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**Error Analysis and the Influence of the First Language on the  
Speaking Skill of EFL Learners:**

**Third Year Licence and Master Two Students of Didactics as a Case**

A thesis submitted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
*Master* in Didactics.

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## **Declaration of Originality**

I certify that this submission is my independent work, and it does not contain any manipulated data. I affirm truthfully that all what has been mentioned previously is true, and the research tools that were used in this research paper are my own.

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## **Dedication**

All praise is due to Allah.

This work is dedicated to my father Naceur and my mother Mokhtaria

To my siblings Ikram, Hatim and Houssam

Thank you so much for the immense support to reach this moment. I could not do this without your constant encouragement.

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## **Abstract**

Errors constitute an inevitable part of the foreign language context. This research paper is undertaken because some of the English sounds are mispronounced repeatedly. In addition, a number of students are struggling with the correct use of the grammar rules. The focal point behind this investigation is to identify the grammatical and the phonological errors that occur due to the mother tongue (Algerian Arabic). This study can raise awareness in the field of language learning by enabling both teachers and learners to know the source of their errors, and it can also provide teachers with a solid foundation about the effects of the Algerian Arabic (AA) on the English as a foreign (EFL) learning process. Therefore, they can design the suitable teaching materials that help in learning English. The present work took place at Moulay Taher University among master two didactics and third year licence students during the academic year 2022/2023. Thus, a questionnaire and observation were used as research tools to gather data. The questionnaire was administered to 61 participants. The findings show that Algerian Arabic has a great effect on the EFL learners' pronunciation and grammar. This occurs because they find difficulty in pronouncing the sounds that do not have counterparts in their first language (L1). It is important to note that learners hardly apply the rules that do not equate with L1 rules. Thereupon, learners should train themselves to pronounce the sounds accurately, and they should intensively practice the English grammar rules to reduce errors because the more knowledge they have the less errors will be produced.

**Key words:** Errors, grammar, language learning, L1, pronunciation, sounds

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## **List of Abbreviations**

- AA: Algerian Arabic
- CA: Contrastive Analysis
- EFL: English as a foreign language
- L1: First language
- SA: Standard Arabic
- TL: Target language

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### **General introduction**

Language transfer or L1 interference is among the most controversial aspects that linguists tackled to identify the areas of interference on the target language. The basic reason behind handling this research is the pronunciation and grammatical problems that EFL learners commonly make. This study may increase the level of error awareness among learners by providing them with valuable insights about the errors that they fall into because of the mother tongue influence. Additionally, it can help also teachers to determine points of weaknesses and strengths of learners. Thus, they can easily reinforce those strenghts and develop strategies to improve the weaknesses to help learners to better learn the English language. In this respect, the present study is dedicated to expose how the mother tongue is impacting the speaking production of learners at the Department of English Language and Literature, Saida University. Master two didactics and third year licence EFL students were selected as a sample population because they are the most accessible by using the non-probability method. These students have been studying English for more than two years and the majority have an intermediate proficiency level. This sample included both male and female students aged between 20 to 45 years old. Furthermore, the researcher used two research tools to achieve the objectives of the current study. First, a questionnaire was conducted to elicit data from students about the difficulties that they have in certain sounds, and the most used techniques in the EFL context such as, translation, the use of bilingual dictionaries. Second, observation was conducted in classroom where data was recorded and later analyzed to determine the grammatical and pronunciation errors that the students frequently commit as a result of the Algerian Arabic.

By addressing the limitations, there are a group of points which need investigation such as, the language interference in vocabulary since the researcher covered only two elements of the speaking skill which are pronunciation and grammar. Concerning grammar, this study could not discuss the misuse of prepositions because of L1.

The current study is designed to achieve a number of objectives which are identifying the speaking errors that occur as a result of Algerian Arabic, highlighting the phonological errors that students commit because of L1 and showing the effect of Arabic on grammar. Hereby, the researcher seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1- How does the Algerian Arabic language impact the EFL students speaking production?
- 2- Does L1 interference lead to pronunciation errors?
- 3- How does the Algerian Arabic affect the learners' grammatical aspect?

Hence, based on those questions a set of hypotheses were drawn up:

- 1- Translating from Algerian Arabic to English leads to grammatical errors.
- 2- The absence of certain sounds (vowels and consonants) in Algerian Arabic impacts the learners' pronunciation.
- 3- When learners are not familiar with TL rules; they adapt the rules of the native language.

A propos of the outline of chapters, this research paper encompasses three chapters. The first chapter was devoted to the theoretical part where concepts related to this study were defined with reviewing prior scholarships to expand knowledge on the current topic while in the second chapter the researcher included all what is related to research methodology; for instance, the research design and instruments that they were adapted to collect data from students. In addition, the third chapter is concerned with the practical side. It was divided into two sections. The first section dealt with the data analysis i.e. both questionnaire and

observation were analysed while the second section was assigned to the data interpretation with giving recommendations and suggestions according to the research findings.

## **Review of Literature**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter is based on the theoretical background, and it encompasses the key concepts related to the study under investigation from previous works. This section will sketch a picture in the readers' mind by providing them with an overview of the next steps that the researcher is going to tackle afterwards. In this chapter, the researcher will report the pre-existing knowledge of the studies that explored the notion of the influence of Arabic in EFL learning by presenting definitions of the key terms; for instance, the first language interference, Algerian Arabic and interlingual. It also draws attention to the major differences between Arabic and English.

### **1.2 First language and foreign language**

First language is the mother tongue that a child acquires during their first years. On the other hand, a foreign language refers to a language that is learnt out of its original environment by not native speakers. When a language is not widely spoken in a certain community, and it is taught in schools as a separate school subject means it is a foreign language (Molar & Catalano, 2015). In other words, it is the language which is not the official language of a given society, but it is presented as a subject matter in schools. The term foreign language is used to express that this language is foreign to a speaker. On the contrary, L1 is the language that the child is exposed to at "mother's knee" Bloomfield (1933, p.43). In other words, the first language is acquired at an early age. When saying that a person is acquiring the first language means that s/he is acquiring the native language.

### **1.3 Dialect vs Language**

Distinguishing between the terms dialect and language is a polemical issue. Glottolog Hammarström, Forkel, and Haspelmath (2017) suggested the idea of mutual intelligibility to differentiate between dialect and language by which if a language variant is not communally understandable, then it is considered as a dependant language, and once a person can comprehend that language without prior learning means it is a dialect of his language. Yet, some reckoned that mutual intelligibility is not always an effective way to do so. John McWhorter (2016) viewed that intelligibility does not function all the time because there are mutually comprehensible languages that normally should be considered as dialects, but they are used as languages and vice versa. The mutual intelligibility aspect does not work all the time since there are languages which other speakers may understand because they are near to their native language; however, they are not treated as dialects and the same thing is happening with languages. Atkinson et.al (1982, p.347) reported that the difference between dialects and languages is affected by politics and ethnic affirmation rather than other reasons which means that distinguishing between these terms is tightly linked with ethnic and political issues .By the same token, Sophia Williams (2022), stated that dialect is a variety of language that is spoken in a certain community. Inclusively, language is regarded as the parent and the dialect is its child i.e. dialect is a form of language. In the same respect, Jones (2020) asserted that dialect is a variety of language that is related to a particular part of the world. For instance, the official language of the United States is English, yet each of its cities has a separate dialect. This means that dialects are types of language that belong to the same language.

### **1.4 Algerian Arabic**

Algerian Arabic is one of the Arabic language variants. These variants represent under-resourced languages. In other words, they are spoken languages that have no script form (Written). Additionally, they are characterized by grammatical and lexical plasticity i.e. their grammar and vocabulary are not stable. The Arabic dialects are different from the



standard Arabic (SA). These characteristics can be applied to the Algerian Arabic as long as it is one of the Arabic dialects. When speaking about the differences between Algerian Arabic and SA, it is worth mentioning that Algerian Arabic entails other sounds in addition to the 28 consonants of SA, such as /g/ as well as, /p/, and /v/ that are taken from the French language because of the touch with the French language in the past (Harrat et al 2016). Though Algerian Arabic is a variety of SA, but still there are some differences in terms of sounds and grammar. According to Berrouba & Gholam (2021), the Algerian Arabic is spoken only in casual settings, and it contains a lot of loan words from different languages, such as French, Turkish and Spanish. This means that this variety is spoken mostly in unofficial situations, for example, when speaking with family and friends.

Regarding phonology, the interdental Arabic sound /ث/, /θ/ is pronounced as /t/ in the Algerian and Egyptian dialects such as, the word "توم", /θum/ is articulated, such as, /tu:m/ "توم" (Saadane & Habash, 2015). Algerians and Egyptians have difficulty pronouncing the sounds /ث/ /θ/, and it is pronounced as /t/. This was endorsed later by Harrat et al (2016) who examined that Algerian people notably the northern ones seldom pronounce the sounds (ث) /θ/, (ذ) /ð/, /ð/ (ظ), and they pronounce instead /t/, /d/. Algerians do have difficulties in pronouncing words /ð/, /θ/.

In the Algerian dialect any sentence can function as an interrogative form, for example, the first option is that questions are asked by using only a tone voice which indicates to the listener that it is a question, or by adding an interrogative pronoun at the beginning.

### **1.5 Arabic language vs the English language**

English is a different language compared to Arabic. This difference is not portrayed only in the historical aspects, but also at the linguistic level, such as phonology, grammar, phonetics and other language elements. This makes both languages genetically distinct.

a) **English consonant sounds vs Arabic sounds**

There are many languages in the world, and each language has its linguistic features, and the sound system that makes it different from other languages. This diversity is embodied in English and Arabic in which they share the same sounds in some cases while they do not in others. Sometimes even when a sound is similar, it is pronounced differently in each of them. Bhela 1999; Grami and Alzughaibi (2012) argued that in English every single sound might have several ways of pronunciation, but in Arabic, the sounds do not which makes the pronunciation task harder for English language learners. The non-phonetic character in English makes the EFL Arab learners confused when pronouncing sounds.

**Table 1**

*The English Sounds and their Equivalents in Arabic*

This table demonstrates the English sounds and their equals in Arabic.

Arabic equivalents	English Sounds
ء	/a/
ب	/b/
ت	/t/
ث	/θ/
ج	/ʒ/
ح	/
خ	/
د	/d/
ذ	/ð/

ر	/r/
ز	/z/
س	/s/
ش	/ʃ/
ط	/
ص	/
ظ	/
ع	/
غ	/
ف	/f/
ق	/
ك	/k/
ل	/l/
م	/m/
ن	/n/
ه	/h/
و	/w/
ي	/j/
ض	/d/
/	/tʃ/
/	/dʒ/
/	/v/
/	/g/

/	/ŋ/
/	/p/

The table above reveals the Arabic sounds that do not have equivalents in English, such as ظ, ط, ص, ع, غ, ق, خ, ض, and the converse is true some English sounds do not exist in Arabic as well including, tʃ, p, v, ŋ, and g. However, this does not mean that both languages are not sharing sounds in common, for example, ذ, د, ر, ز, ج, ت, ب, ا.

Table 2

*The Arabic Sounds that are not Part of the English Sound System*

ض	ق	غ	ع	ص	ط	ظ	ح	خ
/d̥/	/q/	/ʁ/	/ʕ/	/s/	/t̤/	/ð̤/	/h/	/k̤/

As indicated in the second table above, this is the phonemic representation of the Arabic sounds that do not have English counterparts. Most of them are considered as emphatic sounds, and they are produced by blocking the airflow. Thus, they usually refer to an emphatic sound as an obstruent consonant because of the obstruction of air that occurs while producing it.

## b) Vowel sounds

Speaking about the vowel system, Scott (1962) affirmed that the Arabic vowel system is purely distinct from the English one. English has 26 vowel sounds. These vowels are divided as follows: Eight (8) short vowels /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɪ/, /ʊ/, /i/, /ɔ/, /ə/, /e/ and five long /u:/, /ɑ:/

/, /ɜ:/, /i:/, /ɔ:/, /eɪ/, /əʊ/, /ɔɪ/, /eə/, /ɪə/, /ʊə/ and five triphthongs /aɪə/, /aʊə/, /eɪə/, /əʊə/. Odisho's (2005) asserted that the schwa is a remarkable feature in the English language (Belmekki & Djebbari, n.d.). Yet, there are vowel sounds that do not subsist in Arabic, for example, /ɔɪə/, /aʊə/, /aɪ/, /aʊ/, /ɔɪ/, /ɔ:/, /a:/.

There is an extensive difference between the Arabic and English vowels. In Arabic vowels are called /haraka:t/ which means movements referring to the tongue's movement while shaping the consonants they precede, and they are represented by diacritics in writing such as /fatha/, /damma/, /kasra/, /jadda/. The /jadda/ is what is called germination in English. It is concrete and written above the letter while in English it is not apparent. /jadda/ refers to the doubling of consonants. Besides that, the /suku: n/ indicates that the letter has no /haraka/. Furthermore, Long vowels are represented in /mud: d/ (و ا ي).

### c) Grammatical differences

Arabic and English languages differ in terms of the word order in sentences. The English language usually starts with subject, verb and object whereas in Arabic the word order starts as follows: Verb, subject and object. In both cases, the subject comes before the object (IvyPanda, 2021). To explain, The word order in Arabic and English is not the same because in Arabic the sentence starts with a verb while in English the sentence starts with a subject. Kineavy and Warriner (1993, p.606) mentioned that in Arabic adverbs and adjectives pursue the verbs or nouns, yet in English, they precede them which expresses that the adverbs and adjectives come after the verbs or nouns whereas in English they come before the verb or the noun. Due to this contrast, EFL Arab students produce errors. Regarding auxiliaries, sometimes learners do not use them because there are auxiliaries no in Arabic language

## 1.6 Defining errors

Years before, errors were not tolerated, and they were considered as a negative act, but through time this view changed in which the error became a normal part of language learning. Corder (1973) believed that errors are notably crucial in language learning since students learn the language in a discovery method and not mechanically. Errors are learning opportunities in the instructional process.

Gass and Selinker (2001:78; 2008:102) consider errors as “red flags”. To explain meticulously, errors are signs where the learner’s absence of enlightenment is manifested in a second language. Dulay et al (1982) stated error is a “systematic deviation” from the language rules. Errors are a deviance from the right form of the language.

### **1.6.1 Errors vs mistakes**

Drawing a difference between an error and mistake is always the concern of scholars and researchers since this represents a circle of confusion for the majority, especially language learners. According to Ellis (1997), errors are the product of inadequate learning and linguistic incapacities. They cannot be self-reflective because the learner is not conscious of his/her error however; mistakes are slips that a person produces out of exhaustion or inattentiveness. Self-correction is the distinct point in mistakes in which the learner can remediate his mistake.

### **1.6.2 Classification of errors**

According to Corder (1973, p.277), errors are sectioned into four types:

- **Ordering:** It is the improper order of words whether at the syntactic or the phonological level.

- Omission:** Omission occurs when the learner deletes a linguistic element, for example, the third person singular “s”.
- Selection:** Selection is once learners commit errors because of the inappropriate choice of the phoneme.
- Addition:** Addition is the insertion of an item into a word or a sentence; For instance, “She was going home when I saw her.

Dulay et al. (2005, p.61) supported Corder’s classification in which they shared the same division with minor modifications. According to those linguists errors are classified as demonstrated: Omission, addition, misordering and misinformation. It is subdivided into Regularization, archi, and alternating forms.

### 1.6.3 Source of errors

#### 1.6.3.1 Interlingual errors

The term interlingual was introduced first by Lary Selinker in 1972. From a mentalist point of view, learners learn the TL the same way they learn L1. This view can be seen in Chomsky’s universal grammar (1995). This concept revealed that humans are born with a pre-existing linguistic structure which indicates that the child is naturally born with language forms, such as grammar. Both Robinett & Schachter (1983) defined the term interlingual as the errors resulting from the influence of the learner’s native language in another language. Interlingual errors are the errors that happen because of the mother tongue. (Corder & Allen, 1974; Touchie, 1986) assembled that interlingual errors occur predominantly due to the transfer of the mother tongue. These errors happen because of the native language interference. In the same vein, Richard (1974) declared that interlingual is when an error

occurs at the level of the target language because of the first language influence (p.173). This idea reveals that these kinds of errors are detectable in the TL as a result of L1.

### **1.6.3.2 Intralingual errors**

Intralingual errors occur within the target language. They are committed because of overgeneralization, lack of knowledge, inadequate learning, and faulty rule application (Richards, 1971). Learners commit these errors because they do not have enough knowledge, generalize one rule over others, receive a certain rule in a wrong way, or they do not know how to apply the given rules. Erdogan (2005, p.266) reported that when learners are learning a language with a limited knowledge, they commit these types of errors (Cited in Saadaoui, & Nemouchi, 2018). In simple terms, learning a language for the first time leads to errors because learners have not built yet sufficient knowledge.

## **1.7 Theoretical analysis of errors**

### **1.7.1 Error analysis**

Error analysis was developed as a reaction to the contrastive analysis. It aims at explaining errors rather than predicting them. The study of errors provides the teaching staff with knowledge about how to identify errors and reveal the techniques that learners adopt to learn a language. In addition, it feeds teachers with methodologies to remediate errors (Richards et al.1992). It emphasizes the errors made by learners in the target language whether because of the L1 interference or other reasons. Brown (1986) defined error analysis as the process by which teachers can examine, observe and codify the students' errors (p.166).In other words, it helps instructors to detect and categorize errors in language; therefore, they can discover the learning strategies that learners are relying on. Dessououky (1990) declared that error analysis is an interminable operation because as long as people are



still learning languages, they will inevitably make errors. Crystal (1987, p.112) commented that error analysis is a procedure through which the language learners' errors can be determined, categorized, clarified by utilizing the suggested rules of linguists

Despite the fact that error analysis presents an aiding tool for linguists and teachers through which they can determine errors, it could not prevent judgements. Ellis (1986, p.68) revealed that error analysis covers only a parcel of the errors, and it does not give much significance to the language developmental journey of learners i.e. it does not give attention to the learners' progress in learning a language.

### **1.7.2 Contrastive analysis**

Contrastive analysis (CA) was among the first approaches that dealt with errors. It was pioneered by Lado Robert in 1957. According to Kim (2001), CA is a predictive approach in which two languages are compared. It attempts to form a linguistic comparison between L1 and the target language. Additionally, the principles of this approach are to describe, select, and determine differences and similarities between languages and predict the errors as it was elaborated by Eliss (1986). In another way, this approach compares two languages together to mark the similarities and different point between them. Troike (2006, p.34) confirmed that CA is the act of studying a second language with anticipating and interpreting the learners' errors by comparing L1 and TL. This approach gained a widespread attention at that time however; many linguists criticized it for its inaccuracy and practicability. Eliss (2008, p.360) reckoned that it is an oversimplified approach. Moreover, (Hamp, 1968; Gradman, 1973) believed that CA is not factual to predict errors before their occurrence because not all errors can be anticipated with certitude. It is inaccurate to count on predicted errors in an absolute way.

#### **1.7.2.1 Versions of contrastive analysis**

There are two versions of contrastive analysis. First, the strong version believed that learners make errors because of the negative transfer (First language interference), and they can learn easily when L1 and TL are similar (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p.78-79). In other respects, Ellis (1986, p.23) claimed that second language errors are predicted by determining the differences between the TL and the native language. On the other hand, the weak form emphasized the analysis of errors not prediction. This version was developed afterwards into error analysis.

### **1.7.3 Language transfer**

Corder (1981) believed that language transfer is the association between the first language habits and the target language practices. This point was powerfully supported by Dulay et al. (1982) who defined language transfer as the act of transmitting pre-existing knowledge to the present knowledge. In other words, it is to apply certain language forms to another language that the person is learning. Furthermore, Odlin (1989) claimed that the resemblances and divergences between two languages produce the so-called language transfer. To put it differently, the similarities and differences between L1 and TL create language transfer. Lado (1957, p.2) admitted that people transfer their L1 habits and culture to the TL ones. Besides, Schachter (1983, 1992) denied the idea of considering the transfer as a “process”, but rather it is a stumbling block in the language learning process. According to the behaviorist view language learning is a habit formation. Therefore, it considers transfer as a past habit that emerges in the TL, and it has either negative or positive effects.

#### **1.7.3.1 Types of language transfer**

Language transfer is divided into two types which are positive and negative transfer. The positive transfer is to carry the L1 rules that have a negative influence on the L2 process of learning because of the differences between the two languages whereas negative transfer as

its name implies, this type of transfer indicates the use of L1 rules that eases the second language learning (Sabbah 2015, p. 271). Similarly, Dulay et al (1982) claimed when a learner adapts the previously known forms in present situations then it ends with a “correct performance” in TL is a positive transfer. On the contrary, as long as learners are committing errors due to importing old knowledge into their current one, this will lead to negative transfer. As it was revealed by (Ellis, 1995; Gass & Selinker, 2008; Kazemian & Hashemi, 2014), when two languages are similar in terms of the rules, this presents a positive transfer. On the other side, Dulay et al (1982, p. 97) proclaimed that this type of transfer stands on the L1 appearance in the second language learning in a correct “performance”, but it is not always usable; for instance, when dealing with “false cognate” (Saadaoui, S. & Nemouchi, 2018). Positive transfer is not effective all the time especially when facing the same words in two languages, but the meaning is different from one to another. In contrast, the differences between two languages cause a negative transfer.

#### **1.7.4 First language interference**

The first Language is regarded as one of the root causes that control the learners’ errors in language learning. This assertion was proven by Brown (2000); Dulay et al. (1982); Ellis (1997) who agreed that the first language affects the second language acquisition (Cited in Sabbah, 2015). In other words, native language interference is when speakers or writers import their mother tongue into a second/foreign language context. Besides that, Learners sometimes use the first language as a source while learning the TL especially when the two languages are similar. On the other hand, if they are different the influence will be as a negative transfer (Celaya, M., n.d.). The first language affects negatively and positively the learning operation. According to Dulay et al (1982), language interference is the implementation of the mother tongues’ rules in the second language environment.

### **1. 7.4.1 Phonological interference**

Phonological interference appears when speakers pronounce a sound in a manner that is different from the TL, but it is still similar to their mother tongue (Crystal, 1987, p.372). Once L1 phonology interferes with TL learning, learners pronounce sounds in the same way they do in their mother tongue. Furthermore, Wells (1982) declared that learners fail to pronounce the sounds that they do not have equivalents in L1; for instance, /θ/, /ð/ sounds are the most recognizable roadblocks that learners hardly pronounce, and even for natives. This phonetician discussed that these two sounds are the last sounds that children acquire. In the same vein, Berthold et al, (1997) described phonological interference as the intrusion of stress, rhythm, intonation and speech sounds of the native language into the target language context (Cited in Kecyra, 2015). Based on this definition, phonological interference is to adopt the characteristics of speech sounds of the first language to the foreign language atmosphere. As revealed by Al-Badawi, (2012, p.537) observed that Saudi Arabian students mispronounce the voiceless bilabial /p/ and /b/ they pronounce the /b/ sound as a substitute. This researcher examined the phoneme substitution anomaly among Saudi Arabian students where they pronounce /b/ instead of /p/. Apart from this, (Naama, 2011, p.147; Hall, 2003) noticed a phonetic phenomenon when Arab speakers pronounce the initial and final consonant clusters which is the vowel epenthesis. This means they insert a vowel in the middle of consonant clusters; for instance, the word text is pronounced as /tekɪst/.

### **1. 7.4.2 Causes of interference**

Since learners are not sufficiently knowledgeable about the TL at the beginning, they tend to depend on their native language instead. They produce errors when differences exist between L1 and TL because they will rely on their previously known forms of the mother language to achieve a certain task (Ellis, 1997; Richard & Schmidt, 2000). Students refer to

L1 when dealing with TL activities. Nunan (2001) confirmed this notion by mentioning that whenever the differences are elevated, the amount of errors occurring is higher (p.89). When L1 and TL are different; learners are likely to commit errors because of this difference. Furthermore, Lado (1957, p.2) assumed that similar elements to the L1 are accessible for learners and vice versa. In other words, whenever learners find similarities between the languages that they are learning and their native language; the learning task will be easier for them. In addition, (Yule, 2009; Al-Buainain, 2010) mentioned that translation is one of the error sources in the TL. The act of translating from L1 to TL leads to errors in the target language production.

Sudipa (2010) ascertained that once students do not grasp a certain word in the TL, they favour translating forthwith in the mother tongue (Wahyuni, 2016). Students rely on the translation method to do the second language tasks. In addition, Weinreich (1979, p. 64-65) determined a set of reasons behind the interference which are:

- a) Bilingualism: The learner is influenced by both L1 and TL.
- b) Disloyalty to TL: It creates a negative attitude towards the language in which the learner will have limited knowledge. Thus, s/he uses the native language structure.
- c) The absence of vocabulary: Lack of vocabulary encourages interference.
- d) Needs of synonyms: Synonyms help in avoiding repetition when speaking or writing hence, insufficient equivalent words lead the learner to borrow and take words from the L1 to communicate.
- e) Prestige and style: Sometimes people use foreign words to be prestigious, this can make the other side perplexed then interference occurs.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

All in all, the issue of L1 influence has been a concern among scholars, and each of them has treated it from a different perspective. Most of the studies unveiled that the differences and similarities between the native language and the target language cause L1 interference. This topic is considered the centre of language errors due to its fundamental role in affecting the language learning process. In this regard, this chapter aims at giving theoretical concepts and previous views concerning this matter.

## **2.1 Introduction**

The following chapter includes details about the research methodology used to achieve the research objectives of the current study. In other words, the chapter will inform the reader about the methodological aspects that the researcher used to collect and analyse data. Additionally, it describes the instruments, the research design and the methods that this study relied on.

## **2.2 Research design**

The research design is a plan of the procedures that are implemented by the researcher in the investigation. This plan encompasses definite choices that are related to the study. In addition, the selection of the research design is set up on the research problem (Creswell, 2014). Research design is the actions that the researcher adopts to reach the research objectives. In the current study, the researcher needed to opt for both quantitative and qualitative research designs. S/he relied on qualitative research to be able to observe the speaking performance of the target population. In other words, the study required the observation tool (qualitative research) to identify the phonological and grammatical errors that students commit. On the other hand, it followed quantitative research (questionnaire) to measure the numerical data.

Mixed methods research is a research approach where both quantitative and qualitative methods are combined. Timans et al. (2019) asserted that mixed methods research is the type of research design that merges methods simultaneously (p.212). In other words, it joins more than one method as one. Its data is gathered concurrently or sequentially which indicates that both qualitative and quantitative data are collected at the same time; otherwise, qualitative data is gathered before the quantitative and the converse is true. This investigation mixed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative (observation) was used for

description, explanation and narrative reasons whereas the quantitative (questionnaire) approach was needed to attain statistical and numerical analysis. On account of this, the researcher adopted the mixed method to have an in-depth and rich understanding of the given work.

### **2.3 Research site**

The present research takes place at the Department of English, Saida University during the academic year 2022/2023. This department is located in En-nasr Saida in the western part of Algeria, and it was established in 2003.

### **2.4 The target population and sampling**

The target population is the large community that the researcher is interested in and from where the sample is framed. Sampling is the selection of a group of individuals or participants to fulfil the research objectives (Bhardwaj, 2019). To put it simply, it is the sample that the researchers choose to collect their data.

The premise of this study is based upon mixed method research to answer the research questions regarding the influence of the Arabic language on the EFL learning process. It was conducted in Moulay Taher University of Saida in the academic year 2022/2023. EFL master two students of didactics and third-year licence students were selected as a sample population. The current study used convenience non-probability sampling to select the research sample because they were the most convenient in terms of availability and accessibility. Accordingly, the recent work examined errors in EFL use by both male and female students whose ages ranged between 20 and 45 years old. They have been studying English up to two years, and most of them are categorised as intermediate students.

### **2.5 Instrumentation**



The data of this study were collected in one month and a half in intermittent periods. The researcher used two research instruments to gather information from the sample population which are the questionnaire and observation.

### **2.5.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was distributed to 61 students. Twenty-one (21) of master two students and forty (40) from the third year responded to this questionnaire. They were questioned to gain data that is analysed quantitatively. It includes only closed-ended questions such as dichotomous and multiple-choice ones to get clear-cut answers. In this respect, students were asked thirteen (13) questions, and they are supposed to either circle or tick the suitable answers. These questions are separated into two sections. The first section deals with language proficiency, and the second one entails questions related to first-language interference. The researcher gathered a large number of data by using this tool.

### **2.5.2 Observation**

Observation is to monitor events, behaviours, people or objects that are related to a phenomenon that the researcher is interested in as they occur. This method is dependable because it encourages direct contact with the participants (Ekka, 2021). This means that the researcher can observe the target population's behaviours and activities in their natural environment. Besides this, it is used when the wanted data cannot be collected by other research tools such as questionnaires and interviews. On the other hand, it is time-consuming, and it demands the availability of the researcher. Queirós et al.,(2017) reckoned that the observation is a long delayed process, and it needs availability to visit the places where it is done. A further disadvantage, it envisages the Hawthorne effect (Ekka, 2021). This notion reveals that people are likely to behave differently, and they modify attitudes when they are aware that they are being observed.

In this study, the researcher conducted an observation as a second research tool to obtain vivid data. In that respect, the participants' pronunciation and grammar were observed in their natural settings. This allowed the researcher to earn data that is hard to be collected with other research instruments where s/he examined the influence of the mother tongue and the student's experiences. Both participant and non-participant observations were implemented to engage in data collection. Participant observation is when the researcher plays an active role in the process while non-participant s/he is not involved, but rather watches from the sidelines. As observational technique, the investigator had to take notes and record the relevant information to make the operation achievable.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

The researcher combined both qualitative and quantitative techniques for the data analysis process in which s/he provided a qualitative description of the grammatical and pronunciation errors that EFL students usually make along with the use of the quantitative technique to analyse numerically the collected data by using percentages and measurements. The researcher considers the implementation of these techniques together applicable because they help in creating a balance between statistics and explanations.

### **3.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the researcher will be moving from theory to practice where s/he elaborates on the findings obtained by questionnaires and observation. In other words, this part discusses the analysis and interpretation of the collected data and discloses the errors that EFL learners produce while learning English as a result of L1. It also give some recommendations and suggestions for future actions.

### **3.2 Data analysis**

#### **3.2.1 Questionnaire Analysis**

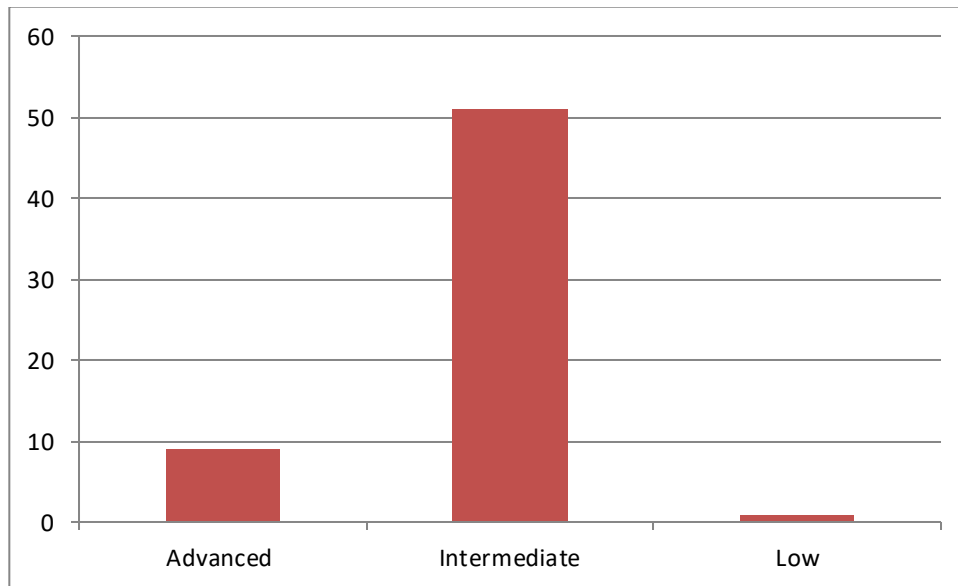
##### **Section one: Language proficiency**

This part contains 6 questions about the student's proficiency level, the most complex skill, the skill where that they commit more errors and the sounds that they find difficulties to produce them.

##### **Question 1: How would you rate your English language level?**

**Figure 1**

*The Score of the Students' Proficiency Level*

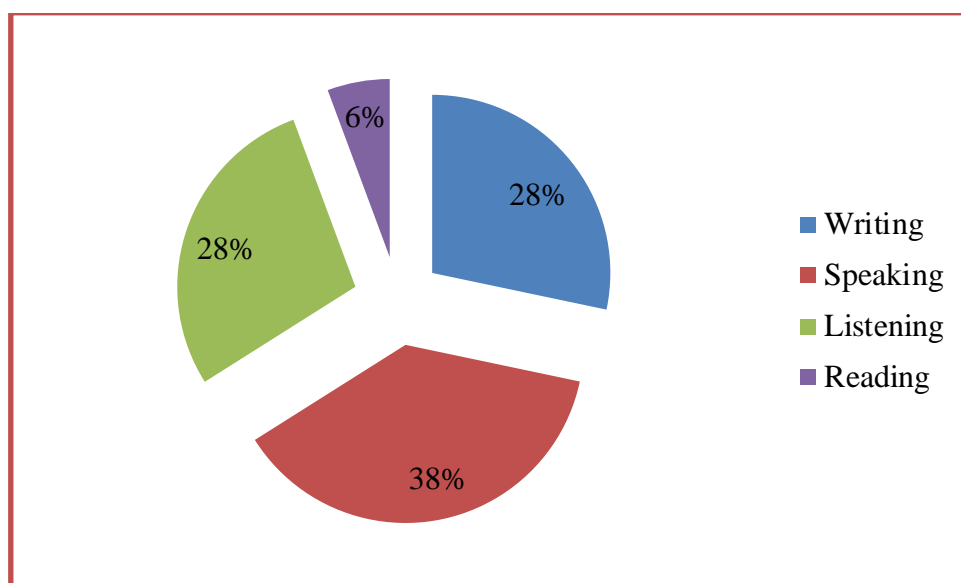


The following bar-graph unveils the students' level. 84% rank themselves in the intermediate category while 14% categorise themselves as advanced students of English. Only 2% have a limited proficiency level. Both intermediate and advanced students might be dynamic and interactive learners. The lack of practice is one of the reasons behind the limited proficiency level because being in a frequent contact with a language increases the linguistic competence of the learner.

### **Question2: What is the most complex skill for you?**

**Figure 2**

*The Most Complex Skill*

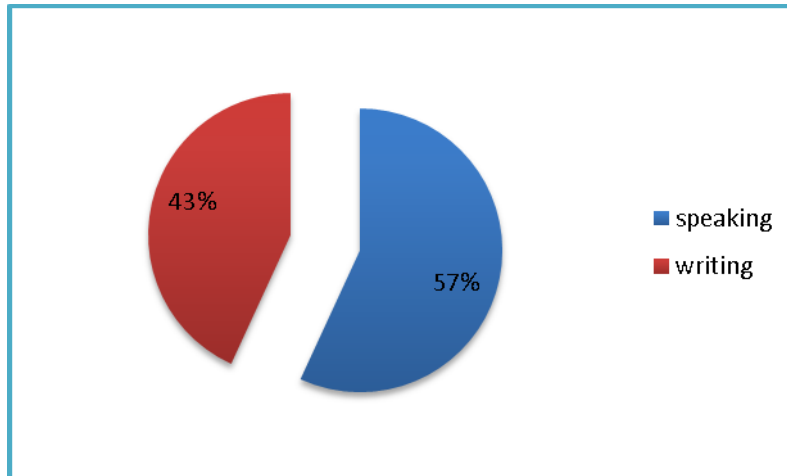


The given figure classifies skills from the most to the less complex one. In this regard, most of the students 38% selected speaking as the most complex skill which implies that many students are having problems in this skill. Both writing and listening skills are at the same rate 28% whereas just 6% of students believe that the reading skill is the most complicated maybe because they have a poor reading skill, or they feel paralyzed when making errors while reading in front of others. The learners who think that writing is complex may have a limited linguistic competence to form well-structured sentences. In addition, this skill requires doing several tasks at once. Many students find the listening tasks hard because it needs extensive attention to decode the spoken words. On the other hand, the speaking skill is one of the most complex skills because the speaker goes through a question-answer process which requires immediate responses.

### Question 3: Do you commit more errors in speaking or in writing?

**Figure 3**

*Learners' Errors in Writing and Speaking*



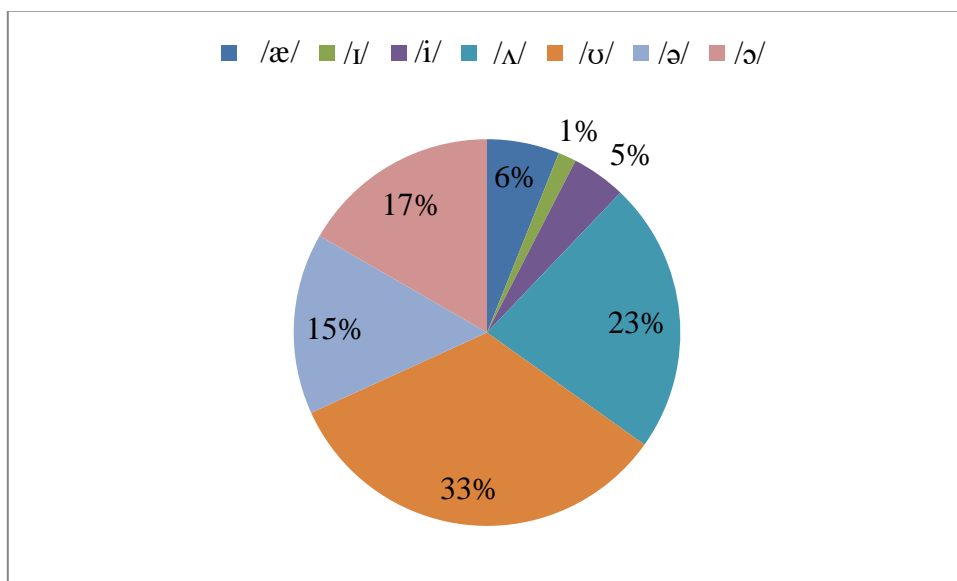
This pie-chart reveals the skill where students frequently commit errors. It indicates that the majority opt for the speaking skill i.e. 57 % commit errors in speaking while 43% of students in writing. According to Figure 2, since speaking is the most complex, students are likely to commit more errors when dealing with it. They make errors while speaking more than writing because they do not take much time to choose words and think before speaking while in writing students are given enough time to submit their assignments which means that they have the opportunity for correcting and adjusting. Those who struggle with writing errors may have difficulties in respecting the punctuation rules.

#### **Question 4: Circle the English vowels that you find difficult to pronounce.**

##### **a- Short vowels**

**Figure 4**

*The Most Difficult Short Vowels*

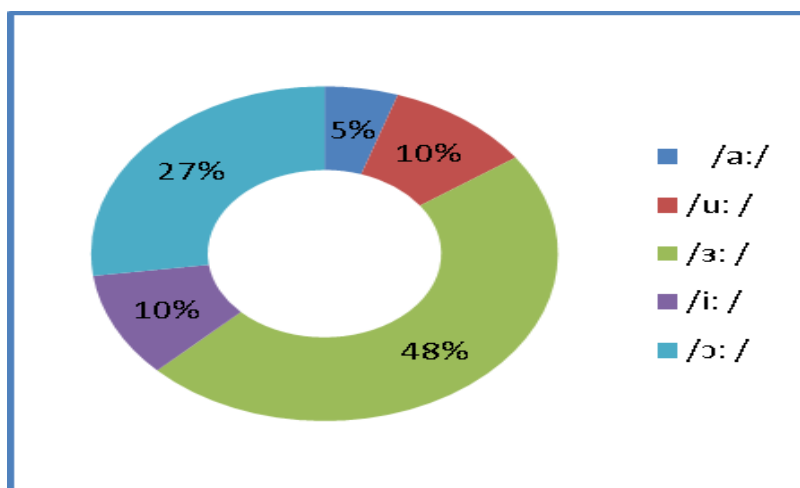


The above-mentioned percentages portray the short vowels that constitute hindrances for learners. In this sense, findings show that 33% of students are facing difficulty incorrectly pronouncing the /ʊ/ sound and 23% with /ʌ/. Moreover, 17% think that the /ɔ/ sound is among the hardest sounds to pronounce while 15 % find the schwa /ə/ difficult. 6% find themselves unable to pronounce /æ/. On the other hand, a small number of learners have problems with /i/ (5%) and /ɪ/ (1%). Students are not aware of the difference between the two /i/ and /ɪ/, and this is reflected in their answers, treating them as the least difficult.

### **b- Long vowels**

**Figure 5**

*The Hardest Long vowels*

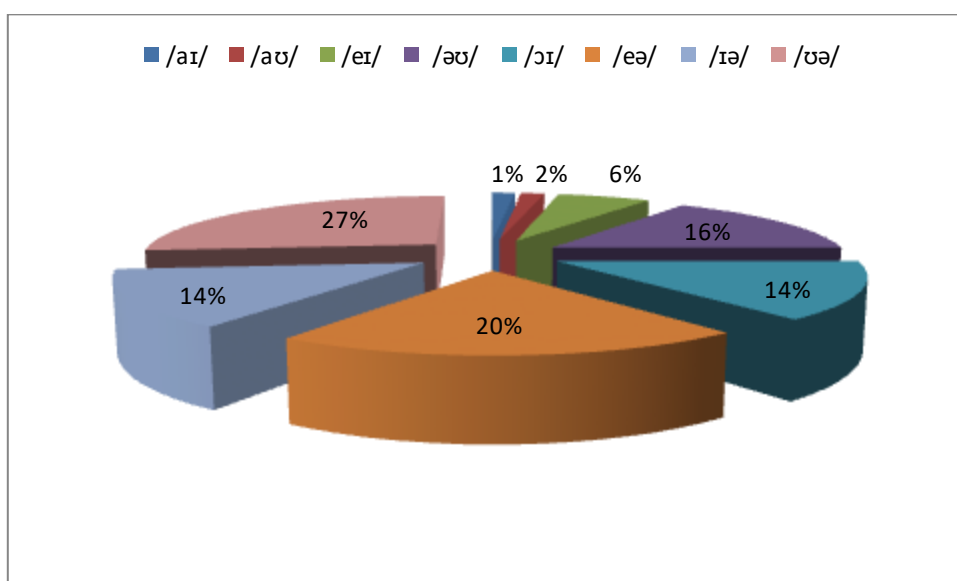


In this chart, the long vowels that students find difficulty to pronounce are measured. A greater number is given for the sound /ɜ:/ in which 48% reckon that it is the most difficult sound for them. On the other hand, /i:/, /u:/ and /a:/ obtained the lowest numbers from 5% to 10%. In addition, a considerable number of students (27%) face difficulty to pronounce the /ɔ:/ sound. EFL learners find the long vowels difficult because they take time to be produced.

### c- Diphthongs

**Figure 6**

*The Most Difficult Diphthongs for EFL Students*



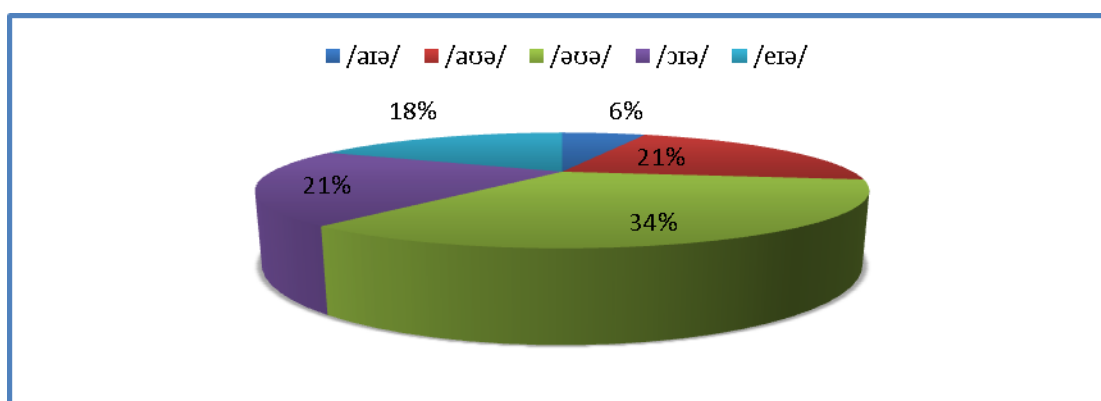


This pie chart discloses the most difficult diphthongs for EFL students. 27% of learners pronounce the /ʊə/ hardly, and 20% classify /eə/ as a difficult sound. Additionally, 16% face problems while pronouncing the /əʊ/sound. An equal number of students 14% think that /ɔɪ/ and /ɪə/ are difficult to produce while few students presume that 1% /aɪ/, 2% /aʊ/, 6% /eɪ/ are the least complicated though /aɪ/ and /aʊ/ are a combination of two strong sounds which shows that students are not cognizant of the difficulty of some sounds. Students have difficulties with diphthongs because they are demanding than the monophthongs.

### d- Triphthongs

**Figure 7**

*The Students' Difficulties with Triphthongs*



The pie-chart above demonstrates the triphthongs that are challenging to utter. Upon this, both /aʊə/ and /ɔɪə/ have an equal percentage of 21% while 34% see the /əʊə/ sound difficult to pronounce. On the other hand, only a few students 6% find the difficulty to realise /aɪə/. Further, 18% of learners see /eɪə/ as a difficult sound. When speaking about triphthongs, more difficulty is mentioned in triphthongs compared to other sounds, and this refers to the lack of exposure to those sounds in both middle and secondary schools.

**Question 5: Circle the English consonants that you find difficult to pronounce.**

### **e- Consonants**

There are several challenges that EFL learners meet when dealing with consonants. In this regard, 20% of students have difficulty in the sound /θ/ while 10% are in /ð/. 18% struggle with /dʒ/ difficult and 15 % with /tʃ/ sound. The aforementioned sounds are usually hard to pronounce for EFL learners because they do not have counterparts in Algerian Arabic. The same number of students 2 % have problems with /g/, /k/, /l/, /f /and /v/. The / f/ and /v/ sounds are a source of confusion. They are both labiodental sounds i.e. Learners use them interchangeably because they have the same place of articulation. These sounds /g/ and /v/ are borrowed from the French language, and they are used frequently in daily life which makes students easily pronounce them in English. For this reason, very few students find difficulty in these sounds. 3% classify /j/ as difficult. Few students have difficulty with this sound because it is commonly shared in both Algerian Arabic and English. 5% consider the production of the /r/, /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ sounds complicated. Only 1% has problems in /s/ and /n/, and 7 % categorise /ŋ/ as difficult. /s/ and /n/ are among the easiest sounds because they exist almost in all languages which lead to fewer errors when pronouncing them compared to other sounds that do not have counterparts in Arabic such as, /dʒ/ and /tʃ/.

**Question 6: Circle the vowels and consonants that your friend classmates usually mispronounce.**

### **a- Consonants sounds**

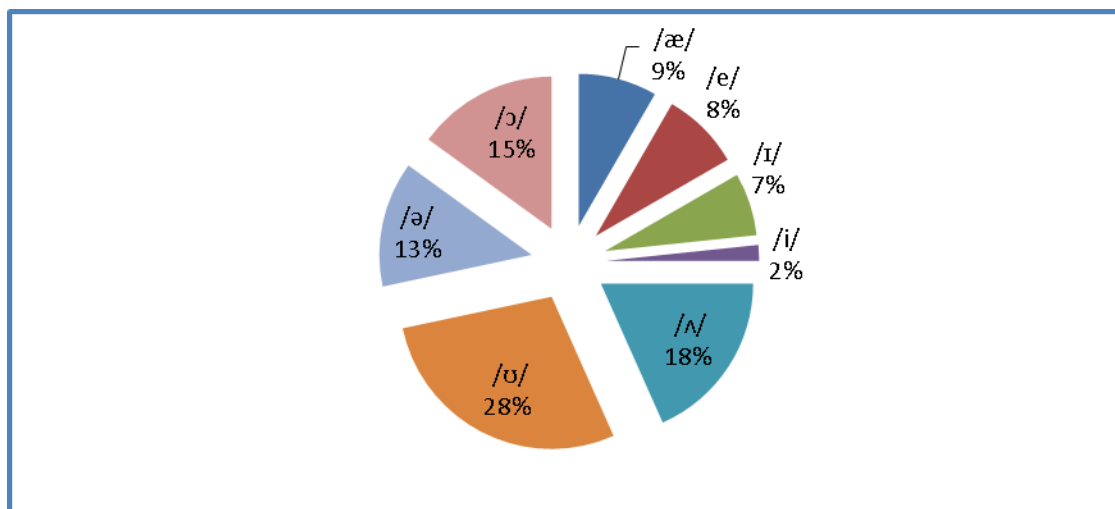
Students were asked about their opinions about their classmates' pronunciation because they can notice that their friends make errors, but are not aware of their errors. The students' answers exhibit that 16% observe that their classmates have difficulties in /ð/ and 10% in /θ/. 21% think that /dʒ/ is the most mispronounced sound, and 14% of class fellows realize /tʃ/ incorrectly. 8% notice that the voiceless sounds /ʃ/ and /ʒ/ are pronounced erroneously. Only 2 % mispronounce / f/, /r/, /m/, and 1% / have difficulty in producing

/h/,/t/,/g/,/j/, and/s/ which can convey less errors are produced when realizing them. 9% think that the same issue persists in the sound /ŋ/, and 3% of students realize /v/ in the wrong way. Classifying /ŋ/as the least difficult though it is one of the sounds that EFL learners remarkably mispronounce may indicate that they are not familiar with the phonemic representation of this sound. Comparing the results of the answers to this question and question number five, it can be noted that the answers are different when students are asked about themselves and their classmates which conveys that students are not conscious of the difficulties they have with certain sounds.

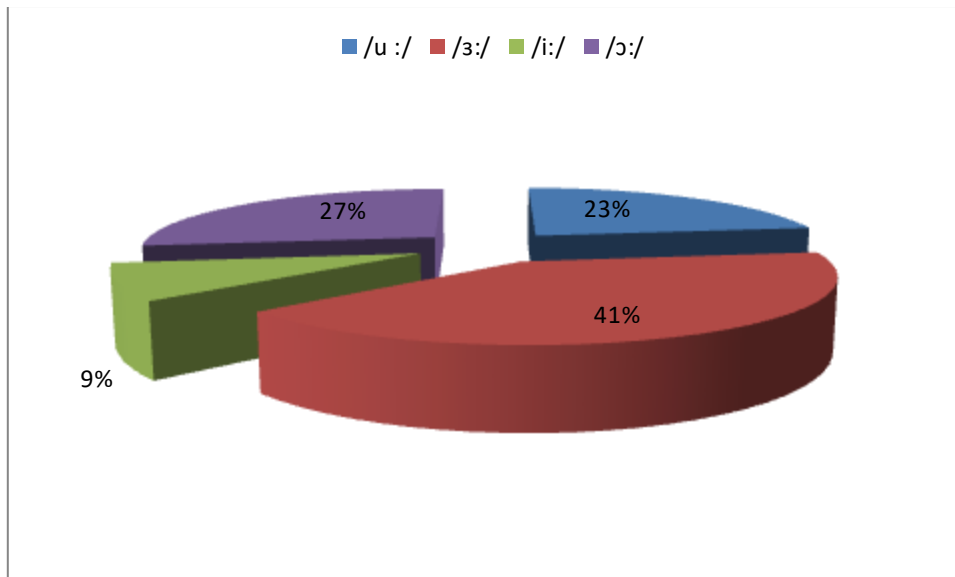
### b- Vowelsounds

**Figure 8**

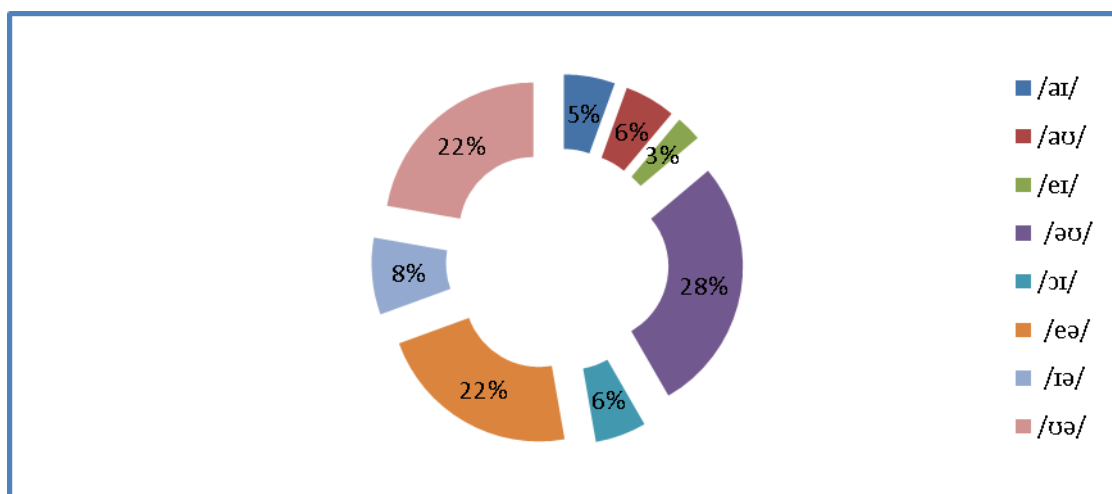
*The Most Mispronounced Short Vowels by Classmates*



The pie chart shows the rates of the short vowels that are pronounced inaccurately. It is noticed that 28% of students pronounce /ʊ/ in the wrong way while 18% affirm that their classmates mispronounce the sound /ʌ/. Furthermore, 15% see that their friends make errors when articulating /ɔ/, and 13% selected the sound /ə/. On the other hand, /æ/ (9%), /e/ (8%), /ɪ/ (7%), and /i/ (2%) have a low percentage which means that few errors are encountered.

**Figure 9***The Commonly Mispronounced Long Vowels by Classmates*

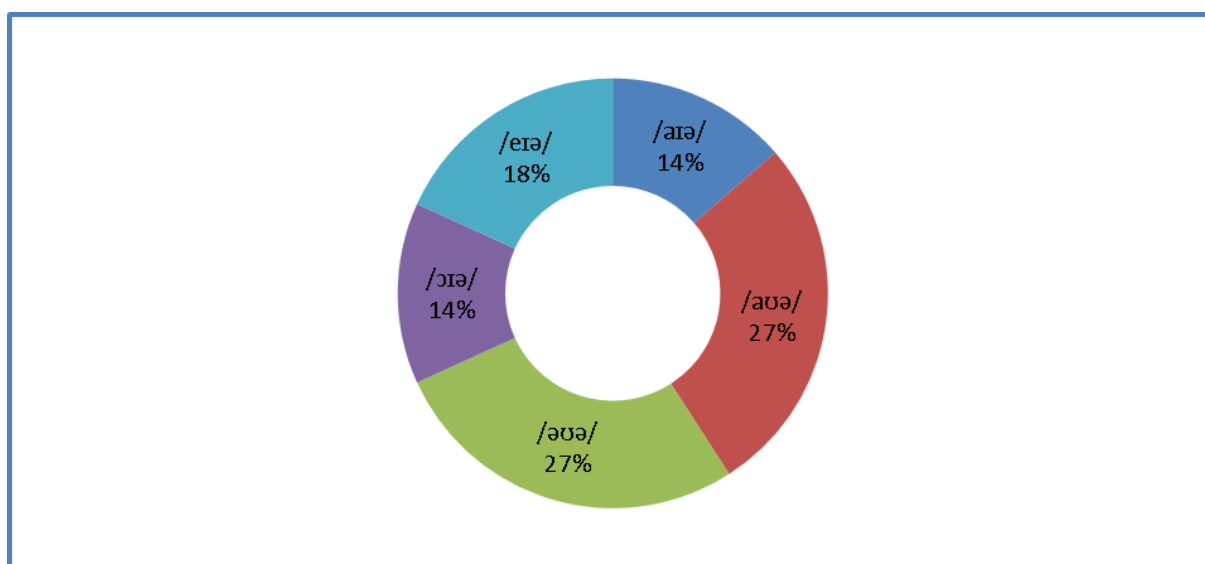
The chart tackles the long vowels that are mostly mispronounced. It turned out that 41% pronounce /ɜ:/ incorrectly, and other students 27% admit that their fellows commit errors when articulating the /ɔ:/ sound. Likewise, 23% mispronounce the /u:/, and a few learners 9% have the same issue with the sound /i:/.

**Figure 10***The Diphthongs that Classmates Articulate in a Wrong Way*

This chart demonstrates the average of the diphthongs that students often mispronounce. 28% of students articulate the sound /əʊ/ wrongly while 22% note that their friends frequently mispronounce /ʊə/. In addition, 22% of students state the same problem with the sound /eə/, and 8% with /ɪə/. Besides that, a limited number of learners notice class fellows are unable to pronounce /aʊ/ 6%, /eɪ/ 3%, /aɪ/ 5%, /ɔɪ/ 6%.

**Figure 11**

*Triphthongs that the classmates mispronounce*



The graph displays the triphthongs that are habitually pronounced improperly. As is evident above, 27% of the students mispronounce /aʊə/ and /əʊə/. Moreover, 14% make errors in /aɪə/ and /ɔɪə/. In the same vein, 18% claimed that the sound /eɪə/ is among the sounds that are articulated erroneously. The realization of triphthongs is hard for students because of their length i.e. they are much longer in pronunciation.

## Section two: First language interference

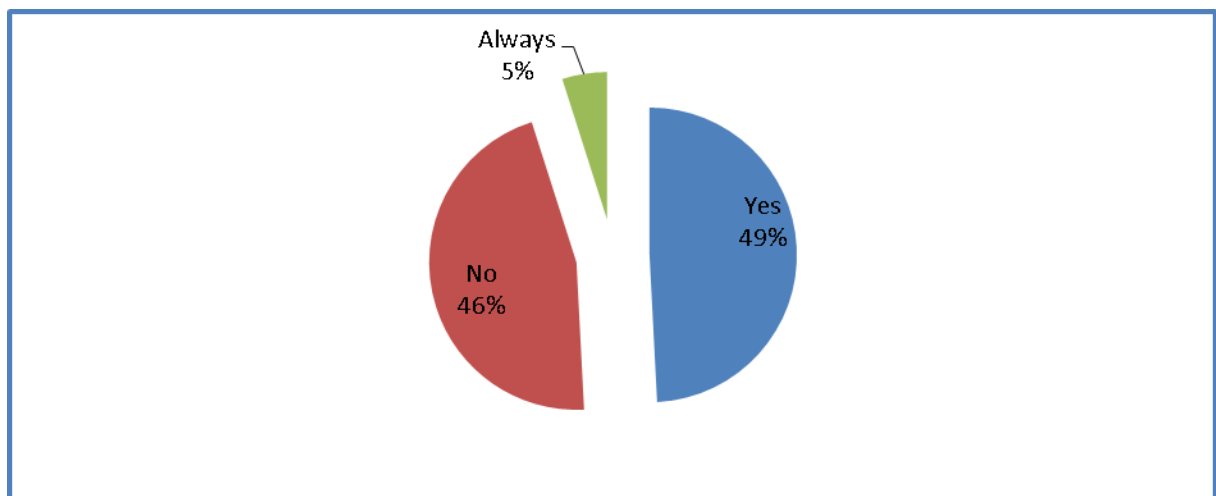
In this section students are asked 7 questions, and they are mostly about the techniques that they use while doing the spoken and written tasks such as, translating before speaking and

writing, thinking in Arabic before doing written and spoken activities and the use of dictionaries

### Question 1: Do you translate from Arabic while writing in English?

**Figure 12**

*Students Translating from Arabic while Writing in English*

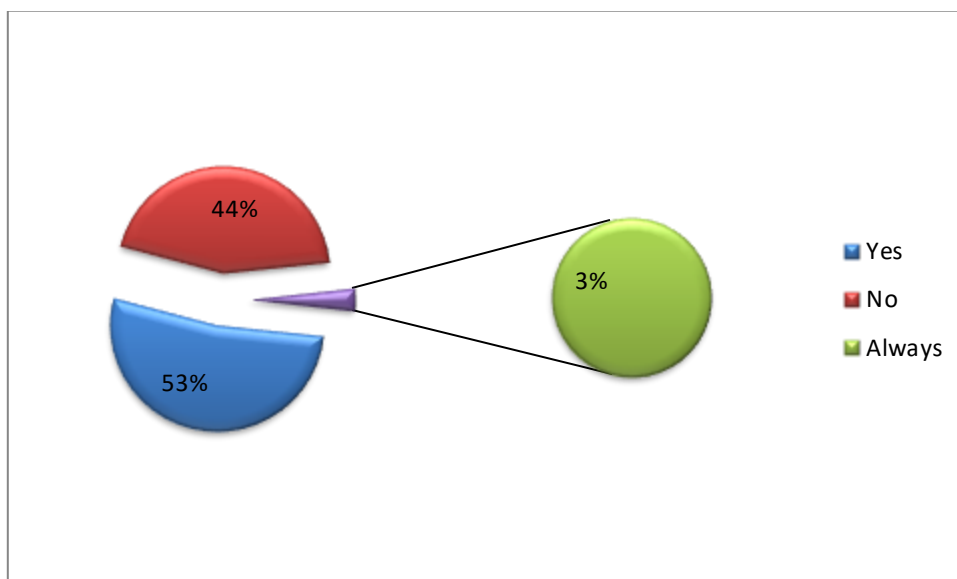


It is observed from the chart at the top that 49% of students rely on the translation technique which means that it is highly used in the EFL context to solve written tasks. Subsequently, 5% asserted that they always use translation while writing. The students who translate have insufficient vocabulary to fulfil English tasks. However, 46% prefer not to translate from Arabic in the writing sessions. The students who avoid translating from Arabic generally have an advanced proficiency level in English because when they have sufficient knowledge of the target language, they will not rely on their mother tongue that much.

### Question 2: Do you translate from Arabic while speaking in English?

**Figure 13**

*Students Translating from Arabic while Speaking*



The aforementioned results disclose the rates of students who translate from L1 to speak English. These percentages expose that 53 % agree on the use of translation which means it became a habit among most of learners, and 3 % rely on this technique constantly. On the contrary, 44% answered by no i.e. they do not translate while speaking.

### Question 3: Do you think in Arabic before speaking in English?

**Table 3**

*Students Thinking in Arabic before Speaking*

Options	Percentages
Yes	70%
No	30%

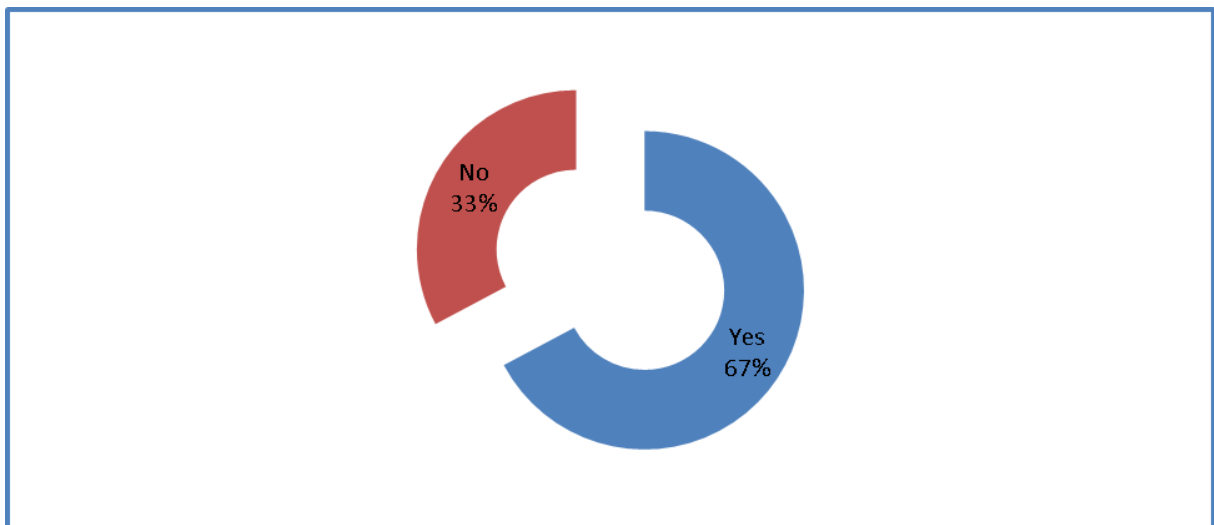
In this question students were asked if they think in Arabic while speaking in English. 70% agree on the translation use which confirms that the majority of students tend to think in

Arabic in the oral productions whereas 30 % disagree. Thinking in the mother tongue is a cognitive process that occurs naturally, especially at the beginning of language learning.

#### **Question 4: Do you think in Arabic before writing in English?**

**Figure 14**

*Students thinking in Arabic before writing*



This chart reveals the number of students who think in Arabic before writing in English. The percentage of 67% shows a large number of students are frequently brainstorming in Arabic before writing assignments while 33% of students do not adopt this approach. Students tend to think in Arabic though they are in an English class maybe because Arabic is the language that they master more and it is used in everyday life.

#### **Question 5: Do you use bilingual dictionaries?**

**Table 4**

*The Use of Bilingual Dictionaries*



Options	Numbers	Percentages
<b>Yes</b>	16	26%
<b>No</b>	11	18%
<b>Sometimes</b>	34	56%

The given table entails numbers that are related to the use of bilingual dictionaries in the EFL context. Some students 56% occasionally depend on bilingual dictionaries to explain the meaning of words while 26% affirm its use and 18% of students do not use this type of dictionary. Bilingual dictionaries are sometimes used to explain the new words that are hard to understand.

### **Question 6: Do you think that learners of English can be influenced by their teachers' pronunciation?**

**Table 5**

*The Impact of Teacher's Pronunciation on Learners*

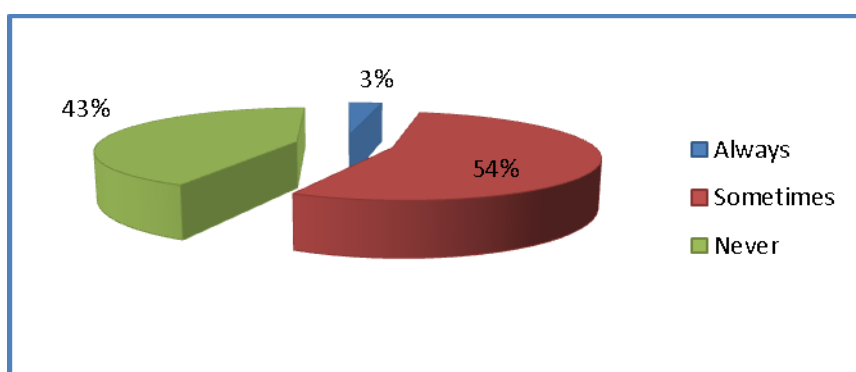
Frequency	Percentages
<b>Often</b>	37%
<b>Sometimes</b>	55%
<b>Rarely</b>	8%

This table encompasses the answers of students about the correctness of the saying that students get influenced by their teacher's pronunciation. 55 % think that sometimes students get influenced by teachers, and 5% see that it barely happens while 37% agree on the frequent occurrence of this type of influence. This shows that students get influenced by their teacher which means that if the teacher is less proficient, this will affect negatively the students' pronunciation and vice versa.

### **Question 7: Do your teachers make any comparison between the Arabic and English languages when teaching grammar and pronunciation?**

**Figure 15**

*Comparing between Arabic and English during Lessons*



In this question students are asked if their teachers usually make comparison between English and Arabic. 54% state that their teachers make comparison from time to time, and 43% of students have never been exposed to the differences and similarities between English and Arabic, yet 3% of learners have always the chance to do so. Comparing the percentages, it can be seen that the number of students who said never is close to sometimes option percentage maybe because they were taught by different teachers. This reflects that 40% of students are not knowledgeable about the differences and similarities between English and Arabic.

### **3.2.2 Classroom observation analysis**

### 3.2.2.1 Pronunciation errors

The observation reveals that both students and teachers mispronounce some sounds. The interdental fricative sound (voiceless) /θ/ is pronounced /t/; therefore, instead of saying “thank you” /θænk ju:/, they say /tænk ju:/, and sometimes it is pronounced /t̪/, for example, the word “methodology” /meθədɒlədʒi/ is pronounced /metədɒlədʒi/. The same thing with the interdental sound /ð/, but it is pronounced as /d/ for example, “this” /ðɪs/ is pronounced /dɪs/. Furthermore, the affricate sound /dʒ/ is replaced by /ʒ/. For instance, “generally” /dʒənərəli/ is /ʒənərəli/. Some students pronounce the fricative sound /ʃ/ instead of the affricate voiceless /tʃ/ such as “chapter” /ʃæptə(r)/ instead of /tʃæptə(r)/. When it comes to the alveolar sound /t/, it is occasionally replaced by the emphatic sound /t̪/. Thus, they say /t̪ɒpɪk/ instead of /tɒpɪk/. The /aɪ/ is turned into a short /ɪ/ for example, civilization /sɪvəlaɪzɪʃən/ is pronounced /sɪvɪlɪzɪʃən/. Additionally, the /ɔ/ is substituted by /əʊ/ “knowledge” /nɒlɪdʒ/ is pronounced /nəʊlɪdʒ/. The researcher noticed the vowel epenthesis phenomena especially when it comes to the final “ed” where some teachers and students add the /ɪ/ sound in between consonant clusters. For instance, “derived” /dɪraɪvd/ is /dɪraɪvɪd/ or “sometimes” /sʌmtaɪmz/ is /sʌmtaɪmɪz/. What is more, some do not pronounce “ing” forms properly, and they pronounce the silent “g” in endings such as /teɪkɪŋ/ rather than /teɪkɪŋ/. There are some cases where learners pronounce words as they are written /ʌðə(r)/ is /əðə(r)/. These sounds are mispronounced repeatedly because EFL learners are not familiar with them in Algerian Arabic which means that they are influenced by the mother tongue. As a result, they rather substitute them with Arabic sounds

**Table 6**

*Examples of Errors in Pronunciation*

Word	Error	Correct form
<b>Method</b>	/metəd/	/meθəd/
<b>Unethical</b>	/ʌnetikəl/	/ʌneθikəl/
<b>Smooth</b>	/smu:t/	/smu:θ/
<b>Identify</b>	/idəntɪfaɪ/	/aɪdəntɪfaɪ/
<b>Thousand</b>	/ˈtaʊznd/	/θaʊznd/
<b>General</b>	/ˌʒɪnrəl/	/dʒənərəl/
<b>Knowledge</b>	/nəʊlɪdʒ/	/nɒlɪdʒ/
<b>Replaced</b>	/rɪpleɪst/	/rɪpleɪsɪd/
<b>Characterized</b>	/kærɪktəraɪzd/	/kærɪktəraɪzɪd/
<b>Changed</b>	/tʃeɪnʒd/	/tʃeɪnʒɪd/
<b>Called</b>	/kɔ:ld/	/kɔ:lɪd/
<b>Supposed</b>	/səpəʊzd/	/səpəʊzɪd/
<b>Maintained</b>	/meɪnteɪnd/	/meɪnteɪnɪd/
<b>Mixed</b>	/mɪkst/	/mɪksɪd/
<b>Varieties</b>	/vərɪtɪ/	/vərəɪtɪ/
<b>Society</b>	/sə:sɪtɪ/	/səsaɪətɪ/

<b>Regions</b>	/ri:ʒəs/	/ri:dʒəs/
<b>Algerian</b>	/æljɪəriən/	/ældʒɪəriən/
<b>Organizational</b>	/ɔ:rgənizeɪʃənəl/	/ɔ:rgənaɪzeɪʃənəl/
<b>French</b>	/frenʃ/	/frentʃ/
<b>Codification</b>	/ku:dɪfɪkeɪʃən/	/kɔ:dɪfɪkeɪʃən/
<b>Changes</b>	/ʃemʒdɪz/	/tʃemʒdɪz/
<b>Within</b>	/wɪdm/	/wɪðm/
<b>That</b>	/dæt/	/ðæt/
<b>Other</b>	/ɔðə(r)/	/ʌðə(r)/
<b>Another</b>	/ənɔðə(r)/	/ənʌðə(r)/
<b>However</b>	/haʊ'ɪvə(r)/	/haʊ'evə(r)/
<b>Existing</b>	/ɪgzɪstɪŋ/	/ɪgzɪstɪŋ/
<b>Planning</b>	/plænɪŋ/	/plænɪŋ/
<b>Majority</b>	/məʒɔrɪti/	/mædʒɔrɪti/
<b>Topic</b>	/tɒpɪk/	/tɒpɪk/

The aforementioned words exemplify the errors that students mispronounce while speaking in English, and as can be seen above that students commit mainly substitution errors where they replace one sound with another when they find difficulty.

### 3.3.2 Grammatical errors

The researcher detected many grammatical errors during the classroom observation. Those errors were repeatedly done. The table below reveals the grammatical errors that students usually make.

**Table 7***Grammatical Interference*

Sentence	Error
<b>Needs analysis is integral part of the curriculum development.</b>	Omission of the article “an integral”
<b>Clash them.</b>	Literal translation from Arabic
<b>How the ESP practitioner analyse the needs of learners?</b>	The omission of the auxiliary “does”
<b>They are lucky?</b>	Arabic interrogation structure
<b>Why did you trap her?</b>	Literal translation from Arabic
<b>We will give them the speech.</b>	literal translation from Arabic
<b>At university we are old</b>	Literal translation from Arabic
<b>She has use determiners.</b>	The omission of “ed”
<b>When it occurs?</b>	The omission of the auxiliary
<b>Cultural people</b>	Literal translation
<b>The Islamic Opening that reach North African countries.</b>	The omission of the “ed”

<b>Language planning is divide into four types</b>	Misuse the present perfect form
<b>Which has consider</b>	Misuse the present perfect form
<b>It will led to language loss</b>	The verb is in the past
<b>Keeped</b>	Wrong conjugation of irregular verb
<b>It is became</b>	The addition of the auxiliary where it should not be.
<b>Pronounce it?</b>	The omission of the modals while forming a request.
<b>I stay here?</b>	The deletion of the modal verb.

The table shows the grammatical errors committed by students. First, they translate literally from Arabic to English to form sentences. It can be noticed that some learners either do not use auxiliaries properly while asking questions or omit them; for instance, when saying “how the ESP practitioner analyse the needs of learners” rather than “How does the ESP practitioner analyse the needs of learners. In addition, the observer discovered that some students could not use appropriately the tenses, for example, omitting the “ed” in the Islamic Opening that reach North African countries while it should be reached since they were speaking about a past event. As it is shown above, students are having difficulties in applying properly some English rules. Furthermore, they have a remarkable difficulty in conjugating the irregular verbs incorrectly where they keep the verbs as they are by adding “ed” at the end, such as the irregular verb keep is conjugated as keeped. On the top of that, they conjugate the verb after the modals while it should be in its simple form. Regarding modals,

students omit them while asking questions or requests, for example, they say I stay here? rather than can I stay here. In this context, EFL learners cannot address questions adequately because of being influenced by the Algerian Arabic questioning structure in which they use an affirmative form with a different tone. This shows that they are relying on the mother tongue to do their English tasks because most of the aforesaid errors are interference errors.

### **3.4 Data interpretation**

According to the previously mentioned statistics, EFL students find certain sounds difficult to pronounce because they are not adapted to these sounds in the Algerian Arabic. Consequently, they substitute those sounds with others that exist in their L1, for example, they substitute the /θ/ with /t/ and /ð/ with /d/ because these sounds do not have a counterpart in AA. When EFL learners do not find equivalents to these sounds in their mother tongue phonological interference is likely to take place in which students will try to produce sounds similar to the AA. This agrees with the results of Al-Shalabi (2021) who stated that students mostly substitute due to the absence of counterparts of sounds in the mother tongue or the impact of the spelling they are accustomed to on pronunciation. Furthermore, some English words are similar to the French language; therefore, students tend to pronounce those words in a way that resembles the French language, for example, /səsaɪəti/ is pronounced as /sɔ:siɪ/. By this, the hypothesis that claims that the absence of certain vowels and consonants in the L1 affects the speaking production of learners is supported.

The questionnaires' results reveal that students are not aware of the difficulties that they have with certain sounds, and this can be noticed clearly when seeing the difference between the answers that students provided when they were asked about themselves and their classmates. Comparing the questionnaire's results with the observation, some of the sounds that are qualified as difficult in the questionnaire are not in fact difficult



/ɜ:/, /əʊə/, /eɪə/, /h/, /m/, /r/, /j/, /ʒ/, /ʃ/, /s/, /v/, /f/, /k/, /aɪə/, /ʊ/, /ʊə/, /ɪə/, /eə/, /ɔɪ/, /ɪə/, /eɪ/, /aʊ/, /ɔɪ/, /aʊə/, /ʌ/, /æ/, /ɪ/, /u:/, /i:/, /g/, /l/, /n/, and there are other sounds that students consider hard to pronounce are frequently mispronounced; for instance, /dʒ/, /tʃ/, /θ/, /ð/, /ɔ:/, /ɔɪə/, /ə/, /e/, /a:/. On the other hand, /aɪ/, /ɪ/ and /t/ are classified in the questionnaire as the least difficult sounds, yet the observation shows that they are the most mispronounced sounds. These results convey that students are not conscious of their errors. Furthermore, no difficulty is mentioned in these sounds /b/, /p/, /d/, /z/, /w/ which means EFL learners can produce them easily. Hence, less difficulty is identified at the level of the English sounds that are similar to Algerian Arabic.

The vowel epenthesis is a remarkable phenomenon among EFL learners where they insert a sound usually a short /ɪ/ to get rid of the consonant clusters; for instance, /mɪkst/ is /mɪksɪd/. The clusterisation system in Algerian Arabic is distinct to the English one where consonant clusters generally occur in the coda syllable. There are main cases where they appear. First, when there is “mad al leen” which is prolonging sounds when there are two letters /w/ (و) and /j/ (ي) preceded by a /fatḥa/ accusative case, for example, /kəw/ خوف. In addition, clusterisation is found also when the speaker stops at a certain sound, for example, /həb/ حبس. These cases are classified as exceptions when consonant clusters occur in SA. Since Algerian Arabic is a variety of SA, they share most of the time the same rules. However, in English those consonants are highly frequent, and they arise in all syllables onset, nucleus and coda, such as train, strawberry and extra. The above results are in line with Alotaibi (2021) findings who found that the non-existence and the infrequency of the consonant clusters in Arabic cause pronunciation problems of these sounds.

The phonetic aspect of the Algerian Arabic also causes the negative transfer by which students can treat English in the same way. Therefore, they may pronounce words as they are written without paying attention that English is not phonetic. For example, the word other

/ʌðə(r)/ is uttered as /əðə(r)/. The researcher could conclude that learners have difficulty in the sounds that do not have counterparts in the AA. On the contrary, pronunciation becomes easier when sounds are similar to their first language.

The same thing can be noted when speaking about grammar. Learners can apply hardly the rules that they are not familiar with in English. As reported also by Al Shahrani (2018) who found that grammatical interference occurs either as a result of the non-attendance of some grammatical structures in Arabic or the unawareness of students of the differences and similarities between Arabic and English. The Arabic language entails only direct verbs, but there are no auxiliaries or helping verbs. Thus, EFL learners find it difficult when using auxiliaries, and this was visualized by the observation. This leads usually forget to use auxiliaries especially while asking questions. The difference between Arabic and English in using modal verbs and tenses is one of the main obstacles that affect the grammatical development of learners. Regarding models, the uncommonness of modal verbs in Arabic can also be a reason behind their incorrect use by EFL learners. They find themselves confused when they are required to use them. They also cannot conjugate properly the irregular verbs because they do not have such verbs in their language, and they generally have problems in choosing the right tenses in English simply due to the difficulty of those tenses compared to Arabic notably the present perfect which is the most complex tense for them. The way those students ask questions shows that they are influenced by Arabic. For instance, instead of starting with auxiliary +subject + main verb +object; they just ask a question in an affirmative sentence by changing only the tone which is incorrect in English. For instance, they say “They are lucky?” instead of are they lucky? However, in AA the speaker is not obliged to go through this process to form an interrogative sentence. Similarly, since there is a vast difference between articles in Algerian Arabic and English, learners misuse them Such as, needs analysis is integral part of the curriculum development (incorrect form). They omit the

indefinite article “an” rather than saying “Needs analysis is an integral part of the curriculum development”.

Using Arabic in the EFL atmosphere causes L1 interference such as translating, thinking in Algerian Arabic or using bilingual dictionaries. This can lead to the production of grammatically incorrect sentences because they will follow the same Arabic structure as it was revealed by the observation. A similar conclusion was drawn by Abbas (2019) who claimed that EFL learners make several grammatical errors when they think and translate into Arabic to look for suitable words. One of the reasons that make students refer to their first language is the lack of knowledge i.e. when they do not know the rules of the target language, or they do not know the right application of those rules; therefore, they use the Algerian Arabic rules to perform the tasks English tasks. For instance, they do translate to Arabic when they want to form sentences in the target language. Thus; they select either the Arabic vocabulary instead or follow the sentence structure of Arabic; for instance, we will give them the speech. This is a purely Arabic sentence which is /naʕt̪il̪iħum əlkalima/ "نعطي اليهم الكلمة". Hence, the observation findings correspond with the questionnaire's results.

If the EFL teachers are influenced by Algerian Arabic, this influence will be transmitted to learners indirectly because their way of pronunciation has a prominent impact on the learners' pronunciation. Moreover, a large number of students confirmed that they translate and think in Arabic while writing or speaking, but this can result negatively in their performance. Simply because they will use the Arabic forms unconsciously which was seen in the observation where students were translating literally from Arabic to English. In addition, the excessive use of bilingual dictionaries is one of the reasons that hinder the student's progress in English because they will depend on their first language.

Comparing between L1 and the target language is significant because when students know the differences they will become aware of the difficulties that they may lead them to error production. Students will think that all languages are the same if they do not know that each language has different features and rules. Still, being aware makes them learn the language cautiously. Therefore; they will try to work on those differences. On the other hand, they will use the similarities for their own benefits. Not only students can do this, but also teachers can exploit those similarities to facilitate the learning process for their students.

### **3.5 Recommendations and suggestions**

Though we cannot radically eradicate the first language interference, but at least we still have the chance to reduce this act in schools and universities by following some steps that help us to do so.

- ❖ In accordance to what has been found, both teachers and learners have to preserve the originality of the English language and its sounds by pronouncing them as they are.
- ❖ Teachers should check regularly the right pronunciation of words before delivering any lesson because their pronunciation will be reflected on the learner.
- ❖ Students have to give much more importance to the International Phonetic Alphabet.
- ❖ They should follow the Montessori approach when teaching alphabets in primary and middle schools in which they are going to start by teaching sounds before the letter name.
- ❖ They should make their learners aware of the difference between the Arabic and the English language.

- ❖ Teachers have to behave as if they are observed to perform better whether in terms of language or the teaching practices.
- ❖ Students should avoid translating from Arabic to English to reduce the amount of grammatical errors.
- ❖ Teaching grammar in context is advisable
- ❖ Curriculum developers should give pronunciation more attention by scheduling separate session to it rather than including it within the lessons.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

Based on the results, EFL learners are prominently affected by Arabic .Most of the errors they commit are either because of the absence of some rules and sounds in their L1, or the implementation of the old habits of their first language in the EFL learning atmosphere. The differences between Arabic and English lead students to errors while the similarity between them facilitates learning. The findings unveil that EFL learners rely actively on Arabic. However, its influence is apparent and stronger in pronunciation than grammar maybe because grammar is given more attention in schools rather than pronunciation.

### General conclusion

L1 interference is among the well-documented issues in the linguistic field. It has been treated widely in previous years, and it is proven that the mother tongue of learners plays a negative and positive role in the EFL learning context. The negative influence impedes the language learning because of the differences between languages while the positive influence helps the learner to perform tasks easily because of the compatibility between L1 and TL. This investigation aims at explaining how Arabic is impacting the learners of English. It defines as well as the L1 as a source of errors and describes the phonological and grammatical imperfections that most learners produce when they are under this kind of influence. The results of this study may assist both teachers and learners to determine their errors and fix them. Furthermore, it can help teachers to design instructional materials by highlighting the techniques that their students are using to learn English.

It has been determined that EFL students and teachers are highly affected by AA. Students mispronounce the English sounds that do not exist in Arabic. Thus, they resort to the insertion of a short vowel to avoid consonant clusters because they are not accustomed to this in Arabic. However, the existence of English sounds in Arabic makes the pronunciation easier for learners. This reveals that the hypothesis which illustrates that the absence of certain sounds (vowels and consonants) in Algerian Arabic impacts the learners' pronunciation is confirmed. In addition, translation from Arabic results in incorrect grammar sentences because while translating students are adapting unconsciously the rules of Arabic which make them produce grammatical errors. Then, the hypothesis which discusses that translating from Arabic to English leads to grammatical errors is accepted. Furthermore, the unfamiliarity of some English grammatical rules leads students to the use of Arabic forms instead. By this, the

## General conclusion

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hypothesis which argues when learners are not familiar with TL rule, they adapt the rules of the native language is supported. All things considered, students repeatedly rely on the mother tongue when dealing with EFL environment.

In the light of the findings, it can be argued that Algerian Arabic can affect negatively the speaking performance of learners when there are differences between Arabic and English whereas it impacts their performance positively once some elements are commonly found in both Arabic and English. Furthermore, the difference between Arabic and English in the sound system can lead to errors because students are not adapted to some sounds which make the pronunciation task of those sounds harder. Similarly, the non-existence of some rules in Arabic leads to negative transfer because learners will either misuse the given rules or apply them in accordance to the Algerian Arabic, and this result in grammatical errors.

Since this study has limited its scope to the speaking skill, other researchers can investigate the writing skill. We do expect in the future also more researches about the Algerian Arabic. Moreover, cast light on the positive influence of the Algerian Arabic on the learners of English. Researchers could conduct also a comprehensive study about the practical application of contrastive analysis, and show how to avoid the influence of the first language. To avoid the lack of resources, it is eligible to provide an in depth-look about the differences and similarities between Algerian Arabic and English, and why the effects of Algerian Arabic do are much stronger on pronunciation than grammar.

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## Appendix

### Students' questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire seeks to collect opinions about the influence of the Arabic language on the speaking skill of EFL learners. Your responses will be kept confidential, and I would be grateful for any help you can offer.

#### Section one: language proficiency

##### 1-How would you rate your English language level?

Advanced	
Intermediate	
Low	

##### 2-What is the most complex skill for you?

Writing ☐      ☐ Speaking  
Reading ☐      ☐ Listening

##### 3-Do you commit errors more in:

Speaking	
Writing	

##### 4- Circle the English vowels that you find difficult to pronounce.

###### A/Short vowels

/æ/	/e/	/ɪ/	/i/	/ʌ/	/ʊ/	/ə/	/ɔ/
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

###### B/Long vowels:

/ɑ: /	/u: /	/ɜ: /	/i: /	/ɔ: /
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###### C/Diphthongs:

/aɪ/	/aʊ/	/eɪ/	/əʊ/	/ɔɪ/	/eə/	/ɪə/	/ʊə/
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### D/Triphthongs:

/aɪə/	/aʊə/	/əʊə/	/ɔɪə/	/eɪə/
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### 5- Circle the English consonants that you find difficult to pronounce.

/l/	/ŋ/	/j/	/r/	/m/	/n/	/w/	/h/	/dʒ/	/tʃ/	/ʒ/	/ʃ/
/ð/	/θ/	/z/	/s/	/v/	/f/	/g/	/k/	/t/	/b/	/p/	/d/

### 6- Circle the English vowels and consonants that your friends/classmates usually mispronounce.

#### A/ Consonant sounds:

/l/	/ŋ/	/j/	/r/	/m/	/n/	/w/	/h/	/dʒ/	/tʃ/	/ʒ/	/ʃ/
/ð/	/θ/	/z/	/s/	/v/	/f/	/g/	/k/	/t/	/b/	/p/	/d/

#### B/Vowel sounds:

/æ/	/e/	/ɪ/	/i/	/ʌ/	/ʊ/	/ə/	/ɔ/
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

/u: /	/ɜ: /	/i: /	/ɔ: /	/ɑ: /

/aɪ/	/aʊ/	/eɪ/	/əʊ/	/ɔɪ/	/eə/	/ɪə/	/ʊə/
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/aɪə/	/aʊə/	/əʊə/	/ɔɪə/	/eɪə/
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### Section two: First language interference

**1-Do you translate from Arabic while writing in English?**

Yes	
No	
Always	

**2-Do you translate from Arabic while speaking in English?**

Yes	
No	
Always	

**3- Do you think in Arabic before speaking in English?**

Yes	
No	

**4-Do you think in Arabic before writing in English?**

Yes	
No	

**5-Do you use bilingual dictionaries?**

Yes	
No	
Sometimes	

**6-Do you think that learners of English can be influenced by their teachers' pronunciation?**

Often	
Sometimes	

Rarely	
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**7-Do your teachers make any comparison between Arabic and English languages when teaching grammar and pronunciation?**

Always	
Sometimes	
Never	