language learners who make mispronunciations and grammatical errors caused by their deficiency in acquiring the needed level of proficiency in English are unable to communicate and to express themselves in English. The learners rely on their previous knowledge of the native language to face the difficulties caused by the lack of proficiency in English. These learners should be helped to overcome the causes and make them do more practice in order to get a satisfactory proficiency level in speaking and to surmount the lack of environment that can make them familiar with English, and the fact that there is no role for English outside the classroom. For teachers, who are aware of all impediments, should equip

themselves with some linguistic theories to research and analyze the causes and to look for solutions by making themselves available to guide their students to be aware of all these differences between Arabic/Berber and English structure, and phonology. Finally, learners need to practice more and to be aware of the importance of knowing the cultural differences in order to get the proficiency to speak English correctly.

## General Conclusion

The present study sets out to investigate learners' mother tongue (Arabic and Berber) interference in learning English language and in acquiring its speaking skill at the level of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year learners' secondary school in Ait Aissa Mimoun (Tizi-Ouzou). In this research, we seek to investigate the English level of the learners' especially in speaking skill and to explain the errors made in the classroom due to their L1 interference. The learners when learning the FL tend to transfer all that they know or all their previous knowledge in L1 and transfer it to learn the target language and simultaneously their old habits transfer too. These facts cause the interference of languages. This study has been conducted relying on two theories of learning named the *behaviorist learning theory* in order to know how our learners learn English language relying on their old habits and background knowledge in the way to interpret their meanings. The second theory is called *contrastive Analysis* by Lado 1957, in which we have compared between the learners' mother tongue (Arabic/ Berber) and the English one and this is achieved through the use of contrastive study to know the similarities and differences between both languages and to know at which levels does the interference generally occur and the reasons behind it.

When similarities exist between two languages, positive transfer occurs and when the differences appear negative transfer results. In our study, the results have shown that the L1 interference on L2 speaking skill is negative rather than positive and this confirms the second hypothesis. We have noticed that the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school learners make errors at the level of grammar, phonology and morphology and they have difficulties at the level of the language structure. For this reason the interference happens.

In the Review of the Literature, we have emphasized the theoretical concepts related to our topic, the learners' mother tongue interference on learning English as a foreign language speaking skill. For this reason, we have adopted a contrastive analysis theory in order to compare

between the native language of the learners (Arabic and Berber with English) to understand the differences between these languages.

The present work seeks to achieve three major objectives. Firstly, it aims to investigate the elements of language in which the learners of English generally interfere with their L1, in order to know at which levels the interference occurs. Then it aims to investigate whether or not the interference that happens between L1 and L2 is negative or positive. Finally, to know if the teachers give help or correct the learners' errors in order to reduce this problem of interference.

In order to gather the needed data, two research tools have been used: a questionnaire distributed to twenty teachers of English in Aoudiai Mohamed in Ait Aissa Mimoun and Ait Bata in Timizart secondary school (Tizi-Ouzou). In addition to the classroom observation in Aoudiai Mohamed secondary school. In order to answer the advanced research questions and to test the hypotheses of this study a mixed method approach was used and this with the combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative data were analysed by using a computer program called (SPSS) a social package for social sciences and the qualitative data were presented referring to discourse analysis (DA). These data are already drawn from two research tools, a total of 20 questionnaires have been distributed: Five to the teachers of Aoudiai Mohamed in Ait Aissa Mimoun secondary school, five were delivered to Ait Bata School teachers in Timizart and the rest (ten) of the copies were distributed through facebook. Eight classroom observation sessions were conducted with the levels of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year secondary school learners in Ait Aissa Mimoun,(Tizi-Ouzou).

From the results gathered from both the research tools: questionnaire and classroom observation, we could provide an answer to the research questions asked in the General Introduction, that mother tongue of the learners interferes with the foreign language and we confirm the hypothesis postulating that the interference is negative. To answer the question that

'teachers help their learners in order to reduce the L1 interference' and to refute the hypothesis that says that 'secondary school teachers' do not help their learners' to overcome this problem'.

It is a hoped that this humble work highlights the learners' mother tongue interference with learning English, in order to know at which levels does the interference occur and to know the kinds of interference that happen and to identify the reasons behind this interference. It is a hope that this study will be beneficial for the secondary school learners in order to give more attention to this problem and to try to make efforts to avoid the interference. At the end, we hope that this modest research will open opportunities for further research in this area of study in the purpose of improving the learning English.

**Recommendations:** some recommendations to avoid the mother tongue interference

**For Teachers:**

- Motivate the EFL learners to be aware of their errors, how their L1 interferes with L2, and the differences between their native language and English one. This would sharpen their awareness of the fact that they cannot apply what is in their L1 to the L2. Thus, they could avoid or at least reduce the amount of their L1 interference on the L2 learning.
- Cultivate a positive perception towards the use of English secondary school.
- Explain the correct rules of pronunciation and spelling, and should help the learners to pronounce words correctly.
- Give feedback to the learners when they commit errors by correcting the errors, explaining the rules, and giving the cause of the errors when resulting from the interference between L1 and L2.
- Teachers should come up with interactive teaching methods to ensure that learners are given an opportunity to interact with each other in English in order to improve learners speaking skills.

**For learners:**

- Have good reading habit and should develop taste for books which are significant in the achievement of good results in English language. In order to develop better their English and to enrich their vocabulary.
- Surround themselves with English by listening to radios, watching TV programs in English, reading books and newspaper. And they should get in touch with English culture and should know English idioms and proverbs.
- Listen to native speakers in order to get the right pronunciation of the words.
- Consider looking at the dictionary for checking the correct pronunciation of words.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I

#### The Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

The present questionnaire is a part of our research work in which we would like to investigate and to know more about the learners' mother tongue interference with English as a foreign language in Algeria while speaking in the EFL classroom. We would really be grateful if you could contribute by filling this questionnaire that will serve to gather data for our study. We pledge that the answers you provide will be kept anonymous and confidential.

Thank you in advance for your precious collaboration!

**NB: you can give more than one answer when necessary.**

#### Section one: Teachers' Profile

Age: .....

What is your work experience?.....

#### Section Two: English Foreign Language learning:

**01-**How do you evaluate the English level of your students? Whatever your answer is, please explain.

Good  Average  Low

.....  
.....  
.....

**02-**In which skill do they face most of their difficulties?

Listening  Reading

Speaking  Writing

**03-** What are the difficulties that hinder your learners from learning English?

.....  
.....  
.....

**04-**What are the solutions you suggest to overcome the learners' English learning difficulties?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

### **Section Three: speaking skill**

**05-** How do you evaluate the learners' speaking skill level?

A) Good  B) Average  C) Low

**06-** What are the criteria you consider in assessing the learners' speaking skill?

Pronunciation  Fluency

Comprehension  Vocabulary

All the above

Others,

Please

specify

.....  
.....

**07-** What are the most common speaking problems you noticed in your learners?

.....  
.....  
.....

**08-** What problems do you face in teaching speaking skill?

.....  
.....  
.....

**09-** Do you give chance to the learners in order to express themselves in the EFL classroom?

Yes

No

**10-**What are the solutions or strategies you can suggest to overcome learners' speaking difficulties?

.....  
.....  
.....

**Section Four: Errors resulting from L1 interference**

**11-** Do errors occur when your learners speak English in the FL classroom?

If yes, what types of errors do learners produce?

.....  
.....  
.....

**12-** Do you think that L1 influences your learners to learn L2? If so, is the influence positive or negative?

.....  
.....  
.....

**13-** In which areas of language does your learners' L1 interfere while the learners are speaking L2 (English)?

- |            |                          |           |                          |
|------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Grammar    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Phonology | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Morphology | <input type="checkbox"/> | All       | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**14-** What are the most common grammatical errors that interfere when learning the English Language?

.....  
.....  
.....

**15-** What do your learners do when they face difficulties while speaking English language?

- They stop speaking
- They try to carry on speaking with English language
- They carry on speaking using their L1

**16-** How do you deal with such interferences?

-You correct them immediately

-You ask them to repeat in order that they notice their mistakes

-You carry on without correcting the mistakes

**17-** According to you, what factors generally cause L1 interference with L2?

Bilingualism

Difference between L1 and L2

Limited vocabulary

Disloyalty to the English language

Needs of synonym

All the above

Others, please specify

.....  
.....

## Appendix II

### The Checklist

Items to be observed	Frequency				
	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1: Do the learners make errors when they speak English foreign language?					
2: Do learners interfere with their mother tongue while learning English language?					
3: Do learners make a direct translation from their L1 to L2 when learning English language?					
4: Do the learners of English face difficulties at the level of phonology, grammar, morphology caused by their MT?					
5: Is the interference of mother tongue a hindrance to learn English as a foreign language?					
6: Do EFL learners try to correct their mistakes when their L1 interferes with L2?					
7: Do teachers give feedback to their learners while the interference occurs?					