

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English

An Investigation of English Foreign Language Students'

Spelling Problems:

The Case of Second Year Licence Students at the Department of English,

University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master Degree in
Language Sciences**

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2016

Dedication

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate

This work is dedicated to:

The only person with the exception of God nothing is more important, my beloved mother;

My father, may Allah rest his soul;

My dear grandmother for her prayers;

My dear brother Abdelhamid for his assistance and help;

My adorable sisters: Hafida, Aziza, Hanan, and Hanifa for their love and help;

My lovely nieces and nephews: Marwa, Hania, Lamis Nada, Younes, and Ayoub;

My dear friends with whom I shared the university life with its lights and shadows:

Bahiyya, Amirra, Mouna, Nassira, Leila, Ismahan, Samia, and Wassila.

Ibtissam

The candle that lights my life, to my mother for her countless love, support and patience.

My father whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity and hard work ring in my ears.

A feel of gratitude to my lovely sister Hanine and my brothers Salah Eddine and Al Haccen for their unconditional support and encouragement to pursue my education.

To all my relatives who prayed for me and were with me in the ups and downs.

To all the people who have been walking alongside me during the five years at university

Among them I mention: Ibtissam, Nassira, Leila, Ismahan, Wassila, Meriem, Mouna, Samia and Wafa..

Bahiyya

Acknowledgement

Above all, we would thank Allah, the Almighty for providing us with patience and will to finish this work.

We owe million thanks and tremendous debt of gratitude to many people who made this dissertation possible.

We would like to express our deepest and infinite gratitude to our supervisor Mrs. Zahia BOUCHAIR, to whom we respect deeply, for her precious guidance, insightful feedback, encouragement, advice and patience.

We express open-hearted gratitude to Mrs NEGHIZ Safia and Mrs KOUIRA Loubna for the time and efforts spent in reading and judging this humble work.

Our modest appreciation goes to Ms. Nassira Boukerreche for accepting to administer the tests and the students' questionnaire in her sessions, and for her receptive students, English second year students group one and two, for donating time and help in the accomplishment of both the tests and the questionnaire.

We would like to take this opportunity to forward our sincere thanks to Dr. Joanne Rudling for her help and care through replying to all the emails we sent to her.

It is with intensive pleasure to extend our deepest gratitude to all the teachers in the department of English who have accepted to fill in the questionnaire.

Last but not least, we must acknowledge the debt we owe to our families and friends and all who have stood incredibly supportive and very encouraging.

Abstract

Owing to a remarkable revival of interest in English Foreign Language learners' spelling errors, the present study aimed at investigating the spelling problem among second year students at the department of English, university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia/ Jijel, and identifying the commonest types and likeliest causes of their spelling errors. Moreover, the study aimed at investigating both students' and teachers' perceptions of the spelling problems that students encounter. Furthermore, it attempted to shed light on the spelling strategies used by the students. The study was based on the hypothesis that if students' were aware of their spelling problems and used a variety of strategies to improve their spelling, they would not experience serious spelling difficulties. In order to achieve these aims, the researchers opted for a dictation test, a translation test, a questionnaire for students and another one for teachers. The findings of the study revealed that the frequency of students' spelling errors is high and therefore students are experiencing serious difficulties in spelling English words. The major causes behind students' poor spelling performance were found to be the irregularity of English spelling system, the complexity of rules and exceptions as well as confusing words, students' ignorance of spelling rules, students' carelessness and their lack of interest to learn spelling. Moreover, the obtained results demonstrated that the students use a narrow range of spelling strategies with great reliance on phonological strategies which have further complicated of the problem. The analysis of the research findings confirmed that the students face great difficulties in spelling because they are not aware of their spelling problems and they use limited strategies to improve their spelling. Based on the results of the study, some pedagogical recommendations were suggested for further research.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

%: Percentage

Am E: American English

Br E: British English

CVC: Consonant-Vowel-Consonant

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EA: Error Analysis

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

Q: Question

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

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CHAPTER ONE:

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT SPELLING: FOCUS ON THE ENGLISH SPELLING

Introduction

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Unquestionably, English, as an international language, plays a vital role in every sphere of life as technology, business and education in particular. Therefore, language learners around the world are striving to acquire it and to improve their English language proficiency. In fact, the basic component of this proficiency is improving the ability to communicate accurately and fluently with others. In fact, this communication can take two forms, either spoken or written. The quest for a good written product is of great importance, especially in higher education and in the workplace where it is used extensively.

As an important component of writing, spelling poses a major challenge to most learners that results misspelled words and incoherent sentences. Errors in spelling may sometimes lead to obscurity and this makes comprehension virtually impossible; hence, spelling is crucial for everybody to communicate his or her ideas and thoughts. In other words, spelling is not merely a representation of words by a combination of letters; rather it is plainly a bridge between the writer and the reader.

Obviously, English spelling is a struggle for native speaker and nonnative speaker alike. Actually, English has frequently been criticized for the complexity of its spelling rules and for the lack of system and consistency in the relationship between the sounds of the spoken language and the symbols of the written language. Thus, English spelling can be described as, most of the times, illogical which cause confusion to learners.

1. Background of the Study

Spelling is a complex skill in writing and causes difficulty to learners, particularly EFL ones. Owing to its necessity to improve writing, the topic of spelling has been studied by a great deal of researchers who examined the spelling errors committed by learners of English and the major causes behind such errors. Therefore, it is worthwhile to cite some studies that have been carried on the topic of learners' spelling problems.

Miressa and Dumessa (2011) investigated the causes of grade nine students' spelling errors at Donbosco High and Preparatory School in Batu, Ethiopia. They included fifty-two students in the study using simple random sampling techniques, and ten teachers who taught other subjects in English were selected using availability sampling. The research revealed that the origin of English Language words is one of the causes for the students' failure to spell words correctly because they lack uniform and consistent spelling rules. Besides this, the discrepancy between the pronunciation and written form of many English words along with less emphasis given to the spelling lesson contributed a lot to the students' spelling errors. The study suggested that teachers should teach and motivate students to learn the correct spelling. Moreover, students should give attention to learn the correct spelling of English words. It is important to expose students to spelling rules and practice exercises in their text books to help them to learn correct English spelling.

In addition to the study mentioned above, another study was made by Banacha (2013) who investigated the types of spelling errors and causes of misspellings found in first year students' writing at Prince of Songkla University in Thailand. For collecting data the students were required to read three books printed by Oxford Publisher which contained short stories, vocabulary items, and grammar rules with exercises. The students were asked to make up sentences using the target words and later the teacher corrected them. After twenty days, the students were given an hour to write forty-five sentences which should

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contain eighty target words. The analysis of the obtained data showed that there were ten types of spelling errors in students' writing namely consonant substitution, vowel substitution, space inaccuracy, confusion in writing scripts, inaccurate double consonants, inflectional endings, letter reversals, vowel omissions, and consonant omissions. In addition, the results of the study revealed that the differences between the English and Thai writing systems were not the only causes of students' spelling errors. Actually, phonological problems, the lack of morphological awareness, and limited knowledge of orthography or spelling were the main causes of students' spelling problems. Accordingly, the researcher suggested that the best way for teaching Thai students English spelling is through the focus on how words are spelled and pronounced (Bancha, 2013).

Likewise, Benyo (2014) made a study which aimed at investigating English spelling errors committed by first year students at the University of Dongola, Sudan. The researcher stated that English spelling performance of university students became a problematic area when teaching English as a foreign or second language. It was noticed that first year students of Dongola university have an obvious weakness in English spelling which has resulted in poor performance of basic behind spelling problems facing students. The study was built on the assumption that spelling errors were due mainly to the English sound recognition and its uses as well as the English spelling rules. After collecting and analyzing data, the study revealed that students' spelling errors were particularly noticeable in vowel sounds and students were struggling with English sounds that do not exist in Arabic language. Also, the study indicated that the factors behind committing spelling errors were overgeneralization and misapplication of spelling rules. On the basis of these results, the researcher recommended that students should be taught correct pronunciation and basic spelling rules and exceptions of English spelling (Benyo, 2014).

On the whole, all these findings make it crystal clear that EFL learners encounter several spelling problems due to a variety of variables. The influence of L1, the complexity of English spelling rules, the mismatch between sounds and letters, and the lack of knowledge of the English spelling were found to be the major causes behind learners' spelling errors. In fact, there has been a large and growing body of literature that has investigated English spelling difficulties among EFL learners in different contexts with different data collection tools. Nevertheless, the existing literature does not reflect the Algerian context because each context has its own specificities.

2. Statement of the problem

Many EFL students at university of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel face difficulties when writing. Among the most noticeable difficulties are related to spelling. In fact, English spelling performance of university students at Saddik Ben Yahia has recently been declining and has become a problematic area in the process of teaching. It has been noticed that students have serious weakness in English spelling. These students make a lot of spelling errors, also it has been noticed that they are incapable of performing even basic writing task without noticeable and glaring spelling errors. .

A review of literature on spelling errors reveals a dearth of researches and shows that very few studies in Algerian context have investigated the difficulties that Algerian students have with spelling when learning English as a foreign language. The scarcity of research with regard to EFL students calls for a research study to be conducted of investigation of the problem of spelling for EFL students spelling in the Algerian context.

3. Aims of the Study

The current study aims at investigating EFL students' spelling level at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University-Jijel. Besides, it attempts to shed light on the different types of

spelling errors as well as the major causes attributing to students' spelling problems and possible solutions that could help to overcome students' spelling errors.

4. Research Questions

The present study is conducted in order to provide plausible answers to the following research questions:

- 1) To what extent are students experiencing spelling problems?
- 2) What are the types of students' spelling errors?
- 3) What are the major causes behind students' spelling errors?
- 4) What are the students' perceptions of their spelling problems?
- 5) What are the teachers' perceptions of their students' spelling problems?
- 6) What are the spelling strategies used by students?

5. Research hypothesis

On the basis of the questions mentioned above, it is hypothesized that:

If students' were aware of their spelling problems and used a variety of strategies to improve their spelling, they would not experience serious spelling difficulties.

6. Significance of the Study

To learn how to write correctly and to be an effective writer are the most important objectives for both teachers and learners, especially at university level. Since writing is used in almost all the subjects for EFL learners at Mohammed Saddik Ben Yahia, writing was a major interest and Students' poor performances in writing have become the core problem which needs an urgent remedy.

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The research has significance in a number of areas. First, the research in hand will be of immense importance to learners who have difficulties with their spelling. It will provide them with clear explanation of their spelling problems and thereby will raise their awareness to the area of difficulty in English spelling. Also, it will provide solutions in order to overcome this problem for learners. Also, students will be aware of the importance of being skilled spellers in order to be good writers.

Moreover, the study attempts to shed light on the factors causing spelling problem for EFL learners. Consequently, teachers will be aware of the expected areas of difficulties in English spelling and how they can be addressed, considering the method that help students to deal with their spelling errors and to find solutions to this problem. Apparently, it would provide suggestions, useful insights to teachers and find teaching procedures that would minimize this problem.

7. Research Methodology

To achieve the aims of the present study, different tools were used. In order to assess the spelling performance of EFL learners at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, types of spelling errors, and likely causes, a dictation spelling test was conducted followed by a translation test. This study is rooted in both the qualitative research design and quantitative techniques. Besides, a questionnaire was administered to students in order to inquire about their perception about spelling, mainly spelling problems. Moreover, to validate the findings of the students' questionnaire used in the study and get a comprehensive picture of the sources of difficulties in making spelling errors, a teachers' questionnaire was conducted.

8. Structure of the study

The study falls into two main parts. The first part is theoretical while the second is rather of a practical orientation. Preceded by an overall introduction, the first part is the theoretical foundation of spelling. It is divided into two chapters. The first chapter highlights some general consideration about spelling, focusing on English spelling. The second chapter deals with learners' spelling errors that cover many aspects, mainly types and major causes of spelling errors. The second part of the study involves field investigation. It describes the population and description of the instruments used in the study. Also, it displays the finding sorted from the tests (dictation and translation test) and two questionnaires, one for the students and another for the teachers to get their perceptions about spelling problem. Lastly, it ends with the main research findings, limitations, and pedagogical implications.

CHAPTER TWO:

LEARNERS' SPELLING ERRORS

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 - 2.3.3.3. Confusion with Numbers and Symbols
- 2.3.4. The Influence of L1
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CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT SPELLING: FOCUS ON THE ENGLISH SPELLING

Introduction

Spelling is of paramount importance in the process of writing and all learners are required to become proficient spellers. This chapter is a review of the literature that concerns spelling in general and English spelling in particular. First, it highlights the concept of spelling, mainly its definition, importance, and its relation with writing and reading. In addition, it introduces the stages of spelling development and the spelling strategies used by learners to improve their spelling. Second, this chapter provides a clear understanding of both the history and the features of English spelling and a comparison between the British and the American spelling styles.

1.1. Definition of Spelling

Various writers provided different definitions of the word 'spelling'. Such definitions have evolved from diverse perspectives, interests and needs. According to Mc Arthur (1992), the origin of the word 'spelling' is not peculiar to a specific language. It may come from Old French "*espeller*" (modern "*épeler*"), probably from Germanic "*spellôn*", or from ancestor Old English "*spel*". In Middle English, spelling was a term used to signify reading books and casting spells, and reading in that time was known as 'spelling a book'. Spelling is defined as "the act, process, or system of relating speech sounds to letters and to the written form of words" (p. 969).

Oxford learner's online dictionary defined spelling as the correct combining of individual letters to form a word. It is also the way a particular word is written. Similarly, Webster dictionary (1993) defined spelling as the process of writing words by using

letters depending on accepted usage of their formation. That is, the way a particular word is written is not random; rather it comprises conventionally accepted form of words.

Moreover, various writers suggested different definitions of spelling. For example, Al Saedi (1989) defined spelling placing letters of each word in the correct sequence order; it is also the ability to write words correctly depending on the memory. In other words, spelling is associated with the ability to recall words from memory. In addition, Perfetti (1997) defined spelling as “the encoding of linguistic forms into written form” (p.22). Hornby (2000) defined spelling as the formation of words correctly from individual letters. That is, letters must appear in a correct sequence to be meaningful. According to Savage (2007), spelling is a written language skill which involves the visual representation of spoken sounds by written symbols and letters. That is, spelling is a visual skill and learners must see the pattern of the language then presenting it in the written form.

As already mentioned, the definition of spelling is to a great extent standard for most researchers even for those in different theoretical background. However, spelling is more sophisticated and related to other aspects of the language. Høien & Lundberg (2000) pointed out that spelling, as a process, is very complex. It consists of many sub-processes, including phonological, morphological, semantic, and orthographic skills (as cited in Wai & Chan, 2014).

1.2.Importance of Spelling

Spelling has always been a controversial area of learning. Some educators claimed that it does not matter if a person spells correctly, spell checkers can correct errors anyhow. However, other educators argued that spelling is extremely important for good learners and the disability to spell correctly can be regarded as a sign of learning failure.

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According to Corder (1981), the ability to spell properly has a crucial role in mastering the writing system of any language. Making spelling errors may lead to obscurity affecting the audience comprehension of the written product, that is, bad spelling is a hindrance for the reader to get the meaning. Therefore, conveying the intended meaning requires essentially the correct spelling of vocabulary words. In addition to that, Simon (2004) argued that learning to spell is necessary because correct spelling is a component of the whole process of learning any language.

Moreover, spelling is extremely important for everyone to communicate his ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Al-Khaffaji and Al-Shayib (1987) stated that “to spell correctly makes written communication easier while misspelling might lead to interruption of communication and misunderstanding” (p.7). That is, good spelling contributes to conveying the meaning of the text, while bad spelling impedes the writers' ideas.

Finally, spelling plays a momentous role in the social life. Writing letters and emails to friends can embarrass the writer if they contain glaring errors. Besides, spelling is highly important when writing job applications and supplementary written tests, or for jobs that call for communication in writing (Westwood, 2008). Spelling, in some occasions, is also necessary as when looking up words in dictionaries, writing notes that others may read, or even playing parlour games (Moats, 2005).

To sum up, spelling is very important in all written languages. Making spelling errors or mistakes may affect the written product and therefore may lead to ambiguity and breakdown in communication. As a result, all learners around the world should strive to get mastery in spelling.

1.3. Spelling and Other Skills

Spelling cannot be treated as an isolated skill in the process of learning any language. Actually, its relation with writing and reading has been a topic for several researchers who have delved into their main shared features and the effects they have on each other.

1.3.1. Spelling-Writing Connection

The writing process consists of producing a piece of writing by placing ideas into printed ones. Kessler and Treiman (2003) asserted that accurate spelling is most connected and critically required for everyday writing. That is, through writing, thoughts and ideas are communicated. In order to communicate them clearly, accurate spelling is necessary. Fagerberg (2006) pointed out that one misspelled word may change the meaning which the writer intended to convey in his/her writing product. In other words, good spellers are able to express their thoughts and feelings clearly and easily more than learners with poor spelling proficiency.

Apel (2001) pointed out that students with poor spelling proficiency resort to writing few words and composition products of lower quality. Writers who struggle to remember spelling often limit themselves to words they can spell. Pratley (1980) asserted that "those who do not have proper spelling accuracy tend to make their writing simple and very short because they are not familiar or unsure of how some words are spelled and this prevents them from expressing their thoughts and ideas accurately and academically" (as cited in Al Harrasi, 2012, p.97). Writers who struggle with spelling often limit themselves to words they can spell, losing expressive power of words.

In addition, Abell (1994) claimed that those who are not proficient at spelling often feel embarrassed about allowing others to see what they have written. That is, students' perception of their spelling ability strongly affects their self-esteem and students with poor

spelling proficiency resist sharing their ideas freely. Whereas, good spelling can increase learners' confidence in communicating with others in written forms.

Fall (1998) asserted that students when writing should not be too concerned about spelling; rather, they should focus on their ideas. According to Westwood (2008), students who pay too great attention to accuracy in spelling may even show the lack of desire to write and create comprehensible and clear messages. Too much attention to spelling can undermine their motivation to write. Fall (1998) pointed out that proofreading step is the appropriate time for learners to revise their copies from any spelling mistakes.

On the other hand, spelling ability may be enhanced through writing. According to Boras (1982), writing is an effective technique to enhance spelling skills because writing requires students to apply their knowledge of how to express thoughts on papers by spelling words accurately. Wollet (1993) claimed that via writing workshop, students are supplied with various opportunities by teachers to write and explore spelling via writing and pair work activities that allow peers to spot on spelling errors. By writing and giving feedback by teachers, learners learn how to spell and figure out conventions about spelling. Writing also affords the teacher the opportunity to scaffold spelling for students. That is, thanks to regular practice of writing, learners can automatically and legibly write alphabet letters and match sounds to letters.

Another factor that may affect spelling performance is the legibility of person handwriting. Legible handwriting assists spelling. It follows that students who write and who are consistent and logical in letter formation may benefit from their handwriting. Children with legible handwriting spell better than children with illegible handwriting (Sue, 1994) (cited in Boras, 1982).

To conclude, spelling and writing are reciprocally related; that is, spelling supports writing and vice versa. Good spellers are most of the time good writers and one of the very important factors to consider with writing competency is spelling. Since one single misspelled word can change the entire meaning of the sentence; to produce competent writing students should write accurately with less spelling mistakes. Hence, Students with poor spelling may be reluctant to write while good spelling can increase learner's confidence in communication with others in written form. Hence, there should be an awareness of the importance of the correct spelling among learners.

1.3.2. Spelling-Reading Connection

Reading and spelling are two important aspects of language learning and the relationship between the two has been discussed through several studies in the field of L1 and SLA research. Studies with young ESL learners have revealed that there is a close relation between English spelling knowledge and English word reading skills (Chiappe et al., 2007). Moats (2005) argued that learning to read and learning to spell are built on much the same underlying knowledge of representing words such as the relationship between sounds and letters.

Previously, spelling was considered a by-product of reading experiences in the sense that, while reading, children build a memory bank of words known by sight and those words can be later written or spelled simultaneously (Westwood, 2008). Wilde (2004) stated that reading is the only important factor for developing the spelling skill. He argued that reading provides children with words in print and, thus, they will acquire a good knowledge of orthographic units (as cited in Westwood, 2008).

This idea was strongly criticized and a considerable amount of research has acknowledged that the ability to rapidly recognize words determines to a substantial extent

L2 reading fluency and comprehension (Birch, 2002; Koda, 1996; Paran, 1996) (as cited in Fender, 2008). Ehri (2005) stated that when the connection between well-formed spelling representations and corresponding phonological and semantic forms is tightly established, word recognition fluency will emerge. Once the spelling of a word becomes familiar, the graphic form will function much the same as a whole graphic unit. In other words, spelling representations are built in memory as graphic forms and they can be retrieved automatically when they are encountered in reading (as cited in Fender, 2008).

Accordingly, spelling ability seems to have a large impact on learners' reading fluency and reading comprehension. Bad spellers are most of the time bad readers (Fender, 2008). This indicates that proficiency in spelling supports reading (Moats, 2005). Therefore, it is proposed that instruction in spelling will enhance children's reading in the earlier years of schooling (Gentry, 2004).

However, some researchers have admonished that poor spelling ability does not necessarily entail that learners are poor readers. Good readers can decode more words than they can spell or encode (Berninger, Abbott, Abbott, Graham, & Richards, 2002) (as cited in Reed, 2012). Westwood (2008) suggested that there is some evidence in this. It is, perhaps, because spelling and reading are two different and separate processes, despite the fact that they rely on some of the same underlying knowledge and skills. In fact, reading relies on some contextual clues to support word recognition, while spelling depends on accurate retrieval and production of a combination of letters which cannot be guided at all from the context.

All in all, the impact of spelling on reading cannot be totally ignored. Many researchers have provided evidence that there is a strong relation between spelling and reading.

According to many studies, having problems in spelling may have negative effects on learners' reading proficiency and fluency in both L1 and L2 acquisition.

1.4. Learning Spelling

1.4.1. Stages of Spelling Development

Learning spelling was considered merely a process of rote memorization, but after the pioneering work of Read (1971), Henderson and Beers (1980), and Ehri and Wilce (1985) spelling has been realized as a developmental process (as cited in Westwood, 2008). The field of research suggested that the process of spelling development occurs in various stages. According to Masterson and Crede (1999), "the development of spelling skill is not random, but rather evolves in stages" (p.243). This clearly indicates that learners go through a series of stages when acquiring their spelling knowledge.

Henderson (1990) suggested a model of spelling development, in which he divided the developmental process into five phases. In his model, each stage was given a name and a description of learners' behaviours at a particular time; the five stages were called *prephonemic stage*, *letter-name stage*, *within-word-pattern stage*, *syllable-juncture stage*, and *derivational-constancy stage*.

Similarly, Gentry and Gillet (1993) outlined five stages of spelling development. The stages were characterized by the changes which reflect the learners' gradual development of their spelling ability. According to Westwood (2008), each stage of spelling development reflects a progress in knowledge which concerns "phonemes, letters and letter-strings, and units of meaning within words" (p.21). He added that the stages reflect to what extent children have acquired different strategies to analyse, check, and correct words by themselves.

Actually, there is no agreement between researchers on the numbers of stages of spelling development; some researchers have proposed four stages, others as many as seven. Also, they have used different terms to label the various stages, but the most common ones can be summarized as follows.

The first stage is called *pre-communicative stage*, also *pre-phonemic stage* or *preliterate stage*. In this stage, children's writings consist of only drawings, and scribbles; and the relationship of symbol to sound has not yet developed to construct real words. Upper-case letters and letters that are found within a child's name are the most used letters in this stage (Treiman et. al, 2001).

The second stage is called *semi-phonetic stage*, also *early phonetic stage*. Children start gradually to understand letter-sound correspondence and use sounds that are assigned to letters in an attempt to make words (Westwood, 2008). According to some researchers, children at this stage use only one letter to represent a whole syllable because children at this stage do not recognize that syllables include other sounds (Cardoso-Martins et. al, 2006).

The third stage is called *phonetic stage*. During this stage, children use letters to represent all the sounds heard in the word usually with the form Consonant-Vowel-Consonant, which enable them to spell some words correctly (Dorn, French, & Jones, 1993). As children progress in this stage, they develop a mental image of how words look in print. That is, they start to use their visual memory on the way words are spelled (Shea, 2011).

The fourth stage is called *transitional stage*, or *syllable juncture stage*. This stage indicates a transition from a single reliance on sounds for spelling words to use of visual information and understanding of words (Shea, 2011). At the level of this stage, learners

will be able to spell single-syllable words correctly with a difficulty in double consonants and adding affixes (Lyon & Moore, 2003).

The last stage is called *correct stage*, or *independence stage*. Reaching this final stage, learners become proficient spellers, even for spelling complex and difficult words. Using a wide range of strategies to correct spelling is available and proofreading skills are increasingly developing through this stage. At the end, most learners have acquired accurate use of orthographic units from which they can draw some spellings of unfamiliar words; thereby, learners now have an ability to spell all common words correctly (Westwood, 2008).

1.4.2. Spelling strategies

Spelling is believed to be more difficult than other language tasks. According to Perveen and Akram (2014), despite the fact learners have received a lot of drilling and training in their schools, they are still producing a lot of spelling errors. This indicates that spelling instruction is insufficient and learners should develop their spelling abilities by themselves. Therefore, students are recommended to use some spelling strategies that can help them to improve their spelling.

1.4.2.1. Definition of a Strategy

A strategy can be defined as “a mental plan or action that enables an individual to approach a particular task in a systematic manner” (Westwood, 2008, p. 25). More specifically, in the context of learning, strategies are defined as “specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques used by students to enhance their own learning” (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992, p. 63). When learners consciously select some strategies that fit a specific language task, these strategies can improve their performance of a given area in language learning.

1.4.2.2. The Importance of Spelling Strategies

Actually, there is evidence that good spellers rely on a variety of strategies for solving spelling problems, while poor spellers use a narrow range of strategies (Hughes & Searle, 1997; Davidson, 2005; Westwood, 2008; Baleghizadeh & Dargahi, 2010; and Langon, 2011). According to a study conducted by Baleghizadeh and Dargahi (2010) with EFL children, there was variability in strategy use among good and poor spellers. Good spellers used multiple and complex strategies to spell words, whereas, poor spellers resorted to use only few and limited ones. Furthermore, Westwood (2008) argued that when learners apply a variety of strategies for producing and verifying words in combination, they guarantee to achieve accurate spelling.

1.4.2.3. Effective Spelling Strategies

A great deal of research has cited countless strategies for spelling improvement taking into account the different sub-skills and processes involved in spelling as well as the role of memory in learning. The most common strategies suggested by researchers are the following: *sound-based* or *phonetic strategies*, *rule-based* or *orthographic strategies*, *visual strategies*, *morphemic strategies*, and *spelling by analogy*.

To start with, many learners use phonological spelling strategies. They sound out the words when they spell them, that is, they rely on the relationship between the sounds or phonemes and their corresponding letters or graphemes (Treiman, 1993). However, reliance on only this strategy is insufficient and may not be adaptive to yield correct spelling in many cases (Read, 1971). Furthermore, as pointed out by Anderson (1991), poor spellers usually rely heavily on this strategy. It would appear, then, that there is a necessity for alternative spelling strategies.

In addition to the strategy mentioned above, *rule-based* or *orthographic strategies* which focus on learning the rules and the regularities of spelling can be a successful strategy to learn spelling. Huges and Searl (1997) stated that English spelling should be viewed as a system that has regularities and thereby spelling problems can be solved. According to Davidson (2005), poor spellers usually lack the knowledge of the rules and regularities of the English language and accordingly, once learners understand the spelling rules and their exceptions, they will easily spell words.

Another strategy learners may use is *the visual strategy*. Some researchers (for example, Searl & Johnson, 1986) maintained that the visual strategy is very effective in teaching students to spell. Using this strategy, learners rely on their visual memory to remember the characteristics of words (Westwood, 2008). Barron (1980) reported that learners retrieve the essential information as a whole by using the visual image of the word which is stored in their memory.

Additionally, *morphological strategies* are among the most important strategies used by learners to enhance their spelling abilities. Such strategies involve using the knowledge of the root word to aid in spelling a related or derived word (Treiman, Cassar, & Zukowski, 1994). Some experts (Elbro & Arnbak, 1996; Teaching & Learning research Project, 2006) argued that the most effective way to store words in memory is by their morphemes rather than by their whole-word forms because morphemic units can be produced easily in some spelling cases (as cited in Westwood, 2008).

Finally, within the research literature, *spelling by analogy* is among the most frequently cited spelling strategies. According to Westwood (2008), knowing the correct spelling of a word helps to spell other words that are related by sound or visual patterns. Therefore, if students learn how to apply this strategy, their spelling ability will be enhanced.

It is worth mentioning that using such spelling strategies is not enough to enhance learners' spelling performance. In fact, students are required to make more efforts in order to develop their spelling abilities. As stated by Davidson (2005), learning the origin of words, using dictionaries, practising, proofreading, and making spelling books can be very beneficial for developing students' spelling performance.

1.5. The English Spelling

1.5.1. The History of English Spelling

According to Davidson (2005), Modern English started 1500 years ago with Old English, or Anglo-Saxon. Despite the fact that Old English had an Alphabet of 27 letters with a sound system of about 40 different speech sounds, there was a correspondence between its spelling and pronunciation. As the Vikings arrived to Northern and Eastern England, there was no great change in the Old English spelling because both the languages of the Vikings and Anglo-Saxon were nearly related to each other.

Since 1066, there was a remarkable change in English language with the introduction of the Norman invasion. The Normans spoke a variety of French which had a Latin root, that is why the Norman French was quite different from Old English in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling. Then, many Anglo-Saxon words had been replaced by French words, a large number of French origin Words had been introduced into English, and even some Anglo-Saxon words had been respelled according to the French spelling rules (Davidson, 2005).

The development of Printing in the 15th and the 16th centuries grossly complicated the situation. Many early printers were foreign, particularly from Netherlands, without any knowledge of English, and thereby led them to use their own spelling when printing English. Actually, the difficulty and complexity of English spelling were not due only to

external historical factors, but there were two main purely English ones. The first one was the strong influence of the language variety of London on the development of English which brought some mismatches between sound and spelling. The second one is the changes that had occurred in the English pronunciation without a corresponding change of the writing system to keep pace with them resulting in a mismatch again between sound and system. In addition to that, there were many scholars in the 16th century who thought the glory of ancient words, from Latin and Greek origin, should be reflected in new ones and, thus, they decided to add silent letters to some English words (Davidson, 2005).

To sum up, English spelling is not chaotic and confusing as people may think. In fact, it comprises different spelling systems mixed together, including words derived from Anglo-Saxon, Latin, and Greek. Furthermore, English spelling had borrowed a whole bunch of words from different languages which had different spelling systems such as French and Italian.

1.5.2. Features of English Spelling

Spelling is an area of learning that often provokes vigorous debate among researchers. Under the gloomy account of the history of English, English spelling was derived from different sources resulting in a spelling system that appears random and perplexing. Therefore, it is suggested that English has irregular spelling system. Meanwhile, there are others who claimed that English spelling is highly predictable.

English has a writing system based on the Roman alphabet. "Although English orthography is an alphabetic system, it is not an ideal one and far from it" (Savants, 2000, p.45). That is, there is no sound-letter correspondence. Knowing the pronunciation of a word does not presuppose knowing its spelling unlike. Most of the modern languages with a few exceptions, such as Chinese and Japanese, adopt the alphabetical principle for their

writing systems like Finnish. In fact, English language has 26 letters of the alphabet that can produce approximately 44 sounds (phonemes) that are represented in 250 different spellings. All these phonemes have to be presented by 26 graphemes either singly or in combination (Ball & Blachman, 1991).

Hasan (2000) stated that English is not a phonetic language. That is, it is not written as it is spoken or it does not have closer phoneme-grapheme correspondence. This is mainly because of the fact that English has different ways of representing the same sound such as a sound can be represented by a letter or different letters. Also, the same letter or letter combination as well can represent more than one sound. The reasons for this irregularity are complex and largely historical.

The main complexity in English orthography is the spelling of vowel sounds. For instance, /i:/ can be spelt in diverse ways as in *believe, receive, machine, be, see, sea, key,* and *phoenix*. Conversely, the symbol 'a' in *father, hate, anchor, ate, all, are,* and many other words has different pronunciation (Baugh and Cable, 1996). In addition, the same diversity in consonant is very confusing to the language learner. Dakhs and Mitchel(2011) acknowledged that the /k/ sound can be represented by 'k, c, ck' or 'ch', depending on its position in the word as in *kite, cat, duck,* and *Christmas*.

However, some scholars argued that English spelling is more consistent. Hildreth (1962) believed that although the non phonetic nature of English causes most of the spelling problems, English is not completely non-phonetic. He stated that about eighty five percent of words in English contain regularly sounded elements that consistently occur in English. Similarly, Templeton and Morris (1999) argued that there are frequent patterns in English spelling that provide a level of consistency. These patterns complement the alphabetic level in providing information about how sounds are spelled such as 'de, an, er, dis, con', and 'tion' and these regular patterns can be easily and directly taught to students.

Paul, Jean, Richard, and Edwin (1966) stated that spelling is not arbitrary. About fifty percent English words are based on sound-letter predictability correspondence. Another thirty four percent of words are predictable except for one sound, and in case words origin and meaning are taken into account only four percent of English words are highly irregular and thereby difficult to be learnt. In addition, there are rules which may be effective to spell many regular words, but problematic for many irregular words (Emery, 2005). According to Savants (2000), there are no official spelling rules that can be applied to all words. In each rule there is an exception to it like the rule of 'i' before 'e' except before 'c'.

To sum up, English spelling has provoked many debates among researchers while some believed that English spelling is irregular and inconsistent and others who claimed that English spelling is highly regular and predictable. In fact, English is not truly phonetic language and not controlled one-to-one letter sound relation. However, Crystal (2003) came in between and asserted that English spelling is highly predictable with just a small number of irregular forms causing a disturbance. He argued that English spelling appears to be more irregular because many of the most frequent used words have irregular spelling. To conclude, English spelling is not inconsistent, rather it is complex.

1.5.3. British English and American English Spelling Styles

American and British English are both variants of the English language; they are studied by most EFL and ESL learners around the world. In each country when English is taught as a foreign or second language, only one variety of English language is adopted by educational authorities; consequently, teachers of English may consider the spelling of words according to other varieties as a spelling error.

There are many differences between British and American English. According to Mickletwait (2005) those differences are traced back to the time when the British colonized America. At that time, English spelling was not widely standardized. The British standard began after the introduction of some influential dictionaries in 1755 such as Samuel Johnson's "A Dictionary of the English Language", and the American standard followed the work of Noah Webster "An American Dictionary of the English Language". The British has kept the spelling of words that have been taken from other languages; whereas, the American English has changed the spelling to make a match between sounds and written forms.

In fact, the spelling differences between American English and British English are not random; rather, they are divided and organized by rules. Some of the common spelling differences are words ending in *-our* in Br E usually end in *-or* in Am E as *colour/color*, words ending in *-re* in Br E often end in *-er* in Am E as *centre/center*, words ending, verbs ending in either *-ise* or *-ize* in Br E always end in *-ize* in Am E as *naturalise/naturalize* and *organize/organize*, words ending in *-ence* in Br E end in *-ense* in Am E as in *licence/license*, and the use of double "l" in Br E while Am E spelling use only one "l" as *travelled/traveled*. However, there are some exceptions of the previous spelling rules for instance the pattern *-ence* and *-ense* are, in some cases, reversed as in *practise(v)* in Br E and *practice(v)* in Am E, also while the American English spelling tend to be shorter, the word *fulfil* in Br E is spelled *fulfill* in Am E. Some spellings, nevertheless, do not obey any systematic rule. Thus, they must be memorized by heart. To give examples, some differences are *cheque*(Br E)/ *check*(Am E), *plough*(Br E)/ *plow*(Am E), and *Tyre* (BrE)/*tire*(AmE) (Tottie, 2002).

Conclusion

The current chapter has offered a review of the literature related to general considerations about spelling and a look at the English spelling. In fact, the concept of spelling has attracted several researchers who have provided different definitions and explanations of this concept, as well its significance either in educational settings or in the social life. In addition, there is considerable evidence that spelling has strong correlation with both writing and reading. Spelling has, also, been realized as a developmental process in which learners go through a sequence of stages in their acquisition of spelling development, as they resort to use different strategies during this process. A review of the history of English spelling has made it clear that the English spelling is not arbitrary and chaotic as many may think; rather it is a victim of a complicated history which resulted in irregular and complex spelling system of English. Finally, it has been pointed out the commonest differences between British and American English spelling styles that learners may confuse in their writing.

CHAPTER TWO: LEARNERS' SPELLING ERRORS

Introduction

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, English spelling is considered, to great extent, difficult due to its irregular and complex features. Consequently, many EFL learners are prone to commit spelling errors. Obviously, many researchers have perceived a great value in analyzing spelling errors. Teachers in trying to understand spelling errors, rely on essential sources of information and ways to analyze them. Error Analysis is one of these sources. This second chapter is mainly a review of Error Analysis, in terms of definition, significance, the concept of errors, errors versus mistakes, and spelling errors' classifications suggested by different researchers as well as the major causes of spelling errors.

2.1. Error Analysis

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the influence of Contrastive Analysis began to fade due to the fact that it failed to describe all errors in language learning, as it is not likely to ascribe all errors to differences between L1 and L2. As a result, there was a need for an alternative to Contrastive Analysis which took the form of Error Analysis (EA).

2.1.1. Definition

EA is a branch of applied linguistics which was first introduced by the British applied linguist Stephen Pit Corder (1967). It is a linguistic analysis that examines errors made by L2 learners. The analysis of learners' errors provides an opportunity for teachers to determine the main areas that need reinforcement in second language teaching-learning process (Corder, 1967). In addition to L1 interference, EA accepted other sources of errors such as intralingual interference, overgeneralization, inadequate teaching, and the effect of

some variables of age, attitudes, aptitudes, and motivation (Shastri, 2010) (as cited in Tomková, 2013)

2.1.2. Significance

It is important to stress that EA is useful in the process of second language learning because researchers who were interested in studying learners' errors argued that errors contain valuable information on the process of learning a foreign language.

According to Corder (1967), errors are evidence that learning is taking place. He argued that the study of learners' errors can systematically provide significant insights into how a language is learnt or acquired. He added that the analysis of students' errors has a practical application for language teachers. Once errors provide feedback, teachers will deduce something about the effectiveness of their teaching.

Moreover, Sharma (1980) stated that EA is an effective support to remedial teaching; it reveals both the successes and failures of the teaching programme. Similarly, Dulay et al (1982) mentioned that EA helps teachers, syllabus designers, and textbook writers to reveal the problematic areas. Therefore, they can design remedial exercises and focus more attention on the trouble spots (as cited in Khansir & Jajeri 2012).

Finally, Richards and Schmidt (2002, 184) pointed out that EA may be carried out for the following purposes:

- identify strategies which learners use in language learning;
- try to identify the causes of learner errors;
- obtain information on common difficulties in language learning as an aid to teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials.

In general, EA has several implications for the handling of learners' errors in the classroom. Accordingly, studying learners' errors should be considered as something positive for both teachers and learners.

2.1.3. The Concept of Error

EFL learners' errors are a major area of study in the field of Second Language Acquisition research. Countless researchers of language learning have come-up with different definitions of an error, always with reference to different aspects of the error.

Hendrickson (1978) defined an error with reference to error correction and the teacher when he stated that an error is "an utterance, form or structure that a particular language teacher deems unacceptable because of its inappropriate use or its absence in real life discourse" (p. 387). In this definition, the teacher has the ultimate authority to decide on what is right or wrong.

Another definition is proposed by Lennon (1991) with reference to the native speaker. For him, 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 speaker's native speaker counterparts" (p. 182).

Some researchers when defining errors have taken into account the target language norms. Worth (1987) defined errors as "systematic deviation from the norms of the language being learned" (p.87). Similarly, Dulay et al (1982) stated that "errors are the flawed side of learned speech or writing" and that "they are those parts of speaking or writing that deviate from some selected form or mature language performance." (p.138)

In general, language errors can be considered as “unsuccessful bits of language” (James, 1998, p.1). They cannot be corrected by the learners themselves who have no intention to commit errors (Edge, 1997; and James, 1998).

2.1.4. Errors versus Mistakes

The two terminologies *mistake* and *error* may seem to be carrying the same meaning; however, linguists and researchers have treated the two terms differently. Thus, it is important to make a clear distinction between mistake and error that are often confused.

Corder (1973) associated errors with failure in competence, whereas mistakes are associated with failure in performance. In a similar way, Ellis (1997) stated that errors reflect deficiency in learners' knowledge; learners make errors because of their ignorance of the correct rules of the target language. Mistakes, on the other hand, reflect occasional lapses in performance.

In the distinction between errors and mistakes, some researchers used the criterion of correction. Allwright & Bailey (1991) pointed out that L2 learners are able to correct their mistakes, but their errors are part of “their current system of interlanguage rules” (p.92), and hence learners do not recognize them as being wrong. Similarly, James (1998) used the same criterion.

2.2. Classification of Spelling Errors

Spelling errors attribute to major errors in English writing. Studying learners' spelling errors provides an opportunity to understand and overcome the learners' spelling difficulties. Hence, spelling errors can be a rich source of information about the English spelling system and the main causes of learners' spelling problems.

Researchers of language acquisition, especially those who were concerned with the study of spelling errors committed by learners of English, provided several classifications of spelling errors. Some of those classifications are mentioned below.

2.2.1. Intralingual Errors and Interlingual Errors

Spelling errors have been classified, with regard to first language interference, into interlingual errors and intralingual errors. Second language learners make interlingual errors due to the interference of their mother tongue, while they commit intralingual errors because of their incompetence at a particular stage (Brown, 2000; Richard, 1974). James et al. (1993) divided sources of interlingual errors into three types: mispronunciation, misrepresentation, and lexical cognate misspelling, whereas intralingual errors are divided into three main types: overgeneralization of some spelling rules, confusion of homophones, and letter naming (as cited in Solati, 2014, pp. 38-39).

2.2.2. Orthographic, Phonological, and Morphological Errors

Moats (1995) provided three major categories of spelling errors which concern mainly the linguistic and orthographic idiosyncrasies of English language. Those categories were orthographic errors (phonetically correct), phonological errors (phonetically incorrect), and morphological errors. Al-Jarf (2010) stated that orthographic errors are such errors when the misspelled word sounds correctly but the graphemes used to spell it do not correspond with the target word, whereas, phonological errors are those errors in which the misspelled word does not sound like the target word, generally, because there is no correspondence between the letters and sounds in the misspelled word. On the other hand, morphological errors are such errors that concern the units of meaning in the target word, that is, word roots and affixes.

2.2.3. Classification according to the Placement of the Error

A common classification of spelling errors focuses on the placement of the error. Cook (1997) investigated types of spelling errors in the written production of learners of English and he categorized their spelling errors into four major categories: omission, substitution, transposition, and addition errors. Many researchers have used Cook's classification of learners' spelling errors when conducting their studies.

2.2.3.1. Omission Errors

Omission errors (or deletion errors) refer to the absence of a letter or group of letters that should be present in the target word. Many studies (Cook, 1997; Maruemon, 2012; Dadzie & Bosiwah, 2015; and Subhi & Yasin, 2015) have shown that omission errors are the most common errors found in learners' writing composition. In this type of spelling errors, learners usually tend to omit silent letters and reduce double consonants, for instance *nife* for *knife* and *necessary* for *necessary* (Al Harrasi, 2012, p.106). According to Sabir (2012), such errors occur when learners fail to analyze all the sounds within a word.

2.2.3.2. Substitution Errors

A substitution error occurs when a letter has been replaced by another one. According to Cook (1997), learners make substitution errors in both vowels and consonants. For example, as stated by Al Harrasi (2012), learners cannot make a distinction between 'e' and 'a' or between 'e' and 'i' and learners also may confuse between 'c' and 'k' or between 's' and 'c'. Sabir (2012) explained that substitution errors are due mainly to the confusion of homophones that often have similar sounds. He added that such errors generally occur when learners lack the knowledge of the correct word and then try to write the word with possible spelling by guessing it with a letter that sounds similar to the actual one.

2.2.3.3. Transposition Errors

Transposition errors (or disordering errors) occur when selecting the correct letters but placing them in the wrong order. Naruemon (2012) argued that transposition errors are mainly due to learners' carelessness as in *grilfriend* for *girlfriend*. However, Dadzie and Bosiwah (2015) asserted that carelessness is not the only cause of transposition errors; in fact, learners' ignorance of spelling rules may be an additional cause of those errors.

2.2.3.4. Addition Errors

Addition errors (or insertion errors) are characterized by the presence of an extra letter or letters in the target word. In his study, Cook (1997) found that learners tend to insert epenthetic vowels between consonant clusters into CVC, or to add the silent 'e' at the end of some words. Sobhi et al. (2015) stated that the chief cause of addition errors is the learners' lack of knowledge of the relation between the spoken and written language (*amaizing* instead of *amazing*) as well as incorrect pronunciation (*bullding* instead of *building*) (p. 244).

2.2.4. Other Types of Spelling Errors

Another classification of spelling errors was suggested by Mitton (1996) who has addressed the role of spellcheckers for correcting spelling errors. Mitton pointed out that when writers write a word which is correctly spelled but it is not the intended one, spellcheckers are unable to correct such types of errors which he called "real-word errors". Those errors can be divided into three types. Wrong-word errors occur when a word is written instead of the right one for example *quit* instead of *quite*; wrong form of words errors concern verb tenses, plurals, affixes and apostrophes for example *use to* for *used to*; and word division errors occur when words are wrongly divided into two parts such as writing the word *myself* as *my self*.

2.3. Causes of Spelling Errors

It has been noticed that many learners of English as a second or foreign language exhibit many difficulties with English spelling. Thus, it is expected that students would make different types of errors that distort their written production. These errors have been attributed to various causes: developmental factors, the irregularity of English spelling, confusion in the English spelling, the effect of the mother tongue, learner's pronunciation, negligence of the English spelling rules and its restriction, in addition to lack of motivation.

2.3.1. Developmental Factors

One of the causes of spelling errors is natural and developmental factors. Bahloul (2007) stated that the majority of spelling errors stems from developmental stage that does not have relation with learners. He explained that some of the spelling errors are said to have relation with the developmental stages of spelling and it is most committed by children. Many of the spelling errors which are committed by learners were highly similar to those committed by native speakers as a part of their developmental stages. For instance, in cases where learners reverse the order of the adjacent letters in some words by spelling *firist* instead of *first*. As learners move on to next higher step in language learning, they are supposed to overcome such errors (as cited in Al Jayousi, 2001).

2.3.2. Irregularity of English Spelling

The main cause of spelling errors, by many researchers, and one that seems to cause most learners of English a big problem in developing their spelling proficiency is the irregularity of English spelling system. In fact, the lack of correspondence between the letters and the sounds results in this complexity. Khansir and Tajeri (2012) claimed that learners' errors are due to the irregularity of correspondence between spelling and

pronunciation. In fact, English language is full of examples of words that are spelled quite differently from their pronunciation.

There are a variety of pronunciations represented by the same letter or series of letters. For example, the orthography *ough* represents at least six different sounds of these words: *cough, tough, bough, through, though, thoroughfare*. Another case is when words that sound the same but spelled differently like *lead* and *led*. In addition, El-Hibri and Alaha (1993) stated that a single word can be internalized by different letters like the sound /f/ is to be found in the following letter combination: 'ph' as in philosophy, 'gh' as in enough. /ʃ/ sound may be represented by 'sh' like in *wash*, 'ti' like in *nation*, and 'si' like in *tension*. Cook (2004) explained that in English there are 44 phonemes, while there is only 26 letters. Thus, a grapheme can be represented by many phonemes.

The discrepancy between the written presentation and the actual pronunciation of words is attributed to different causes. First, spelling words has different diverse origins with different spelling conventions and English has absorbed words from different languages and took their spelling. Also, pronunciation changed drastically over the last centuries while spelling has remained the same. In the past about 300 to 500 years ago, the now silent letter in *knife* was pronounced. Therefore, learners are confused when it comes to spelling these words. In addition, spoken language varies depending on the context like in formal and informal setting and hence context plays a crucial role in choosing appropriate pronunciation and spelling (Khansir and Al Tajeri, 2012). Rudling (2012) claimed that a simplified standardized spelling system could not possibly reflect all the great varieties, English dialects, regions and even within individuals spelling of words may differ.

To sum up, spelling English words by itself is difficult. As we do not spell many words the way they sound because of the mismatch between the spoken and the written form.

This inconsistency in English spelling misleads students to write words with wrong spelling.

2.3.3. Confusion of English Spelling

English spelling is an area of English writing that is difficult to master. English spelling does have a number of underlying rules that are helpful; nevertheless, learners struggle with these rules that are too many, complex, and have a lot of exceptions.

2.3.3.1. Confusion with Words

There are words in English language that cannot be spelled correctly by simply linking the right letters together in the right order. Associating letters shapes with their corresponding sounds is not sufficient for learners to master English spelling. In fact, learners should have a good grasp of compound words and homophones which may lead to confusion and misspellings.

Stilman (1997) defined a compound as a word consisting of two words or more that express only a single concept. He distinguished between three types of compound words; open compounds are two words written separately with a space between them, closed compounds are two words written together as one word, and hyphenated compounds are two words joined by a hyphen. In fact, there are no fixed rules to determine which of three types of compound words should be applied. Add to the complication, hyphens in English have several uses and rules; they are used to connect syllables of a word broken at the end of a line, to join suffixes and prefixes to words, and, as mentioned before, to connect compound words (McCaskill, 1998). Consequently, among the spelling errors made in writing are the spelling of compound word that is whether to write one word or two words and whether to insert a hyphen or not (Davidson, 2005).

English is full of tricky and bewildering homophones that result a lot of incomprehension when learners write the wrong word. According to Mc Arthur (1992), a Homophone is derived from the Greek word *homo* which means the same and *phone* means sound. A Homophone is a word that sounds the same as another one but has different spelling and meaning like *beer* and *bier*. Galko (2007) stated that a homophone is a serious difficulty for majority of learners. One homophone is more common and familiar than the other one; consequently, whenever learners encounter confusion about which one of them to use, they tend to use the one they are familiar with. Devine (2002) stated that homophones are source of spelling errors and spellcheckers will not spot on the misusing of the two words because both of them are correct. Therefore, learners must be aware of different word usages and meaning.

2.3.3.2. Confusion with Letters

The frequent occurrence of silent letters, the choice between single and double consonants, the spelling of word-endings, and the use of capital letters in English may result in some spelling problems and confusion for learners.

Silent letters are those letters that are written but not pronounced. According to Rudling (2012), there are more than 60% percent of English words that include silent letters in their spelling, and those letters used to be pronounced at earlier times but ceased to be pronounced. Smith (2003) stated that there are several silent vowels in English but there are no specific rules for spelling them. Similarly, Devine (2002) argued that there are no rules to determine when to use silent letters, and therefore words which consist of silent letters have to be learnt.

The most difficult hurdle for any speller in English is the dread of double letter dilemma. Stilman (1997) argued that words with double consonants cause a lot of trouble.

Learners commit errors in doubling the wrong letter, incorrectly doubling more than one, and doubling one instead of two. Davidson (2005) stated that this difficulty emerges in words when added prefixes, suffixes, and Greek and Latin derived words. When adding prefixes result that the adjacent letters become identical, learners may confuse whether to double the consonant or not like in dissimilar. Also, words from Greek and Latin cause problems since these origins do not have clear word forming element; they are not clearly understood by learners and do not give clue whether it requires double letter or not. Furthermore, learners may find difficulty when suffixes are added and get confused whether to double consonants or not.

Burt (2002) gave a list of rules for double consonant. For instance, in one-syllable verb ends in consonant followed by vowel then consonant, the last letter is doubled when add the following vowel suffixes are added: 'ing, ed, er, est, en, ish, ery, -y', for example, *stopping, robbed, sitting*. The final letter is doubled, also, when a word has more than one syllable, and when the final syllable is stressed in speech like *preferred*. However, the double consonant rules have a lot of exceptions.

The choice between *ible/able, ance/ence, ant/ent, tion/sion, and or/er* arises some difficulties in English spelling. Stilman (1997) stated that word-endings spelling errors are common type of errors in learners' writing because some endings almost have the same sound and, he added, there are no specific rules to apply when choosing a word-ending for a given word (example: *relevant* and *respondent*).

Although the use of capital letters is straightforward, it has tremendous rules that lead to confusion and misspelling. Eastwood (2002) stated that capital letters are used at the beginning of the sentence, with names of people, titles of books, newspapers, and films. According to Davidson (2005), all main words of a title should be capitalized; whereas

minor words are not except when they are placed at the beginning or the last in a title. He added that the same capital words in a title are written in lower case in other forms of writing. Also words that are derived from name of people or places sometimes retain capitalization and sometimes not depending on each dictionary (Stilman, 1997).

2.3.3.3. Confusion with Numbers and Symbols

In addition to words and letters which lead to confusion in English spelling but also there are also symbols that are bewildering for learners. Although those symbols are less frequently used, they are mostly misused. Numbers and symbols, apostrophes, accents and diacritics are problematic for learners.

The problem with numbers arises when students confuse whether to use letters or figures to write numbers. There is no clear agreement between authorities from where to start writing numbers in figures; That is, from twenty upwards, or over ten, or over twelve, and less commonly above ninety-nine. Larger and complex larger numbers are spelled in figures. In mathematics, numbers of measurement, amounts, and fractions are generally written in figures (Davidson, 2005). Baugh (1993) argued that most of the spelling errors are due to the learners' negligence of the type of the text in which numbers occur in.

The confusion of symbols as &, @, ≠, % is remarkably due to the learners' ignorance of its various uses in its appropriate context. The ampersand (&) is generally used in business and advertisement as an alternative for 'and'. The @ sign is used mostly when sending email address and in informal language to give price. The hash (≠) is used in American English to mean numbers. The % symbol is commonly used in technical writing, while in general writing it is spelled 'per cent' (Davidson, 2005).

The use of apostrophes in English may result in some difficulties and confusion. Apostrophes are used to indicate possessions, plurals, and omitted letters in contractions.

Despite the fact that apostrophes have three independent uses and each of which follows certain rules, learners are mistaking them and getting mystified (Stilman, 1997). Foster (2005) stated that the use of apostrophes in possessives makes some troubles for learners who often confused between, for example, *its* and *it's*.

English language has borrowed many words from different languages; those languages have words that are spelled not only with letters but also with accents and diacritics written above or below some letters. Some of those words have introduced to English and they become treated as fully English ones, but other ones are still considered foreign words; thus, learners have to spell them according to their original spelling system (Davidson, 2005). As a result, learners of English generally avoid using foreign words in their writing because they fear spelling them incorrectly (Devine, 2002).

In conclusion, many learners are baffled permanently by words that render problems. English includes troublesome words with difficult spelling such as homophones, words with silent letters, and compound words. Besides, there are no official spelling rules to control some aspect of the English spelling like word ending, silent letters, and the use of numbers. Moreover, there are a lot of rules for other patterns like apostrophe, symbols, and numbers. In addition, for almost every commonly followed rule there are exceptions. All these complexity in English words and spelling rules exacerbate spelling problems for EFL learners. Although some rules are helpful, memorizing a large number of rules with their exceptions besides confusing words is probably difficult and frustrating.

2.3.4. The Influence of L1

Obviously, the irregularity of English spelling inflicted by its areas of confusion cause most of spelling errors; however, there are still other reasons of spelling that have no relation with English itself.

Extensive researches have shown that the difference that exists between the mother tongue and the target language hinders the process of learning a language. For instance, Corder (1993) claimed that speakers whose mother tongue is similar to the target language are likely to find it easy to be acquired more than the other speakers whose mother tongue is far distant linguistically (as cited in Al Jarf, 2010). Smith (2008) asserted that learners with similar writing system to English like Spanish find English writing system easy, while in cases where it is highly far like Arabic and Japanese, it will be not easy to learn English writing system. Sarille and Troik (2006) referred to the effect of the mother tongue on L2 acquisition as transfer and Brown divided it into positive and negative transfer, in which learners' errors are caused by negative transfer as Lado hypothesized.

Learners have experienced problems acquiring L2 writing system in case the mother tongue has no equivalent for some of the linguistic features found in the target language. Cook (1997) stated that Arab learners may write *bicture* for *picture* due to the lack of /p/ in Standard Arabic. Bhela (1999) pointed out that when learners had gaps in their L2 syntactical written structure, they tend to adjust the form of their L2 by using patterns from their mother tongue. For example, there are many alphabet that does not exist in Arabic; hence, learners try to substitute with the English alphabet that is closer in pronunciation in Arabic (Baloch, 2013). In Japanese, there is no /l/, /r/ and /v/ phonemes, therefore speaker of Japanese may misspell *violin* as *biolin* (Gunion, 2012) (as cited in Narwemon, 2012, p.5).

The influence of the mother tongue is a source of English spelling errors. Figuredo (2006) argued that when learning second or foreign language, learners rely on their phonological and grapheme-to-morpheme correspondence of their first language. For example, Wales uses the same alphabet as English, but has regular phoneme grapheme correspondence, then Welsh learners write words that resemble their spelling system as *dinnar* for *dinner*.

EFL learners are influenced by the sound system of their first language. For example, one of the characteristics of Dutch is that consonants are doubled after a short vowel; thus Dutch learners may misspell *week* as *wekk*. Furthermore, in Thai language final 's' does not exist and thereby they may spell *hospital* as *hopital*. In addition, the effect of transfer occurs between the writing system of the learner's first language and second or foreign language. Thai language does not exploit space between words. As a result, in writing in English, Thai learner may not use space in open compound words like writing *everyweek* instead of *every week* (Banchara, 2013).

To sum up, apparently the linguistic difference between the mother tongue and the target language may cause EFL learners to commit a lot of spelling errors. Learners tend to make errors due to the influence of their mother tongue concerning sound system, phoneme-grapheme correspondence, and also to writing system characteristics.

2.3.5. The Influence of Learners' Pronunciation

Another difficulty that is related specifically to EFL learners is not being able to identify pronunciation distinctly enough to spell words. Thus, another source of spelling errors is the influence of learners' pronunciation. Devine (2002) claimed that dropping syllables or letters from words in speaking or running the two syllables together translated in writing, for instance, by writing *intramural* as *innermural* and *interesting* instead of *interesting*. Cook (1997) claimed that unlike native speakers, students may lack the knowledge of the actual sound system of English and hereby will use the wrong letter, especially for /e/ and /i/ as in spelling *beg* for *big*. According to Banchara (2013), when learners write words they rely on their own pronunciation as they mispronounce words such as *government* and *politics* which have /rn/ and /ks/ cluster by omitting the n and s and keeping only r and k, for example, spell these words as *goverment* and *politic* the way they pronounce them.

Cook (1997) asserted that pronunciation-based problem is due to the learners' ignorance of the sound system and thus the use of the wrong letter. Bancha (2013) stated that when learners are unable to distinguish between similar sounds, this will cause mispronunciation and eventually leading to spell words incorrectly.

2.3.6. Ignorance of Spelling Rules

Lack of knowledge of spelling rules and their exceptions is another cause of errors. This category contains the words that were misspelled because students seemed to lack the ability to apply some of the basic spelling rules of English. It includes errors that attributed to the incomplete application of English spelling rules, or the lack of knowledge of the exceptions of spelling rules, such as forming the plural of the words that end with the letter 'y', doubling the last consonant in words that end with CVC combination of letters, or dropping the final 'e' when adding inflections (Hildreth, 1962).

Solati (2014) conducted a study and examined English spelling of Persian EFL learners' sources of spelling errors. The finding showed that most of the spelling errors are due to the learners' unawareness of the restriction and exceptions to one of the spelling rules. Learners may lack the necessary knowledge when adding some morphemes, for example, errors such as *studyes* was committed by participants. This clearly shows the learners' unawareness of changing the final 'y' into 'i' when it is preceded by consonants.

Al Badawy (2016) in his study pointed out that most of the learners' spelling errors were due to the learners' understanding of the appropriate context that to apply a specific rule. To illustrate, subjects lack the knowledge of where to replace 'y' by 'i' and also to double consonants since those rules are the commonest confusing in English.

2.3.7. Lack of Motivation and Interest

Another possible reason could be learners' lack of desire to learn correct spelling of English words. Many students do not pay enough attention to the way they spell words; they simply write them the way they feel, rather than the way it is supposed to be written which lead to carelessness. Harry (1970) pointed out that learners commit spelling errors because of the lack of motivation to learn accurate spelling due to the lack of desire to do that (as cited in Miressa and Dumessa, 2011, p. 106).

Clearly, learners do not devote enough time to learn spelling rules and how to spell patterns; besides, they do not attempt to use the available means and materials to learn how English words are spelled. Shaw (1970) stated "the most important steps in correct spelling are the desire to learn, to devote necessary time to learn; the third is to use all available means to learn" (p.167). That is, learners must show an appreciation for spelling. Students should put particular attention and take spelling seriously. In addition, there should be an interest of spelling from the part of the learners as well the teacher who must give efficient feedback to the learner. Moreover, there should be available sources like books that emphasize spelling rules.

Miressa and Dumessa (2011) conducted a study that investigated the causes of students' spelling errors at Donbosco High and Preparatory School in Batu. They analysed writing test from the dictation sample sentences written by the students. Teachers' questionnaire results showed that students lack interest to learn spelling. Teachers explained that Learners' spelling errors were committed because of students' lack interest in learning or knowing the correct spellings of English words and learners believed that learning spelling is restricted to lower grade students only. In addition, from the part of the students' questionnaire, it showed that teachers neglected correcting spelling errors when they marked their students' written examinations. This obviously indicates lack of attention by the teacher to teaching spelling.

Obviously, lack of interest and motivation is another strong cause of spelling errors. This may lead to students to be careless to write with correct spelling or to learn English spelling as well.

Conclusion

In this second chapter, learner's spelling errors have been reviewed. First, It has been demonstrated that Error Analysis is an effective linguistic analysis that paved the way for researchers to analyse errors. Different definitions of the term errors have been provided and the distinction between the two related terms that are often used interchangeably, mistake and error has been clarified. Second, numerous classifications of spelling errors that denoted the different aims, criteria and methodologies applied by researchers have been discussed. Among them, there are interlingual and intralingual errors; orthographical, phonological and morphological errors; types depending on the placement of errors and others. In order to get more insights about spelling errors, the most likely causes that led behind spelling errors have been discussed in the last section of the chapter. The first cause is the developmental factor that is natural and diminishes through time. Then, there is the irregularity of English spelling which was considered as the chief reason of spelling errors. Since there is a lack of mapping between the written and the spoken language, learners may face a lot of difficulties. Moreover, English has tricky words with myriad rules that lead to a great confusion to learners. Accordingly, learners may lack the knowledge of these rules and their exceptions. Furthermore, learners coming from different backgrounds brought patterns from their mother tongue and use them in L2 and so they stumble upon a negative transfer from these features in writing. Also, inaccurate learner's pronunciation may cause learners to commit spelling errors. Finally, spelling errors may be attributed to lack of interest in the part of the teacher and the students.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

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CHAPTER THREE: FIELD WORK

Introduction

While the first two chapters have presented a theoretical foundation which highlighted spelling mainly English spelling and spelling errors, this upcoming chapter is devoted to the practical part of the dissertation in hand. This chapter begins with a brief account of the motives behind the selection of the population of the study and a detailed description and administration of the instruments used in this study. Then, it looks at a deep analysis of the presented data followed by discussion. Finally, it provides pedagogical implication, some recommendation and impetus for further researches.

3.1. Research Methodology

3.1.1. Population and Sampling

The population of this research work consists of second year License students of English as a foreign language at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel during the academic year 2015-2016. The choice of this population is due to several reasons.

First, students have already studied writing as a basic skill during middle and high school. In addition, they studied writing in their first year at university three sessions a week, of which a session lasts ninety minutes. This suggests that they have already and sufficiently been equipped with basic knowledge of writing. Moreover, second year students take writing which is scheduled for four hours and a half per week.

Consequently, this opportunity to practice writing, especially in their first and second year at university has normally helped those learners to attain a certain level of mastery in English writing in general and spelling in particular. Therefore, they can supply this study with sound data. Participants under scrutiny have been selected through a randomized

sample from the existing population, which is 224 students. All the participants were from two groups from second year and the number of the total participant was 45.

3.1.2. Research Instruments

In order to gather reliable data and to ensure clear finding of this present study, two different research methods were used. The first instrument is a dictation test. It is conducted in order to uncover, describe, and deepen understanding of students spelling errors. It is followed by a translation test aiming at strengthening the results of the dictation test and also at testing to what extent the students are careful or careless when they spell English words. Finally, in order to figure out students' and teachers' perception about spelling, a students' questionnaire and a teachers' questionnaire were used.

3.1.2.1. The Tests

3.1.2.1.1. The Dictation Test

The primary instrument of data collection of this study was a dictation test. Based on the main aim of the current study of testing teachers' performance, a dictation test is the most appropriate tool for data collection. In order to assess the student's spelling competency, dictation test is useful for recording the different types of spelling errors which aid us to come up with a fair numerical representation of the errors. In this study, a word dictation test is selected to collect for two main reasons. First, spelling dictation test mainly aims at checking students' spelling performance only. This means that other parts of language, particularly grammatical errors are not considered. Second, in free writing task, for example, students with spelling deficits often use avoidance strategies and intend to spell words they know how to spell. Thus, a spelling dictation test is a reliable and accurate method in measuring spelling proficiency.

3.1.2.1.1. Description of the Dictation Test

The spelling dictation test was prepared by the researchers. The dictation test consisted of 70 words. In order to make sure the students recognize the words, the words are presented in context by putting them in meaningful sentences (26 sentences). Most of the words are familiar and easy as foreign learners of English studied them from the early years of instruction. For example, the words *Funny*, *minutes*, *speech*, *wonderful*, *group*, *nowadays* could be spelled correctly by a middle school pupil.

Despite the fact that some words are chosen randomly, other words are chosen according to certain criteria. Ten words were chosen from the most frequently misspelled words included in the book of *How to Improve Your Spelling* by George Davidson. It followed them with familiar words that are likely to pose difficulty to students as homophones. Besides, different types of words which were used commonly in English and words with spelling rules such as: words with 'ie' or 'ei', words ending in 'y', doubling consonants. For clarifying all sides of the problem, words with different types of vowels, short, long and combined vowels, and different types of consonants are used. Also, the spelling test mixed both one syllable words and multi-syllable one; words whose spelling match their pronunciation and others not.

3.1.2.1.2. Administration of the Dictation Test

The dictation test was administered over two consecutive days for each group of participants. The researchers were present in the administration of the dictation test in order to give any necessary explanation. Permission was sought from the teacher of the class in order to give the researchers time for the two tests. Fortunately, the teacher was cooperative and kindly willing to participate in accomplishing this study and asked the

participant to act seriously as it is a test. It all took place in a vivid and friendly atmosphere.

The participants were asked first of their willingness to take part of this study and participate in the tests. Then, the contributors were informed about the proper way of replying the tests and drew the attention of the importance of responding to the test individually and without relying on the dictionary. The word dictation test was administered to the students at the beginning of the lecture in a single session that lasted about 30 minutes.

The participants were given papers with spaces to fill in with the dictated sentences. The papers were coded with numbers for the purpose of comparing the results obtained from the dictation test with those that will be obtained from the translation test in order to investigate students' carelessness. The test administrators read the sentences aloud, word by word and repeated the full sentences with clear voice and participants asked for repeating when missing a word. At the end of the test, the subjects were given time for revising their writing. All the subjects who participated in the test handed it back to the researchers on the spot.

3.1.2.1.2. Translation Test

One of the main aims of this research work is to unearth the commonest causes of spelling errors and therefore prescribe solutions. A translation test is generally used to assess student's competence in vocabulary and meaning of words in the target language. However, in this work, translation test is mainly used to determine the extent to which the students are careful or careless when spelling words. As a matter of fact, carelessness is when students do not pay enough attention when writing words that lead to making errors. Accordingly, carelessness can be tested by comparing the spelling of the same target word

in different places. Thus, students were asked to translate some words from Arabic into English which were dictated in the previous test. Carelessness is counted when a word is spelled differently in both tests.

3.1.2.1.2.1. Description of the Translation Test

The translation test consisted of 23 words (appendix B) which represents one third of the whole words which the participants were asked to translate them from English into Arabic. The whole number of words in the translation test was included in the dictation test. The researchers chose words that have only one equivalent translation in English in order to ensure that the subjects would spell the same words targeted by the test. Also, all these words are familiar to second year learners of English who are supposed to have command of the meaning, pronunciation and also the spelling of these words

3.1.2.1.2.2. Administration of the Translation Test

Once the students completed the dictation test, the researchers administered the translation test. The participants were given papers that were coded with numbers and distributed to students keeping the same number as in the dictation test. The test paper consisted of target words in Arabic and gaps to be filled with the translated word. The participants were provided with the necessary instruction for the completion of the test smoothly and easily. The test lasted for about 10 minutes and all papers were handed back by all the participants.

3.1.2.1.3. Questionnaires

The questionnaires were opted for as effective instruments for gathering data on the topic of research. According to Nunan (1992), a questionnaire is “an instrument for the collection of

data, usually in written form, consisting of open and/or closed questions and other probes requiring a response from subjects" (p.231).

Actually, questionnaires are acknowledged as the most important source of information for a research work in order to obtain qualitative and quantitative data. Also, they enable the researcher to collect a large number of data in a fairly short time and to illustrate freely the participants' views and thoughts.

For the present piece of research, two varied questionnaires were used, one for the students and another one for the teachers.

3.1.2.1.4. Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire aims at eliciting students' perceptions about their spelling problems and investigating their awareness of the importance of learning English spelling. Besides, it was designed to seek out the strategies used by the students to improve their spelling performance.

3.1.2.1.4.1. Description of the Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was introduced by a short text explaining the purpose of the study and giving some instructions on how to fill the questionnaire in. It consists of twenty-five questions which are divided into closed questions requiring from participants to choose "yes" or "no" answers or to pick up the appropriate answer(s) from a number of choices, and open-ended questions which are intended to elicit information from the participants about the issue of this research.

The questions are subdivided into four sections. The first section, entitled "Background Information" and consisting of six questions, aims at gathering general pieces of information about the participants: their gender, years of studying English, their level in

writing and spelling as well as their familiarity and use of British spelling and American spelling. The second section entitled "students' attitudes towards learning English spelling" and contains four questions inquires about the students' views of learning English spelling.

The third section entitled "students' views of their spelling problems" consisting of 5 questions aims at investigating the students' perceptions of the main causes behind their spelling errors and to elicit whether there are other factors contribute to their spelling problems. The fourth section, entitled "the use of spelling strategies among students", is devoted to the spelling strategies used by the students.

3.1.2.1.4.2. Administration of the Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was handed in by the researchers to the same groups of students who participated in the tests (45 students). The researchers were present during the administration of the questionnaire for the purpose of providing students with any necessary explanations so as to avoid misunderstanding that could lead to invalid responses.

At first, students were provided with appropriate instructions before the ongoing work of answering the statements. The instructions were about how to fill in the questionnaire and for which purpose it was designed. Also, students were informed that their answers will be anonymous and they will be used only for the targets of this research. At the end, all the questionnaires were returned back.

3.1.2.1.5. Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' questionnaire aims at investigating teachers' perceptions about their students' spelling problems.

3.1.2.1.5.1. Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' questionnaire involves twenty-three questions in the form of closed questions where teachers are invited to pick up the appropriate answer (s) and open ended questions requiring from teachers to justify, explain or give suggestions.

The present questionnaire is made of five sections. The first section seeks to gather general information about the participants. The second section inquires about teachers' perceptions about learning spelling. The following section was designed to spot light on teachers' view of their students' spelling errors. The next section is devoted to find out teachers' responses of their students' spelling errors. However, the last section in this questionnaire was an opportunity for teachers to make their own suggestions if ever they have some.

3.1.2.1.5.2. Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire was handed to fifteen teachers who have taught different modules at the department of English, university of Jijel. The administration of the teachers' questionnaire was during the examinations of the second semester of the academic year which made it difficult to look for teachers and resulted in not returning back two questionnaires. Thus, only thirteen teachers are involved of this study.

3.2. Analysis of the results

3.2.1. Analysis of the Dictation Test

This section offers the finding of the study and the analysis of spelling errors committed by the participant sample in the dictation test. First, after collecting the papers, students' responses were marked individually. The researchers scrutinized every paper one by one, recording the faulty forms given by each student for each target words. Each word that

deviated the target word fully or partially was marked as an erroneous word and underlined; then, a list of the whole misspelled words was made.

For each participant, the researchers counted the words that were spelled correctly, words that were spelled incorrectly, and words were not spelled. The results are summarized in the table below

Table 1. *Students' Performance in the Dictation Test: Focus on Students*

Subjects	Correct spelling	Incorrect spelling	No answer	Total	Subjects	Correct spelling	Incorrect spelling	No answer	Total
1	61	9	0	70	24	31	32	7	70
2	25	37	8	70	25	55	11	4	70
3	29	25	6	70	26	27	37	5	70
4	55	15	0	70	27	43	27	0	70
5	35	33	2	70	28	43	27	0	70
6	52	28	0	70	29	50	20	0	70
7	44	26	0	70	30	49	15	6	70
8	37	23	0	70	31	39	24	7	70
9	36	32	2	70	32	33	34	3	70
10	35	35	0	70	33	33	37	0	70
11	30	34	6	70	34	33	37	0	70
12	22	45	3	70	35	36	34	0	70
13	31	38	1	70	36	38	30	2	70
14	32	30	8	70	37	32	37	1	70
15	61	9	0	70	38	41	29	0	70
16	52	28	0	70	39	43	24	3	70
17	55	15	0	70	40	35	35	0	70
18	45	25	0	70	41	35	35	0	70
19	31	35	4	70	42	43	27	0	70
20	27	40	3	70	43	30	40	2	70
21	48	22	0	70	44	31	39	0	70
22	44	26	0	70	45	52	18	0	70
23	38	31	1	70					

The Table 1 above shows the performance of the participants in the dictation test. The striking feature emerging from learners' performance is that no students managed to spell all words correctly. It is also noticeable that the participants' level in the test varies. Only few participants tended to spell most of the words correctly; only three participants misspelled only nine or ten words, for example subjects 1, 25 and 15. Secondly, 18 participants made total number of errors that range between 11 and 30. In addition, the rest, which comprises the majority, of the subjects made more than 30 words with total number of 24 participants. In other words, students with low performance in spelling test are far more than those with good spelling and this implies that majority of the Second year students have poor spelling proficiency.

In the analysis, the students' performance in terms of the target words is also considered. The researchers counted for each target word the number of its correct spelling, incorrect spelling and cases where students do not write the word at all. The total number of words that are calculated is 3150 words. It is the result of the number of the target words multiplied by the number of participants. That is $45 \times 70 = 3150$ words.

Table 2. Students' Performance in the Dictation Test: Focus on Words

Word	Correct spelling	Incorrect spelling	No answer	Total	Word	Correct spelling	Incorrect spelling	No answer	Total
Recommended	9	36	0	45	Britain	36	9	0	45
Studying	36	9	0	45	Behaviour	32	13	0	45
Weather	14	29	2	45	Attract	26	19	0	45
Cigarettes	21	24	0	45	Whole	30	10	5	45
Accept	31	12	2	45	Especially	29	16	0	45
Quit	27	16	2	45	Politician	32	13	0	45
Suffering	31	14	0	45	Quite	27	18	0	45
Cannot	17	28	0	45	Funny	29	16	0	45
Guarantee	15	28	2	45	In spite of	30	15	0	45
Tomorrow	33	12	0	45	Cough	9	30	6	45
Praise	13	31	1	45	Medicine	20	25	0	45
doubt	21	20	4	45	Throat	28	17	7	45
Fooling	18	24	3	45	Rough	27	15	3	45
Fascinating	20	20	5	45	Dictionary	28	22	0	45
Colleague	4	39	2	45	Communication	41	4	0	45
Italian	29	15	1	45	Influential	25	20	0	45
Restaurant	24	20	1	45	centre	22	23	0	45
Dilemma	5	39	1	45	English	30	15	0	45
Lying	24	20	1	45	Literature	34	11	0	45
Embarrassment	1	41	3	45	Neighbour	35	10	0	45
Fulfil	22	20	3	45	Competition	25	20	0	45
government	20	25	0	45	Lose	16	29	0	45
Yourself	19	24	2	45	Autumn	16	29	0	45
Whether	24	12	9	45	Island	38	7	0	45
Changeable	13	26	6	45	Group	37	8	0	45
Received	22	23	0	45	Believe	38	7	0	45
Compliment	8	37	0	45	Liar	25	20	0	45
Delivered	24	21	0	45	Relief	28	17	0	45
travelled	36	9	0	45	Finally	39	6	0	45
Quiet	10	32	3	45	Wednesday	17	28	0	45
Forty	33	12	0	45	Leaves	28	17	0	45
Minutes	30	9	6	45	Pronunciation	12	33	0	45
Wedding	36	4	4	45	Different	37	18	0	45
Landmarks	26	19	0	45	Prize	25	20	0	45
Total	802	710	63	1575	Total	974	580	21	1575

Table 2 clearly shows that all words are misspelled by the participants and most of the words are misspelled by considerable number of the participants. The majority of

misspelled word frequency is about or above 18. This is a clear evidence that second year students have serious spelling problems this could be explained by the fact that the learners have small bulk of vocabulary.

Moreover, the table indicates that the total number of words that are spelled correctly is 1776 with percentage of 56.38%, whereas those of incorrect words are 1290 with percentage of 40.95 %. Although the total number of words that are misspelled is less (about the half) than the words with correct spelling, it is a considerable and alarming number. Taking into accounts that the target words that are dictated in the test are not very difficult and appropriate for second year students who are specialized in English, the number of misspelled words is very high. This entails the participants' low performance in spelling.

The highest number of words that are misspelled occurs with the words like *embarrassment* with total number of 41 errors and only 1 student spelled it correctly; *dilemma* and *colleague* with 39 spelling errors. It can be deduced from these words that students are having great difficulty with words that have double consonant and also words that are considered in English as confusing like *quiet* (32), *compliments* (37); however, the most frequent words that are spelled correctly by participants are *tomorrow* (33 time), *finally* (39 time), *group* (37 time). Most of these words are frequently used by students; thus, they are easy to be retrieved from memory.

In addition, there is a considerable number of target words that are not spelled by participants with total of 84 errors with frequency of 2.66%. It has noticed that majority of the words that are not spelled are the same that were misspelled by large number of subjects. For instance, the words like *recommended*, *whether*, *guarantee*, *fascinating* (5), *dilemma*, *fooling* (3), *throat* (7). This can be explained by learners' preference to avoid

writing the words they do not know how to spell than to write them incorrectly and thereby prove learners' limited knowledge of the spelling of words.

Obviously, the classification of spelling errors is a crucial step to recognize spelling problems. Accordingly, the errors found in this study were analysed and further sorted into eight categories. Below, there is an explanation of each category.

- Omission: it includes errors caused by deleting one letter or more.
- Substitution: it includes errors caused by substituting a letter for another in spelling a word.
- Addition: it includes errors caused by inserting an extra letter or letters to a word.
- Reversal: it includes errors that caused by disordering some letters in a word, for example, two adjacent letters are reversed.
- Word –division: it includes errors that caused by writing one word as two and vice versa. In other words, an extra word space or a lack of word space.
- Unrecognizable word: it includes word that does not fit any category.
- Real word: it is a word that has a correct spelling, yet it is used in inappropriate context.
- Uppercase word: it includes errors that occur by writing words with small letters instead of capital letters.

In order to show what predominant type and thereby likely causes of spelling errors, researchers recorded the frequency of each error types and their percentages of the total. The percentages were critically analysed in order to explore the common spelling errors made by students giving and reasons behind making them. The data gathered were then tallied and tabulated.

It is noteworthy here that a misspelled word can be placed in more than one category, for example, the word *recommended* was spelt *recomanded* by many students.

This misspelled word could be placed in the substitution category as the letter *e* was substituted by the letter *a*. However, it can be placed in the omission category as the double letter *m* was omitted. Also, when there was more than one error in the same word, all types of errors were counted.

Table (3) summarizes the finding related to the numbers and percentages of the identified spelling errors classified according to the mentioned types.

Table 3. Spelling Errors According to their Types

Types of spelling errors	Frequency	Percentage %
Omission	463	31.96
Substitution	264	18.13
Addition	160	11.25
Reversal	67	4.43
Word –division	53	3.50
Wrong word	191	13.30
Unrecognizable word	164	12.17
Upper case letters	79	5.22
Total	1441	100

Here are some examples of spelling errors from each category.

Table 4. Examples of Salient Spelling Errors According to their Categories

Types of spelling errors	Examples
Omission	<i>Comunication, embarassment, funy, chanel, actualy, dilema, chanel, atracts, recomended, fasinating, goverment, iland, neibour, wether, autum, Resturant, guarantee, nowadays, changable, diffrent, collegue</i>
Substitution	<i>Sigarettes, influencial, polititians, Compitition, restourant, prononciation, automn, cegarettes, Recommanded, dilimma, liar, regrat, speach, liar</i>
Addition	<i>Groupe, reliefe, fullfil, forty, pronounciation, Governement, delievered, folling</i>

Reversal	<i>Recieved, beleive, wendnesday, releif, queit, munits</i>
Word –division	<i>Can not, your self, land marks, now days,</i>
Wrongword	<i>Loose, complement, exept, hole, college, lives, layer, prays, weather (instead of whether), cafe, quite and quit (instead of quiet)</i>
Unrecognizable word	<i>Cof, leing, fullfeel, garanty, nabor, asment, coph, imbarassment, dellema, Ruff, garanti, regratte, releave, liyer, realeave, dylema, liteur, leeves, Callage, sefring, weither</i>
Uppercaseletters	<i>english, italian</i>

In the forty five papers analysed, a total of 1441 errors were found. From the table 2 we obtained these results:

Omission: It can be inferred from the above Table 4 that the highest error rates in this study occurred within the error category of omission. Omission errors comprised 483 errors of the total with frequency rate of 31.96 %.

This category of errors can be further divided into three types. The first one is the deletion of double consonant letters which occurred most frequently as it is shown in Table (2). For example, students wrote *actualy* or spelled *recommended* as *recomended*. In fact, students do not know in which place to double consonants. That is, it seems that subjects lack the ability to apply some of the basic spelling rule of English, mainly the 1-2/2-1 rule of single and double consonants.

The second, some students omitted silent letters in the test like in *government, island, autum*. Such types of errors may occur due to the irregularity of English spelling and the fact that silent letters are deleted in pronunciation and thus students delete them in writing. The last case is the omission of vowels, particularly 'e' as in *diffrent*, *guarante* or "a" as in *seprate, garentee*. Learners tended to spell words the way they pronounce them. Also participants deleted 'a' as in *nowdays* and *collegue*. Hence,

irregularity of English spelling, particularly vowels and students' unawareness of that can be attributed to such kind of errors.

Substitution: According to Table (3), substitution errors comprised 264 errors of the total number of errors with frequency rate of 18.13 %. Participants substituted letter(s) with other letter(s). Participants confused between letters particularly 'c' and 't' to present the sound /ʃ/. As an example, students wrote *influencial, polititians*. It can be deduced from these examples that these errors occurred because of the mismatch between sound and written symbol in which the same sound can be presented by different letters.

Also, participants confused between 's' and 'c' and misspelled words such as *sigarettes, embarraccment, ceparate*. This is may be due to the irregularity of English spelling in which both c and s letters can be pronounced as /s/ sound in particular context and learners exhibit a difficulty in recognizing that.

Furthermore, substitution with vowels occupied large number of spelling errors for example substituting *i* for *e* like in, *guarantie* and *medecine*. Also, there is a substitution of 'o' for 'e' as in *neighbor l*, or substituting 'u' by 'o' as in *automn*. These errors might be attributed to the complexity of English spelling particularly vowels which are a confusing area in English and also to learners' pronunciation.

Wrong- word errors: the able above clearly depicts that wrong word errors committed by participants with total number of 191 and frequency rate of 13.30 %. For example, subjects wrote 'Maria did not except to quite her job', here *accept* is replaced by *except* and *quite* instead of *quit*. The main reason of wrong-word errors is the confusion of the different words or form of words that are quite similar to each other in English. Subjects confused between the words like *quit, quiet, and quite; praise and prize*. In addition, students committed spelling errors such as *compliment* as *complement* and confusing between

weather and *whether*. It is worth mentioning here that wrong word errors can be attributed to homophones which is an area in spelling that poses a great difficulty for EFL students and also it is due to lack of the meaning of the word and to students' carelessness.

Unrecognizable word: Data obtained from Table (3) reveals that unrecognizable word errors are the fourth category of the most common spelling errors. It recorded 184 errors with a frequency rate of 12.17%. For instance, learners committed such spelling errors: *cof, lyer, fullfeel, neibor, imbrassment, ruff, lyer, cogh, dealima, cuff, nabor, Raf, lyer* (Table 4).

This type of error may be attributed to the lack of knowledge of the spelling of words besides the irregularity of English spelling. Some errors were caused by partial or total ignorance of words which students were asked to spell. Thus, students either got part of the word correct by associating it with its pronunciation or wrote it totally wrong. Also, it is noticeable that such errors may occur because of the bad and weak memory of the student, analogy with words that sound alike it and their carelessness. In addition, those errors may be due to the transfer from Arabic. Participants spelled English words with phonetic spelling the way it is pronounced as in Arabic; thus, they rely on sound-based rules.

Addition errors: It can be obtained from Table 2 that addition errors are the sixth most common error with a total number of 160 errors and a frequency of 11.25. Based on results from Table 3, participants added extra letters to words; for example, by writing *groupe* which could be due to influence of the French. It has noticed other errors like *fourty* and *pronounciation* which is clearly attributed to false analogy with the word *four* and the verb *pronounce*.

Reversal errors: The Table (3) above shows that reversal errors comprised 79 errors with a frequency of 5.22. This is clearly illustrated in words with 'ie' and 'ei'. Participants

committed errors such as writing *recieved*, *beleive*, *releif*. This spelling error can be due to the learners' ignorance of English spelling patterns and rules of 'i' before 'e' except 'c'. Also, learners failed to spell words with correct order of vowels like in spelling *munits* and *delimma*. Such errors occurred because of the weak memorization or lack of knowledge of the spelling of words.

Upper case letters: Upper case words recorded less significantly concerning errors with total number of 67 and frequency rate of 4.43%. Based on results from Table 2, students misspelled words like *english* and *italian*. These errors occurred mainly because of the students' carelessness, particularly with taking into consideration the simplicity of the rule of capital letter. Obviously, learners tend to underestimate the importance of capital letters as a part in spelling and thereby commit errors concerning capitalization. Besides, a possible explanation of these errors is the lack of revising the paper before submitting it.

Word –division: Based on the data obtained from Table 3, word-division recorded the lowest total number of 53 with frequency of 3.50%. As shown in the table 1, participants spelled *your self*, *land marks*, *can not*. Arguably, students break a word to two parts because they do not know the way it is spelt and it appears from its pronunciation as being compound of two separate words. It implies that participants failed to recognize the cases where to use compound and separate word.

Clearly, through the analysis of students' spelling errors types and their likely causes, it is difficult to identify a single cause for some types. Errors occurred by multiple causes in which there is kind of overlap.

Based on the data obtained from the dictation test, all the target words in the study were misspelled. It is worth noticing here that not only the target words that were misspelled, but also other words that were dictated. However, these errors were not counted to avoid

ending with large number of errors that will be difficult to be analysed. In addition, through the analysis of the students' papers, it is found that some students left blank spaces of the sheet given them and did not attempt to spell certain words.

Moreover, participants were inconsistent in their use of British and American spelling. Subjects of this study varied in their use between British and American English and were not restricted to only one style. This inconsistency could be attributed to the confusion between British and American spelling or to learners' carelessness.

3.2.2. Analysis of the Translation Test

After collecting data from the translation test, learners' spelling errors were identified and presented in tables.

Table 5. Students' Performance in the Translation Test: Focus on the Students

Students	Words spelt correctly	Words spelt incorrectly	No answe r	Tota l	Students	Words spelt correctly	Words spelt incorrectly	No answer	Total
1	22	1	0	23	24	19	4	0	23
2	15	8	0	23	25	21	2	0	23
3	17	6	0	23	26	13	9	1	23
4	19	4	0	23	27	15	8	0	23
5	15	7	1	23	28	16	7	0	23
6	14	8	1	23	29	16	6	1	23
7	15	8	0	23	30	18	5	0	23
8	17	6	0	23	31	19	4	0	23
9	16	7	0	23	32	12	11	0	23
10	11	12	0	23	33	12	9	2	23
11	16	6	1	23	34	15	8	0	23
12	10	13	0	23	35	16	7	0	23
13	17	6	0	23	36	16	7	0	23
14	15	8	0	23	37	14	9	0	23
15	20	3	0	23	38	18	5	0	23

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16	14	9	0	23	39	18	5	0	23
17	18	4	1	23	40	17	6	0	23
18	17	6	0	23	41	16	7	0	23
19	11	11	1	23	42	18	5	0	23
20	8	15	0	23	43	11	12	0	23
21	22	1	0	23	44	11	12	0	23
22	13	9	1	23	45	19	4	0	23
23	16	7	0	23					

The table above indicates that the number of students' spelling errors in the translation test is ranged from one error to fifteen errors. Only few students did not spell many words incorrectly, for example students number 1, 21, and 25; however, many students committed more than six errors. These results show that students spelling performance in the translation test was poor.

Table 6. Students' Performance in the Translation Test: Focus on the Words

Word	Spelt correctly	Spelt incorrectly	No answer	Total
Doubt	23	22	0	45
Centre	36	9	0	45
Received	25	20	0	45
Quiet	22	21	2	45
Restaurant	27	18	0	45
Cigarettes	31	14	0	45
Tomorrow	36	9	0	45
Forty	33	12	0	45
Minutes	36	15	0	45
Politicians	33	12	0	45
Behaviour	40	5	0	45
Cough	17	28	5	45
Literature	35	10	0	45
Neighbour	32	13	0	45
Autumn	18	27	0	45
Island	38	7	0	45

Travelled	33	12	0	45
Believe	34	11	0	45
Liar	30	15	3	45
Suffering	34	11	0	45
Government	31	14	0	45
Wednesday	28	17	0	45
Dictionary	34	9	0	45
Total	706	319	10	1035

As it is displayed in Table 6, all the words in the translation test were misspelled by the participants. The most common misspelled words are autumn (twenty-seven), received (twenty), and quiet (twenty-one). Similarly to the dictation test, students' spelling performance in the translation test was poor.

Table 7. Comparison between Students' Performance in Both Tests

Word	Correct in both tests	Correct in test 1/incorrect in test 2	Incorrect in test 1/correct in test 2	Incorrect in both tests: similar incorrect spellings	Incorrect in both tests: different incorrect spellings	Total
Doubt	15	6	8	11	5	45
Centre	21	2	15	7	0	45
Received	20	2	5	14	4	45
Quiet	9	1	13	11	11	45
Restaurant	20	4	7	8	6	45
Cigarettes	19	2	12	2	10	45
Tomorrow	30	3	6	5	1	45
Forty	29	4	4	3	5	45
Minutes	30	0	6	4	5	45
Politicians	29	3	4	5	4	45
Behaviour	32	0	8	4	1	45
Cough	9	0	8	19	9	45
Literature	33	1	2	7	2	45
Neighbour	29	6	3	5	2	45
Autumn	13	3	5	12	12	45
Island	36	2	2	2	3	45
Travelled	32	4	1	6	2	45

Believe	31	7	3	2	2	45
Liar	21	4	9	6	5	45
Suffering	28	3	6	5	3	45
Government	18	2	13	7	5	45
Wednesday	16	1	12	9	7	45
Dictionary	28	0	6	7	4	45
Total	548	60	158	161	108	1035

Table 7 shows that a considerable number of students were not consistent in their spelling of many words in a comparison between the dictation test and the translation test. For example, only thirteen students spelled the word *autumn* correctly in both tests while twelve of them misspelled it but in the same way. The rest spelled the word either correctly in one test and wrongly in the other one and vice versa or misspelling it in two different ways.

Students' spelling of the target words correctly in both tests indicates that students have the knowledge of how to spell words while the same incorrect spelling of words in both tests suggests that students lack the knowledge of spelling some English words. However, in the three left cases, that is, in case of spelling the word correctly in the dictation test while misspelling it in the translation test and vice versa, or misspelling the word differently in both test signifies that students do not give attention or care about the way they spell words in their writing and, therefore, these words can be addressed mainly to students' carelessness.

3.2.3. Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Q 1: Indicate your gender

Table 8. Students' Gender

Gender	Subjects	Percentage %
Male	8	17.78
Female	37	82.22
Total	45	100

The obtained results show that the majority of the participants are females with a percentage of 82.22% while males are only 17.89%. In Algeria, generally speaking the number of female is higher than that of male in EFL classrooms.

Q 2: How long have you been studying English?

Table 9. Years of Studying English

Years	Subjects	%
Nine	25	55.56
Three	5	11.11
Two	15	33.33
Total	45	100

The aim behind asking this question is to know about the students' experience in studying English. The majority of the participants, a percentage of (55.56%), stated that they have been studying English for nine years; whereas, (33.33 %) and (11.11%) of them stated that they have been studying English for three and two years respectively taking into account only their years of studying English at the university. This shows that most of the students are expected to have already acquired enough background knowledge of the English

language. Besides, during their years of studying English, they are expected to have a good grasp of English spelling.

Q 3: How would you rate your writing skill in English overall?

Table 10. Students' Self Evaluation of their Writing Skill

Options	Subjects	%
Very good	3	6.67
Good	18	40
Average	22	48.89
Poor	2	4.44
Very poor	0	0
Total	45	100

The target behind addressing this question is to assess students' writing proficiency. Only three students (6.67%) assumed to have a very good level, eighteen students (40%) considered their writing skill to be good, twenty-two students (48.89%) thought that their level is average, and two students (4.44%) believed that their level in writing is poor. These results show that most of the surveyed students are facing some problems that prevent them from mastering their writing skill.

Q 4: How would you rate your spelling ability in English overall?

Table 11. Students' Self Evaluation of their Spelling Ability

Options	Subjects	%
Very good	3	6.67
Good	25	55.55
Average	17	37.78
Poor	0	0
Very poor	0	0
Total	45	100

This question aims at evaluating students' spelling performance. According to the results shown above, 55.55% and 6.67% of the participants evaluated their level in spelling as being good and very good respectively, while 37.78% of them reported to have an average level in spelling. This implies that the many students are satisfied with their spelling level.

Q 5: To what extent do you think you are familiar with the differences between British spelling and American spelling?

Table 12. Students' Familiarity with British Spelling and American spelling

Options	Subjects	%
Extremely	3	6.67
Significantly	19	42.22
Moderately	23	51.11
Not at all	0	0
Total	45	100

The table above shows that a little more than half of the participants (51.11%) stated that they are moderately familiar with British spelling and American spelling, while 42.22% of the participants stated that they are significantly familiar with the two different spellings. Only 6.67% of total number of the participants assumed to be extremely familiar with the differences between British spelling and American spelling.

Q 6: When you write, what do you use?

Table 13. Students' Use of British English and American English Spellings

Options	Subjects	%
British spelling	13	28.89
American spelling	9	20
Both of them	18	40
I do not know	5	11.11
Total	45	100

According to Table 13, a considerable amount of the participants (40%) use a mixture of British spelling and American spelling, 28.89% and 20% of them use either British spelling or American spelling while 11.11% chose the "I do not know" option. From these results, it is clearly noticeable that many students are not consistent in their use of British and American spellings. On the basis of the participants' answers obtained from the previous question (Q5), this is believed to be due to students' lack of knowledge of the spelling differences between British English and American English.

Section Two: Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Spelling

Q 7: How much is it important to know the correct spelling of words?

Table 14. Students' Perceptions about the Importance of Correct Spelling

Options	Subjects	%
Not important	0	0
To some extent important	0	0
Important	9	20
Very important	36	80
Total	45	100

This question aims to display if learners are conscious about the importance of correct spelling or not. According to students' responses, most of the participants (80%) said that spelling is very important and the rest (20%) opted for the option "important". The obtained results clearly indicate that all the students involved in the study are well informed about the significance of the correct spelling of words which normally pushes them to improve their spelling abilities.

As far as the second part of this question is concerned, students were asked to justify their answers. In fact, the participants provided different justifications for their choices. Since the participants chose only "important" or "very important" the results of these two

options are combined together and students' justifications are divided into four main themes. It should be mentioned that only forty students gave their answers.

- “Changing the spelling of words may affect their meaning, for example in case of homophones; this may lead to misunderstanding from the part of the reader” (twenty students).
- “Good spelling results in good writing” (nine students).
- “Spelling is a part of language proficiency” (six students).
- “Correct spelling enhances learners' pronunciation” (five students).

Q 8: How do you find learning English spelling?

Table 15. Students' Perceptions on the Degree of Difficulty of Learning English Spelling

Options	Subjects	%
Very easy	1	2.22
Easy	27	60
Difficult	17	37.78
Very difficult	0	0
Total	45	100

This question targeted to get insights about the students' views about their learning of English spelling. As can be seen from Table 14, the majority of the participants with a percentage of (60%) thought that they learn English spelling at ease, 37.78 % considered their learning of English difficult, and only one student found it is very easy to learn English spelling.

Q 9: Do you think reading can help you to improve your spelling?*Table 16. Students' Attitudes towards the Importance of Reading in Developing their Spelling*

Options	Subjects	%
Yes	44	97.78
No	1	2.22
I do not know	0	0
Total	45	100

Almost all participants (97.78%) appreciated the role of reading to improve their spelling; only one student thought that reading cannot help in improving students' spelling performance. Light should be cast on the fact that under this question, students are asked to provide some explanations. In fact, all the participants addressed the importance of reading either through learning the spelling of new words or checking the spelling of the words that used to be misspelled. This indicates that the participants are aware of the paramount importance of reading for developing their spelling abilities.

Q 10: Do you think it is important to spell correctly when sending emails or when chatting?*Table 17. Students' Views on the Importance of Correct Spelling when Sending Emails or when Chatting*

Options	Subjects	%
Not important	7	15.56
To some extent important	11	24.44
Important	18	40
Very important	9	20
Total	45	100

This question was intended to see whether students care about their spelling only in educational settings or not. The table above shows that 40% and 20% of the participants

opted for the options very important and important respectively, whereas 24.44% of them chose to some extent important, against 15.56% who considered correct spelling when sending emails or chatting not important.

Students' justifications for stating that spelling is either important or very important when sending emails or chatting can be summarized as follows:

- “Conveying a clear message requires correct spelling of words” (thirteen students).
- “Sending emails and chatting is an effective way to practice spelling”(eight students).
- “Spelling creates an impression about the writer” (six students).

On the other hand, the participants whose answers were to some extent important argued that sending emails or chatting generally concerns friends rather than teachers that is why they do not care too much about their spellings. For those who believed that spelling is not important when sending emails or chatting claimed that the context in this case is informal in which they use abbreviations, thus the correct spelling of words is totally ignored by students.

Section Three: Students' Views of their Spelling Problems

Q 11: How often do you make spelling errors?

Table 18. Students' Frequency of Making Spelling Errors

Options	Subjects	%
Always	3	6.67
Often	10	22.22
Sometimes	25	55.55
Rarely	7	15.56
Never	0	0
Total	45	100

As indicated in Table 18, slightly more than half of the participants (55.55%) said that they sometimes commit spelling errors while 22.22% and 15.56% of them replied that they often and rarely respectively commit spelling errors and finally a low percentage of participants (6.67%) indicated that they always commit spelling errors.

Q 12: In your opinion, what are the main causes of your spelling errors? Choose only four.

- a. Many words in English are not written the way they are pronounced.
- b. English spelling is full of rules and exceptions as well as confusing words.
- c. Learners' incorrect pronunciation of words.
- d. The linguistic differences between English and Arabic.
- e. The linguistic differences between English and French
- f. Lack of knowledge of English spelling rules.
- g. Lack of interest to learn spelling.

Table 19. Reasons Attributed to Students Spelling Errors

Options	1		2		3		4	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	23	51.11	6	13.33	7	15.56	5	11.11
B	0	0	4	8.89	7	15.56	11	24.44
C	4	8.89	4	8.89	9	20	5	11.11
D	0	0	1	2.22	1	2.22	3	6.67
E	3	6.67	3	6.76	3	6.67	3	6.67
F	7	15.56	17	37.78	6	13.33	8	17.78
G	8	17.78	10	22.22	12	26.66	10	22.22
Total	45	100	45	100	45	100	45	100

When students were asked about the probable sources of their spelling errors, the answers were distributed rather eventually among all the options. Table 18 demonstrates that the first main cause of students' spelling errors is that many words in English are not written the way they are pronounced as reported by 51.11% of the whole number of the participants; then the lack of knowledge of English spelling rules as well as the lack of

interest to learn spelling with a percentage of 37.78% and 26.66% respectively have been chosen as the second and the third main causes of the students' spelling errors. The last main cause that has been selected by the participants (24.44%) was the fact that English spelling is full of rules and exceptions as well as confusing words.

Q 13: Do tiredness and boredom affect your spelling performance?

Table 20. Students' Perceptions on the Effect of Tiredness and Boredom on their Spelling Performance

Options	Subjects	%
Yes	24	53.33
No	12	26.67
I do not know	9	20
Total	45	100

As far as the results obtained, 51.11% of the participants claimed that their spelling performance get affected by tiredness and boredom, 42.22% pointed out that neither tiredness nor boredom hinders them from spelling words correctly. 6.67% of the participants stated that they do not know.

Q 14: Do you think you make more spelling errors in your examinations than in your workshops and homework assignments?

Table 21. Students' Perceptions of the Effect of the Examinations on their Spelling Performance

Options	Subjects	%
Yes	26	57.78
No	19	42.22
I do not know	0	0
Total	45	100

This question was addressed to determine if students are affected by their examinations. The results in the table above indicate that (57.78%) as the highest percentage of the students who have participated in this study stated that they make more spelling errors in their examinations than in their workshops and homework assignments. For other participants (42.22%) whether it is an exam or not, their spelling performance is not affected at all.

In addition to the results gained from the previous questions (Q13), this explains the fact that students' spelling can be affected by some performance factors. According to the participants' explanations, it can be elicited that stress, anxiety and time-constraints, which are performance factors, may hinder students from spelling correctly. Other students assumed to be not affected during their examinations on the basis that they are well prepared and try to concentrate on their spelling in order to get good marks.

Q 15: How do your teachers respond to your spelling errors?

Table 22. Students Views on their Teachers' Responses to their Spelling Errors

Options	Subjects	%
Correct the error	37	82.22
Only draw your attention	8	17.78
Do not care	0	0
Total	45	100

As depicted in Table 22, the majority of the participants (82.22%) stated that their teachers correct their spelling errors while only 17.78% claimed that their teachers only draw their attention to their spelling errors.

In the second part of this question, the participants were asked about their responses to their teachers' feedback. All the participants agreed that they take their teachers' correction into account by checking the correct spelling of words in the dictionary in an attempt to

avoid misspelling these words later on. Therefore, it becomes clear that it is very important from the part of the teachers to provide their students with corrective feedback on their spelling errors.

Section Four: The Use of Spelling Strategies among Students

Q 16: What do you do when you come across a word you cannot spell?

Table 23. Students' Responses when Facing Difficulty to Spell Words

Options	Subjects	%
Ask your teacher	10	22.22
Ask your friend	7	15.56
Replace it with another word	12	26.67
Try to write it by yourself	16	35.55
Total	45	100

As can be noticed from Table 23, the highest percentage of the participants (35.55%) said that they rely on themselves whenever they came across a difficult word while (22.22%) of them resort to ask their teachers. Another group of the participants (15.56%) replied that they ask their friends and the others (26.67%) opted for replacing the word with another one. This divulges that many students do not attempt to learn the spelling of some English words.

Q 17: How do you usually write a word you cannot spell?

- a. Try to pronounce the word
- b. Use rules to help you spell the word
- c. Rely on your memory
- d. Break the word into syllables
- e. Spell it like a similar word that you know how to spell

Table 24. Way of Spelling Words Students Usually do not Know How to Spell

Options	Subjects	%
a	17	37.78
b	2	4.44
c	8	17.78
d	2	4.44
e	7	15.55
a + e	3	6.67
a + c	3	6.67
a + c + e	2	4.44
b + d + e	1	2.22
Total	45	100

The Table 24 shows that a considerable number of the participants (37.78%+ 6.67%+ 6.67%+4.44%) use sound-based strategies to spell word, some participants (17.78%) rely on their memory, 15.55% of the participants spell words by analogy while both rule-based strategies and breaking down syllables got a lower percentage (4.44%) for each. Also, it can be noticed that if we combine the results of those students who picked up more than one strategy, only eleven students (20%) of the total number of the participants use a variety of spelling strategies.

Q 18: when you are writing and come to a word you do not know how to spell, how often do you write the word the first way that comes into your head and you keep going?

Table 25. Students' Frequency of Writing a Word they do not Know How to Spell the First Way it comes to their Head

Options	Subjects	%
Always	5	11.11
Often	8	17.78
Sometimes	25	55.55
Rarely	7	15.56
Never	0	0
Total	45	100

An examination of the table above reveals that more than half of the participants (55.55%) opted for sometimes to be the frequency of their writing of a word they do not know how to spell the first way it comes to their head while a group of participants (17.78%) said that it is often. In addition, other participants (15.56%) chose rarely; however, some of the participants (11.11%) reported that they always write a word they do not know how to spell the first way it comes to their head and keep going.

Q 19: When you are writing and come to a word that you do not know how to spell, how often do you check to see if the word looks right?

Table 26. Students' Frequency of Checking the Right Spelling of Words

Options	Subjects	%
Always	18	40
Often	13	28.89
Sometimes	9	20
Rarely	5	11.11
Never	0	0
Total	45	100

A quick glance at the table above will reveal that 40% of the participants always check the correct spelling of words when they are writing, 28.89% of them often check their spelling while 20% and 11.11% of the participants responded by sometimes and rarely respectively. The analysis of this question in addition to the previous one (Q18) reveals that many students to some extent care about the way they spell words.

Q 20: When you are writing and come to a word that you do not know how to spell, how often do you find it hard to go on writing until you are sure of the spelling?

Table 27. Students' Frequency of Difficulties they Face when Writing Words they do not Know how to Spell

Options	Subjects	%
Always	7	15.56
Often	11	24.45
Sometimes	22	48.88
Rarely	5	11.11
Never	0	0
Total	45	100

From this table, it can be noticed that nearly half of the participants (48.88%) claimed that they sometimes find it hard to go on writing until they are sure of the spelling of a word, (24.45%) of them replied by often, and 15.56% of the total number of the participants stated that they always find it difficult to keep writing until they are sure of the spelling of a word. On the other hand, a minority of participants (11.11%) opted for rarely as their answer.

Q 21: How often do you notice the spelling of words when you are reading?

Table 28. Students' Frequency of Noticing the Spelling of Words while Reading

Options	Subjects	%
Always	14	31.11
Often	18	40
Sometimes	11	24.44
Rarely	2	4.44
Never	0	0
Total	45	100

The results in the Table 28 reveals that 40% of the participants often notice the spelling of words when they read, 31.11% of them always pay attention to the spelling of words while reading, whereas a considerable amount of the participants (24.44%) said sometimes and only two students (4.44%) reported that they rarely notice the spelling of words when they read. This implies that the majority of the students are aware of the way words are spelled.

Q 22: When you are reading, how often do you notice when a word is spelled in a way that you would not have expected?

Table 29. Students' Frequency of Noticing Unexpected Spelling of Words while Reading

Options	Subjects	%
Always	5	11.11
Often	11	24.44
Sometimes	21	46.67
Rarely	8	17.78
Never	0	0
Total	45	100

The results in the table above show that a higher percentage of the participants (46.67%) prefer to say that they sometimes notice unexpected spelling of words when they are reading, then 24.44% of them reported that they often do so while 17.78% of the participants opted for rarely. Only 11.11% of the total number of the participants argued that they always notice unexpected spelling of words when they read.

Q 23: When you are reading, how often do you think of ways to remember the spelling of words that are new to you?

Table 30. Students' Frequency of Thinking of Ways for Remembering the Spelling of New Words

Options	Subjects	%
Always	9	20
Often	8	17.78
Sometimes	22	48.89
Rarely	6	13.33
Never	0	0
Total	45	100%

The results in the table above demonstrate that 48.88% of the participants sometimes think of ways to remember the spelling of new words when they are reading, 20% preferred to choose always, 17.78% thought that it is often, whereas only 13.33% of all the participants claimed that they rarely think of ways to keep in head how to spell new words.

The analysis of both Q22 and Q23 displays that although all the surveyed students admitted that reading contributes to their spelling improvement, they do not adopt it as a strategy to learn the spelling of words. This is believed to be due to students' carelessness.

Q 24: How often do you proofread your written work before submitting it?

Table 31. Students' Frequency of Proofreading their Written Work

Options	Subjects	%
Always	17	37.78
Often	11	24.44
Sometimes	10	22.22
Rarely	7	15.56
Never	0	0
Total	45	100

As it is distributed in the Table 31, 37.78% of the participants tend to proofread their written work always while 24.44% and 22.22% of them opted for often and sometimes respectively to be the frequency of proofreading their written products. Only 15.56% stated that they rarely proofread their written work.

Table 32. The Effects of Proofreading on Overcoming Spelling Problems

Options	Subjects	%
Yes	45	100
No	0	0
Total	45	100

This table represents the participants' answers of the second part of this question in which they were asked whether proofreading does help them to overcome their spelling errors. It is clearly noticeable that there was a complete accord among the participants in answering this question. They all agreed that proofreading help them to correct their spelling errors.

Despite the fact that all the participants are aware of the importance of proofreading in overcoming their spelling errors, yet a considerable number of them declared that they do not frequently proofread their written work (the first part of this question) which indicates that these students do not care about their spelling.

Q 25: Do you use spelling strategies or ways to improve your spelling?

Table 33. Students' Use of Spelling Strategies to Improve their Spelling

Options	Subjects	%
Yes	28	62.22
No	17	37.78
Total	45	100

Among forty-five students, twenty-eight of them, that is a percentage of 62.22%, claimed to use spelling strategies, while the rest of the participants (37.78%) said that they do not use any of them.

In so far the second part of this question is concerned, students were asked to give some examples of the spelling strategies they use. Reading, practicing, memorizing, subtitles of videos and using dictionaries are the commonest spelling strategies used among the students that have been surveyed. Some participants mentioned that they sometimes use some spelling rules and mnemonics to improve their spelling.

However, quite few participants used this question as a space for blaming their teachers because they did not teach them such spelling strategies, and that is why they do not know any spelling strategy. Other participants claimed that there is no need for spelling strategies because they have already mastered the spelling skill while few of them stated that they have more important things to care about rather than improving their spelling abilities.

3.2.4. Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis

Section One: Background Information

Q 1: Indicate your gender

Table 34. Teachers' Gender

Gender	Subjects	Percentage %
Male	5	38.46
Female	8	61.54
Total	13	100

With regard to teachers' gender, 61.54% of the teachers that have participated in this study are females, while 38.46% of them are males.

Q 2: What is your highest degree?*Table 35. Teachers' Qualifications*

Options	Subjects	%
Master degree	1	7.69
Magister degree	12	92.31
Doctorate degree	0	0
Total	13	100

Almost all the participants in this study (92.31%) hold a Magister degree; only one teacher has a master degree.

Q 3: How long have you been teaching English at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel?*Table 36. Teachers' Experience*

Number of years	Subjects	%
Eight	2	15.38
Five	6	46.15
Four	5	38.46
Total	13	100

As far as teaching experience is concerned, all the participants have from four to eight years teaching experience.

Q 4: Which module (s) have you taught?

Teachers who were given this questionnaire have been teaching different modules such as oral expression, written expression, grammar, research method, literature and other content modules.

Actually, teachers' experiences in different modules for many years and the degree they hold as well as the essential role they play and their evaluation of their students will

provide the researchers with reliable opinions and suggestions. Thus, it will positively contribute to reaching the aim of this research.

Q 5: How would you rate your students' writing ability in English overall?

Table 37. Teachers' Evaluation of their Students' Writing Ability in English

Options	Subjects	%
Very good	0	0
Good	0	0
Average	9	69.23
Poor	4	30.77
Very poor	0	0
Total	13	100

As can be seen in the table above, the majority of the participants (69.23%) evaluated their students' writing ability as being average, while the rest (30.77%) said it is poor.

Q 6: How would you rate your students' spelling ability overall?

Table 38. Teachers' Evaluation of their Students' Spelling Performance

Options	Subjects	%
Very good	0	0
Good	0	0
Average	4	30.77
Poor	9	69.23
Very poor	0	0
Total	13	100

Table 38 shows that 69.23% of the participants argued that their students' spelling ability is poor. However, 30.77% of them opted for average spelling ability of their students. This suggests that teachers are not satisfied with their students' spelling performance.

In contrast of the students' responses obtained from the questionnaire, the majority of the participants reported that they have very good, good and average spelling ability. This implies that students are unaware of their spelling problems.

Section Two: Teachers' Perceptions about Learning Spelling

Q 7: How much is it important the correct spelling of words?

Table 39. Teachers' Perceptions about the Importance of Correct Spelling

Options	Subjects	%
Not important	0	0
To some extent important	0	0
Important	3	23.08
Very important	10	76.92
Total	13	100

According to this table, 76.92% of the participants thought that it is very important for their students to know the correct spelling of words, while the rest (23.08%) replied by important. This implies that spelling errors have great impacts on students' language proficiency.

As far as the second part of this question is concerned, the participants were asked to justify their answers. In fact, different teachers provided different justifications for their choices.

- "Misspelling may affect the meaning of words and this will lead to misunderstanding."
- "Students cannot master any language without acquiring good knowledge of the spelling system of this language."
- "Students cannot be good writers without being good spellers."
- "Students cannot pronounce words correctly without acquiring their accurate spelling."

Q 8: What is your view about the English spelling?*Table 40. Teachers' Views on the Difficulty of English Spelling*

Options	Subjects	%
Very easy	0	0
Easy	3	23.08
Difficult	10	76.92
Very difficult	0	0
Total	13	100

The results show that 76.92% of the surveyed teachers claimed that English spelling is difficult, whereas 23.08% of them considered it easy. This indicates that the development of students' spelling abilities needs more efforts and attention.

Q 9: Do you think that the improvement of students' spelling at the university is the responsibility of:*Table 41. Teachers' Views about the Responsible of Improving Students' Spelling at the University*

Options	Subjects	%
Teacher	0	0
Student	6	46.15
Both	7	53.85
Total	13	100

As far as the results obtained, teachers seem to be controversial. More than half of them (53.85%) believed that the improvement of students' spelling at the university is the responsibility of both teachers and students; others (46.15%) stated that only students are responsible for improving their spelling at the university.

To add verisimilitude, teachers were asked to give justifications for their answers. Accordingly, the teachers who thought that the improvement of the students' spelling at the university is the onus of the students provided the following reasons as justifications:

- “The ministry has adopted a more learner-centered approach to teaching” (one teacher).
- “At the university, students must depend on themselves; teachers are more concerned with the teaching of content modules” (three teachers).
- “Spelling is not a matter of teaching” (two teachers).

However, the justifications of those teachers who argued that both teachers and students are responsible for the improvement of students' spelling at the university are listed as follows:

- “Students must rely on themselves and teachers have to guide, encourage, help and push them to improve themselves” (two teachers).
- “Teachers should teach their students vocabulary skills, word roots, word parts and how to form word and students are required to practice what they have learnt” (two teachers).
- “Students cannot acquire all the knowledge about spelling alone without the assistance of their teachers” (three teachers).

Q 10: To what extent do you think your students are aware of the use of British spelling and American spelling?

Table 42. Teachers' Views about Students' Awareness of the Use of British and American Spellings

Options	Subjects	%
Extremely	2	15.38
Significantly	0	0
Moderately	10	76.92
Not at all	1	7.69
Total	13	100

From the table above, it can be seen that the majority of participants (76.92%) declared that their students are moderately aware of the use of British spelling and American spelling, 15.38% of them selected extremely, and only one of the total number of the participants opted for not at all.

Q 11: To what extent do you think your students are consistent in their use of British spelling and American spelling?

Table 43. Teachers' Views about the Students' Consistency in their use of British and American Spellings

Options	Subjects	%
Extremely	0	0
Significantly	2	15.38
Moderately	7	53.85
Not at all	4	30.77
Total	13	100

Table 43 indicates that slightly more half of the participants (53.85%) asserted that their students are moderately consistent in their use of British and American spellings, while (30.77%) of them selected tot at all. In addition, a low percentage (15.38%) thought that their students use both British spelling and American spelling.

Section Three: Teachers' views of their Students' Spelling Problems

Q 12: How often do your students commit spelling errors?

Table 44. Teachers' Views about their Students' Frequency of Committing Spelling Errors

Options	Subjects	%
Always	6	46.15
Often	5	38.46
Sometimes	2	15.38
Rarely	0	0
Never	0	0
Total	13	100%

Responses to this question indicate that 46.15% of the participants reported that their students always commit spelling errors, 38.46% of them opted for often, whereas only 15.38% of the participants said that sometimes is the students' frequency of committing spelling errors. Accordingly, students are expected to be experiencing serious problems.

Q 13: In your opinion, what are the main causes of your students' spelling errors?

Choose only four causes then rank them.

- a. Many words in English are not written the way they are pronounced.
- b. English spelling is full of rules and exceptions as well as confusing words.
- c. Learners' incorrect pronunciation of words.
- d. The linguistic differences between English and Arabic.
- e. The linguistic differences between English and French
- f. Lack of knowledge of English spelling rules.
- g. Lack of interest to learn spelling.
- h. Students' carelessness.

Table 45. Teachers' Responses to the Reasons Attributed to their Students' Spelling Errors

Options	1		2		3		4	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	7	53.85	2	15.38	2	15.35	1	7.69
B	3	23.08	6	46.15	2	15.35	1	7.69
C	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	23.08
D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15.35
F	1	7.69	3	23.08	1	7.69	4	30.77
G	1	7.69	2	15.35	6	46.15	0	0
H	1	7.69	0	0	2	15.35	2	15.35
Total	13	100	13	100	13	100	13	100

In so far this question is concerned, the results seem to be varied. As it is displayed in the table above, the first main cause behind students' spelling errors was that many words in English are not written the same way they are pronounced as stated by more than half of the participants (53.83%). The fact that English spelling is full of rules and exceptions as

well as confusing words seemed to be the second main cause of students' spelling errors with a percentage of (46.15%) while the third main cause as reported by the same number of participants (46.15%) was students' lack of interest to learn spelling. However, the fourth main cause that contributes to students' spelling errors was believed by 30.77% of the participants to be students' lack of knowledge of English spelling rules.

Q 14: How much are your students interested in improving their spelling performance?

Table 46. Teachers' Responses to their Students' Interest to Improve their Spelling

Options	Subjects	%
Not interested	4	30.76
To some extent interested	8	61.54
Interested	1	7.69
Very interested	0	0
Total	13	100

As it is clearly shown in the above table, eight of the total number of the teachers who participated in filling in this questionnaire (61.54%) stated that their students are to some extent interested in learning the correct spelling of words, whereas four teachers (30.76%) claimed that they are not interested at all. Only one teacher reported that his/her students are interested in learning the correct spelling of words.

Q 15: To what extent do you think spelling errors decrease as students move to higher level?

Table 47. Teachers' Responses to the Decrease of Students' Spelling Errors as they Move to Higher Level

Options	Subjects	%
Extremely	0	0
Significantly	3	23.08
Moderately	8	61.54
Not at all	2	15.38
Total	13	100

Responses to this question show that the majority of the participants (61.54%) agreed that spelling errors moderately decrease as students move to higher level, others (23.08%) selected significantly, and few of them (15.38%) thought that there is no decrease of students' spelling errors as they move to higher level at all. This can be explained by the fact that students are careless and do not attempt to improve their spelling.

Section Four: Teachers' Responses to their Students' Spelling Errors

Q 16: How do you respond to your students' spelling errors?

Table 48. Teachers' Responses to their Students' Spelling Errors

Options	Subjects	%
Correct the error	9	69.23
Only draw students' attention	4	30.77
Do not care	0	0
Total	13	100

As it can be read from the table above, 69.23% of the participants stated that they correct their students' spelling errors. The remaining (30.77%) said that they only draw their attention to the error.

Q 17: What kind of spelling errors do you usually point out?*Table 49. Teachers' Responses to the Kind of Errors they usually Point out*

Options	Subjects	%
Most major errors only	6	46.15
Only few major errors	0	0
All errors	7	53.85
Total	13	100

The analysis of the table above shows that slightly more than half of the participants (53.85%) reported that they correct all errors. The remaining (46.15%) stated that they correct most major errors only.

Q 18: Do you penalize students for spelling errors?*Table 50. Rate of Teachers who Penalize Students for Spelling Errors*

Options	Subjects	%
Yes	10	76.92
No	3	23.08
Total	13	100

The majority of the participants (76.92%) pointed out that they penalize students for spelling errors generally by reducing the mark especially in written expression and oral expression modules. However, the rest (23.08) asserted that they do not penalize students for their spelling errors particularly in content modules.

Q 19: How often do you draw the learners' attention to the rules of English spelling?*Table 51. Teachers' Frequency of Drawing the Students' Attention to the Rules of English spelling*

Options	Subjects	%
Always	2	15.38
Often	4	23.08
Sometimes	7	53.85
Rarely	0	0
Never	0	0
Total	13	100

As it is clearly displayed in the Table 52, most of the surveyed teachers (53.85%) admitted that they sometimes draw the students' attention to the rules of English spelling while 23.38% of them opted for often, and then only 15.38% acknowledged that they always draw the students' attention to the rules of English spelling.

Q 20: How often do you draw the students' attention to common spelling patterns?*Table 52. Teachers' Frequency of Drawing the Students' Attention to Common Spelling Patterns*

Options	Subjects	%
Always	3	23.08%
Often	4	30.77%
Sometimes	6	46.15%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Total	13	100%

As it is shown in Table 51, 46.15% of the participants indicated that they moderately draw the students' attention to common spelling patterns, 30.77% of them selected significantly, and the rest 23.08% picked extremely.

Q 21: To what extent do you raise students' awareness to irregular spelling and silent letters?

Table 53. Teachers' Responses to Raising Students' Awareness to Irregular Spelling and Silent Letters

Options	Subjects	%
Extremely	3	23.08%
Significantly	4	30.77%
Moderately	6	46.15%
Not at all	0	0%
Total	13	100%

Table 53 illustrates that the majority of the participants (46.15%) stated that they moderately raise students' awareness to irregular spelling and silent letters while 30.77% of the whole number of the participants opted for significantly. The remaining (23.08%) said that they extremely draw the students' attention to irregular spelling and silent letters.

Q 22: To what extent do you draw the students' attention to the differences between American spelling and British spelling?

Table 54. Teachers' Responses on Drawing the Students' Attention to the Differences between British and American Spellings

Options	Subjects	%
Extremely	2	15.38%
Significantly	4	30.77%
Moderately	7	53.85%
Not at all	0	0%
Total	13	100%

A quick look at Table 53 reveals that the majority of the participants (53.85%) agreed that they moderately draw the students' attention to the differences between American and British spellings. Another group of the teachers (30.77%) pointed out that they

significantly draw their students' attention to the differences between the two different spellings and the rest (15.38%) chose extremely.

The results obtained from Q19, Q20, Q21 and Q22 urge to say that students' spelling improvement may be affected by less spelling instruction offered by their teachers.

Section Five: Further Suggestions

Q 23: What are your suggestions to overcome students' spelling problems?

Responding to this question, teachers provided different suggestions as solutions to overcome students' spelling problems. In fact, their suggestions were varied and concerns both students and teachers.

From the part of the students, teachers recommended extensive reading of books, novels and articles with the use of dictionaries. In addition, they suggested that students have to learn spelling rules, patterns and their exceptions as well as to practise them. Moreover, one teacher advised less reliance on spellcheckers; he stated that "students ought to type less on their computers and write instead".

From the part of the teachers, all the participants agreed that students should be provided with some spelling instructions to help them improve their spelling performance and make them more interested in learning spelling. Besides, for many teachers dictation can be a good strategy to practice spelling as one of them asserted "teachers should dictate as much as possible or lecture only, leaving the task of note-taking for students who should check their spelling afterwards on their own". Finally, teachers' main concern was to raise students' awareness towards the important of correct spelling.

3.1. Discussion and Interpretation of the Results

Generally, results of the dictation test revealed that the total number of students' spelling errors was 1411. Accordingly, it is sobering to realize that second year LMD students at the department of English university of Jijel face many difficulties when it comes to spelling. In fact, this was clearly shown in teachers' responses who reported that their students frequently commit spelling errors. Surprisingly, the majority of the surveyed students (55.55%) declared that they have good spelling level which implies that these students are unaware of their spelling problems.

Students' spelling errors obtained from the analysis of the dictation test were classified into eight categories. Spelling errors were concentrated in omission and substitution categories with total frequency of 50.09%. Omission errors were the commonest type of spelling errors made by participants. This type has to do with exclusion of letters from words particularly double consonants, silent letters and less frequently vowels. Concerning substitution errors category, subjects appear to confuse between letters, be it consonants or vowels, and alternate between them.

The next category is wrong word category (13.30%) in which participants confused between words that have quite similar spelling and resorted to write words they are familiar with. It followed by unrecognizable words (12.17%) which are no way resemble the target word. Then, addition errors was the fourth category (11.25 %) where the most insertion letters were vowels. Reversal category comes next with percentage of 5.22 %; in this category participants confused in the order of vowels particularly vowel pairs 'ie' and 'ei'. The next least frequently was uppercase letters (4.43%). Finally, wrong division was the least common type (3.50%).

To sum up, participants are grossly confused with words that have double consonants and silent letters. Also, learners do not have a good grasp of the sound system of English; hence, they are confusing with the order of vowels or in choosing between consonants. In addition, learners exhibit great difficulties in words that are similar like homophones and get confused between them. Also, most of the participants here failed to spell words that require the use of one of the basic spelling rules.

On the basis of students' spelling errors classification, likely causes of students' misspellings can be deduced. Large number of errors is due to the inconsistency of English spelling system in which there is no one-to-correspondence between letters and sounds. That is, phonemes can lead to spelling problems merely because the writing does not always represent the sounds as they are pronounced.

Another cause behind students' spelling errors is the fact that English spelling is full of rules and exceptions as well as confusing words. It can be concluded from the analysis of the students' errors that the majority of the participants were incompetent in spelling words that follow complex rules and some of which that have a lot of exceptions like words with double consonants. Also, students have exhibited a great difficulty with the spelling of some confusing words for example homophones.

Additionally, students' lack of knowledge of English spelling rules is one more cause of students' spelling errors. It is clearly shown in the analysis of the dictation test that some errors occurred because of the misapplication of spelling rules and learners' ignorance of these rules. Learners applied a rule to a category which does not fit this category and lead to error committing like spelling *studing*, *recomended*. This can be explained by less spelling instructions since the teachers admitted that they do not frequently draw their students' attention to common spelling rules and patters as well they do not raise their

awareness of irregular spelling, silent letters and differences between British spelling and American spelling.

Furthermore, students' carelessness is another factor that had affected their spelling performance. This can be clearly shown from the analysis of the translation test where some students wrote wrongly due to sheer carelessness. Students wrote differently the same word in different position. Also, via the analysis of students' spelling errors, the researchers came up to the conclusion that some types of errors occurred because of carelessness, namely unrecognizable words and upper case words. In addition, students' carelessness can be elicited from students' questionnaire. Although most of the participants claimed that reading is useful for improving spelling, it was elicited that learners implicitly shown carelessness to learn spelling of words in reading or in writing and they do not focus on spelling of difficult words or new ones.

In addition, students' spelling errors might be attributed to learners' pronunciation. Through the analysis of some of the spelling errors of participants, it can be deduced that when they write words they rely on the pronunciation of words. Learners wrote some words as they pronounce them; this eventually leading them to write inaccurately particularly with words that does not much their pronunciation. This can be illustrated by examples of words in which letters are added or deleted.

Moreover, there are other causes that have a slight effect on students' spelling performance. The first is the linguistic differences between English and Arabic. Through the analysis of the errors committed by students, there was no existence of words that were affected by Arabic like confusing with the letters p and v that do not exist in Arabic. Also, the analysis of the dictation test did not refer to most of the time to the effect of the mother tongue even to words that contain long vowels, silent letters. A probable explanation is that

Algerian EFL students are not affected by French which is far linguistically from English; rather, they are slightly influenced by French.

The second is the linguistic difference between English and French that seems to have modest effect on the misspelling of some words. The analysis of participants' papers did not include a large number of errors that have affected by French. For example, participants wrote *medecin* and *groupe*. This clearly supported by the students' and teachers' perceptions who stated that the linguistic difference between Arabic and English or Arabic and French are not considerable causes of spelling errors.

It is worth noticing that via the analysis of the data gathered from the dictation test, there were further causes that were not highlighted in the theoretical part. Weakness of memorization and recalling may be attributed to occurring of some errors particular the one that occur in more than one type or unrecognizable words and words that reverse the order of letters. Also, another reason for spelling errors is the lack of knowledge of the meaning of words. This cause can be exemplified by words that have been replaced by its homophone. In addition, learners' unawareness of the spelling rules or patterns in English, sometimes, pushes them to make an analogy of the difficult word with other word that is derived from it. However, false analogy leads in most of the times to make errors like spelling *pronunciation* as *pronounciation*.

In addition to the causes that have been discussed, the analysis of the students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire revealed that students' spelling errors can be attributed to their lack of interest to learn English spelling (table 15 and table 41).

With regard to the differences existing between British spellings and American spellings, the majority of the participants declared that they use both British English and American English when they write because, as they reported, they are not familiar to a great extent

with the differences between the two varieties. In fact, this was clearly shown in their performance in both the dictation test and the translations test where most of the students were not consistent in their use of British spelling and American spelling.

Concerning the use of spelling strategies, the students' questionnaire revealed that the majority of the participants relied on sound-based strategies and only few of them use a variety of spelling strategies. In comparison between the results of the dictation test and the students' answers obtained from the questionnaire, it revealed that good spellers reported that they use more than one spelling strategy while poor spellers opted for only one strategy mainly phonological strategies. As it was earlier discussed in the theoretical part, poor spellers use few spelling strategies with great reliance on phonetic strategies which added to the complication of the problem.

As far as the use of strategies to improve students' spelling is concerned, the participants' answers showed that there is a variety of using such strategies. The most commonly used strategies are reading, practising, memorization, using dictionaries, subtitles of videos and less frequently spelling rules and mnemonics.

In a nutshell, the analyses of the data obtained significantly divulged that second year License students are highly experiencing spelling problems. Their spelling errors can be due to different causes. Some of which concern the nature of English spelling system, sounds don't correspond to letters and numerous spelling rules. Others are related to students who are unaware of the importance of learning spelling. Last and not least, teachers also assign the responsibility for neglecting to some extent providing students with some knowledge of English spelling so as to make students more interested in learning spelling.

3.2. Pedagogical Recommendations

On the light of the results discussed above, the researchers would like to suggest some recommendations that can help improve students' spelling performance.

To the students

Clearly, no one is born as a good speller. Since students declared that learning spelling is of paramount importance, they should make more efforts to improve themselves. Students' must read a lot because reading has been proved to be an effective strategy to improve spelling. Students are also required to write frequently and practise the spelling rules and patterns they learn. Additionally, they may use spelling notebook that includes difficult and confusing words. Students must develop a habit of looking up to the spelling of words in the dictionary for correct spelling and avoid assuming the spelling of words. Also, students are asked to improve their pronunciation and should memorize words in meaningful context in order to get their meaning and usages and to be able to differentiate between similar words.

Moreover, students must proofread their written works before submitting them. Furthermore, students should rely on a variety of spelling strategies that fit specific words. For example, break the word into syllables. Also, students should use mnemonic which is helpful to remember tricky and difficult words. Finally, students must take their learning of English spelling seriously and be aware of the fact that they cannot master English without acquiring a good grasp of its spelling rules and patterns.

To the teachers

Teachers are also to blame since they admitted that they do not provide their students with enough knowledge about the English spelling system. Therefore, it is recommended

that teachers of all modules should devote some time for presenting some spelling rules and exceptions, besides regular patterns. In addition, they are required to highlight the divergence between spelling and pronunciation and focus on the inconsistencies in English spelling. Also, they are required to encourage students to write and read frequently as well as they may use some spelling games and quizzes to facilitate the process of learning spelling. Moreover, they have to raise students' awareness to the importance of learning spelling and to make them interested in extending their spelling knowledge starting from their first year at the university.

3.3. Limitations of the Study

When carrying out this study, the researchers confronted a number of difficulties. First, time constraints was the major faced problem, especially when it comes to the practical part particularly the analysis of the dictation test which was very time consuming. Second, the lack of primary sources at the library of the English Department University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia- Jijel was another difficulty that has been faced throughout the course of conducting this piece of research. Third, the researchers would have involved more teachers and students but by fear of not assigning the work in time, the number was restricted and therefore the generalization of the findings might be limited.

Conclusion

In so far, this chapter has described the research instruments used for conducting this study: dictation test, translation test, students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire. Also, it provided an analysis with discussion of the obtained results. The findings clearly indicated that students are encountering many problems when it comes to their spelling in English. This urges to argue that both students and teachers are required to take into account the learning of spelling so as to improve students' spelling performance.

General Conclusion

Recently, there has been an increasing interest in studying EFL spelling errors, mainly their types and causes. The study in hand has started from the point that learners' spelling performance is affected by different causes which hampered their writing proficiency.

The current study is made up of three chapters. The first chapter presented a theoretical background about the most important issues that concern spelling in general and the English spelling in particular. The second chapter discussed the issue of errors in 2LA and the major causes of learners' spelling errors. The last chapter provided a thorough description of the research instruments used in the study: dictation test, translation test, students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire. The results have been analyzed and discussed to end up with some conclusive points.

In fact the findings of the study revealed that EFL second year students at the university of Jijel are facing grave problems when it comes to their spelling performance. It also revealed that the main cause of students' failure to spell English words correctly in their writing is the nature of English spelling system as being irregular, confusing, and full of rules and exceptions. Another cause of students' spelling errors can be addressed to students' carelessness, lack of knowledge of English spelling and lack of interest to learn spelling.

Concerning the use of spelling strategies among students, the obtained results clearly indicated that students rely heavily on phonological strategies and do not apply a combination of several strategies for spelling words. As it is mentioned in the theoretical framework, this supports what other researchers have found when they acknowledged that good spellers use a variety of strategies while poor spellers opt for only few one. That is,

the poor spelling performance of students is getting more sophisticated by their lack of use of effective spelling strategies.

To conclude, the findings of the present study was compatible with the findings of other studies that have dealt with EFL learners' spelling problems (Al Harrasi, 2012; Solati, 2014). In fact, there was an agreement between researchers that English spelling arises a lot of difficulties for EFL learners which implies that learning English spelling is not an easy task; it requires time and a lot of practice for learners to master the most frequent words in English language, as well EFL teachers are asked to scaffold their students to improve their English spelling performance.

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Appendices

- A. Dictation Test
- B. Translation Test
- C. Students' Questionnaire
- D. Teachers' Questionnaire
- E. Résumé
- F. ملخص

Appendix A

Dictation Test

1. Our teacher recommended studying two hours every night.
2. He seemed undecided whether to buy cigarettes or not.
3. Maria did not accept to quit her job.
4. Adam was obviously suffering from stage fright.
5. I cannot guarantee that she will come on time tomorrow.
6. Sometimes when people praise you, they are actually fooling you.
7. Last week, I spent a fascinating time with my colleague in an Italian restaurant.
8. The government building is located in the centre of the city.
9. I am in a dilemma of carrying on my study or getting a job.
10. The cost of lying, without doubt, is always embarrassment and regret.
11. In order to fulfil your dreams, you should separate yourself from the failures.
12. The weather is changeable at the moment.
13. Sara received many compliments because she delivered a *wonderful* speech.
14. The child became quiet in the last forty minutes of the wedding party.
15. There are many beautiful landmarks in Britain.
16. Nowadays, the equality between men and women attracts the attention of the whole society especially politicians.
17. Her reaction to his behaviour was quite funny.
18. In spite of the fact that I took some cough medicine, my throat is still rough.
19. All channels of communication need to be kept open.
20. Shakespeare is one of the most influential figures in the English literature.
21. My neighbour Sami won the first prize in the competition.
22. Some trees lose their leaves in autumn.
23. My group travelled to an island which was small and not far away.
24. Do not believe him; he's a big liar.
25. It is a relief; the work has finished finally before Wednesday.
26. I looked up the word " pronunciation " in three different dictionaries.

Appendix B

Translation Test

Translate the following words into English:

without..... بدون شك

city=وسط المدينة

r.....a letter =أستلم رسالة

q.....=هادئ

.....=مطعم

.....=سجائر

.....=غدا

.....=أربعون

.....=دقيقة

.....=سياسيون

b.....=السلوك

.....=السعال

English.....=الأدب الانجليزي

.....=الجار

.....=الخريف

.....=جزيرة

.....=سافر

.....=يؤمن

.....=كتاب

.....=يعاني من

.....=الحكومة

.....=الأربعاء

.....=قاموس

Appendix C

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire serves as a data collection tool for a research work that aims at investigating the spelling problems facing second year students of English. Your attempt to answer this questionnaire will be of great importance for the accomplishment of this research purpose. Please tick in the appropriate box (or boxes) and justify or explain whenever necessary. Thank you in advance for your collaboration and help.

Section One: Background Information

1. Gender: a. Male b. Female
2. How long have you been studying English?.....years
3. How would you rate your writing ability in English overall?
 - a. very good
 - b. good
 - c. Average
 - d. Poor
 - e. Very poor
4. How would you rate your spelling ability in English overall?
 - a. very good
 - b. good
 - c. Average
 - d. Poor
 - e. Very poor

5. To what extent do you think you are familiar with the differences between British and American spellings?

- a. Extremely
- b. Significantly
- c. Moderately
- d. Not at all

6. When you write, do you use?

- a. British spelling
- b. American spelling
- c. Both of them
- d. I don't know

Section Two: Students' Attitudes towards Learning English Spelling

7. How much is it important to know the correct spelling of words?

- a. Not important
- b. To some extent important
- c. Important
- d. Very important

Please justify,.....
.....
.....

8. How do you find learning English spelling?

- a. Very easy
- b. Easy
- c. Difficult
- d. Very difficult

9. Do you think reading can help you improve your spelling?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

Please, explain,.....

.....
.....

10. Do you think it is important to spell correctly when sending emails or when chatting?

- a. Not important
- b. To some extent important
- c. Important
- d. Very important

Please, justify,.....

.....
.....

Section three: Students' Views of their Spelling Problems

11. How often do you make spelling errors?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

12. In your opinion, what are the **main causes** of your spelling errors? Choose only **4** causes.

- a. Many words in English are not written the way they are pronounced.
- b. English spelling is full of rules and exceptions as well as confusing words.
- c. Learners' incorrect pronunciation of words.
- d. The linguistic differences between English and Arabic.
- e. The linguistic differences between English and French
- f. Lack of knowledge of English spelling rules.
- g. Lack of interest to learn spelling.

Please, rank them (the **four main causes**) from most important to least important, starting with number 1 for the most important cause.

1. 2. 3. 4.

13. Do tiredness and boredom affect your spelling performance?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

14. Do you think that you make more spelling errors in your examinations than in your workshops and homework assignments?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

Explain, why?.....
.....
.....

15. How do your teachers respond to your spelling errors?

- a. Correct the error
- b. Only draw your attention to the error
- c. Do not care

If your answer is 'a' or 'b', how do you respond to your teachers' correction?

.....

.....

.....

Section four: The Use of Spelling Strategies among Students

16. What do you do when you come across a word you cannot spell?

- a. Ask your teacher
- b. Ask your friend
- c. Replace it with another word
- d. Try to write it by yourself

Others,.....

.....

.....

17. How do you usually write a word you cannot spell?

- a. Try to pronounce the word
- b. Use rules to help you spell the word
- c. Rely on your memory
- d. Break the word into syllables
- e. Spell it like a similar word that you know how to spell

18. When you are writing and come to a word that you don't know how to spell, how often do you write the word the first way that comes into your head and you keep going?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

19. When you are writing and come to a word that you don't know how to spell, how often do you check to see if the word looks right?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

20. When you are writing and come to a word that you don't know how to spell, how often do you find it hard to go on writing until you are sure of the spelling?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

21. How often do you notice the spelling of words when you are reading?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

22. When you are reading, how often do you notice when a word is spelled in a way that you wouldn't have expected?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

23. When you are reading, how often do you think of ways to remember the spelling of words that are new to you?

- a. Always
- b. often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

24. How often do you proofread (revise) your written work before submitting it?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

If "always" or "often", does proofreading help you to correct your spelling errors?

- a. Yes
- b. no

Explain, how?.....
.....
.....

25. Do you use spelling strategies or ways to improve your spelling?

a. Yes

b. No

Please, explain.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your help

Appendix D

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire serves as a data collection tool for a research work that aims at investigating teachers' perceptions about their students' spelling problems. We would be so grateful if you could answer this questionnaire which will be of great importance for the accomplishment of this research purpose. Please tick in the appropriate response in the corresponding box and justify or explain whenever necessary.

Thank you in advance for your collaboration and help.

Section One: Background Information

1. Gender: a. Male b. Female

2. What is your highest degree?
 - a. Master degree
 - b. Magister degree
 - c. Doctorate degree

3. How long have you been teaching English at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia-Jijel?years

4. Which module (s) have you taught?

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.....

.....

5. How would you rate your students' writing ability in English overall?

- a. very good
- b. good
- c. Average
- d. Poor
- e. Very poor

6. How would you rate your students' spelling ability in English overall?

- a. very good
- b. good
- c. Average
- d. Poor
- e. Very poor

Section Two: Teachers' Perceptions about Learning Spelling

7. How much is it important for your students to know the correct spelling of words?

- a. Not important
- b. To some extent important
- c. Important
- d. Very important

Please,Justify.....
.....
.....

8. What is your view about the English spelling?

- a. Very easy
- b. Easy
- c. Difficult
- d. Very difficult

9. Do you think that the improvement of students' spelling at the university level is the responsibility of:

- a. Teacher
- b. Student
- c. Both

Please, explain.....

.....

.....

10. To what extent do you think your students are aware of the use of British spelling and American spelling?

- a. Extremely
- b. Significantly
- c. Moderately
- d. Not at all

11. To what extent do you think your students are consistent in their use of British spelling and American spellings?

- a. Extremely
- b. Significantly
- c. Moderately
- d. Not at all

Section Three: Teachers' Views of their Students' Spelling Problems

12. How often do your students commit spelling errors?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. Never

13. In your opinion, what are the **main causes** of your students' spelling errors?

Choose only **4** causes.

- a. Many words in English are not written the way they are pronounced.
- b. English spelling is full of rules and exceptions as well as confusing words.
- c. Learners' incorrect pronunciation of words.
- d. The linguistic differences between English and Arabic.
- e. The linguistic differences between English and French
- f. Lack of knowledge of English spelling rules.
- g. Students' lack of interest to learn spelling.
- h. Students' carelessness.

Please, rank them (the **four main causes**) from most important to least important, starting with number 1 for the most important cause.

2. 2. 3. 4.

14. How much are your students interested in improving their spelling performance?

- a. Not interested
- b. To some extent interested
- c. Interested
- d. Very interested

15. To what extent do you think spelling errors decrease as students move to higher level?

- a. Extremely
- b. Significantly
- c. Moderately
- d. Not at all

Section four: Teachers' Responses to their Students' Spelling Errors

16. How do you respond to your students' spelling errors?

- d. Correct the error
- e. Only draw your students' attention to the error
- f. Do not care

17. What kind of spelling errors do you usually point out?

- a. Most major errors only
- b. Only few major errors
- c. All errors

Others,.....
.....
.....

18. Do you penalize students for spelling errors?

- a. Yes
- b. No

How?.....
.....
.....

19. How often do you draw the learners' attention to the rules of English spelling?

- a. Always
- b. Often
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely
- e. never

20. To what extent do you draw the learners' attention to common spelling patterns?

- a. Extremely
- b. Significantly
- c. Moderately
- d. Not at all

21. To what extent do you raise students' awareness to irregular spelling and silent letters?

- a. Extremely
- b. Significantly
- c. Moderately
- d. Not at all

22. To what extent do you draw the learners' attention to the differences between American spelling and British spelling?

- a. Extremely
- b. Significantly
- c. Moderately
- d. Not at all

Section Five: Further Suggestions

23. What are your suggestions to overcome students' spelling errors?

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.....

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Thank you for your help

Résumé

Vu le grand intérêt pédagogique accordé, ces derniers temps, à l'étude de l'ampleur et de la qualité des fautes d'orthographe commises, par les étudiants en langue anglaise, à l'université de Jijel, nous avons fait une petite recherche qui a pour but d'étudier spécialement l'ampleur de ce problème chez les étudiants de deuxième année et d'en proposer quelques solutions. Pour cela nous sommes parties de l'hypothèse que les étudiants étaient conscients de leurs problèmes en orthographe et de la stratégies qu'ils devaient adopter ils n'auraient pas souffert de ces difficultés d'orthographe. Pour étayer notre hypothèse nous avons essayé de déterminer la quantité et la qualité des fautes fréquemment commises par les étudiants ainsi que leurs causes objectives et subjectives et de connaître les stratégies adoptées par les étudiants et les enseignants pour surmonter ce problème. Et pour obtenir des informations concrètes nécessaires à notre théorie, nous avons adopté la démarche pratique suivante : Nous avons proposé aux étudiants une épreuve de dictée et une traduction de texte. Puis nous avons soumis aux et aux enseignants un même questionnaire. Les résultats de notre étude ont montré les faits suivants : Les étudiants commettent effectivement beaucoup de fautes d'orthographe. Cela montre qu'ils ont un véritable problème dans l'expression écrite qui est, à notre avis, principalement du au fait que langue anglaise est pleine de règles, d'exceptions et de mots composés, en plus de l'ignorance et la négligence des étudiants des règles de la phonétique. Notre étude a montré aussi que la stratégie adoptée par les étudiants est très limitée. Ce qui a rendu ce problème plus compliqué. Enfin, nous pouvons conclure que notre hypothèse qui suppose que les étudiants n'adoptent pas la bonne stratégie pour éviter de commettre trop d'erreurs d'orthographe est valable. Et nous leur conseillons d'accorder plus d'attention à l'exactitude orthographique

ملخص

نظرا للاهتمام الكبير الذي حظيت به دراسة الأخطاء الإملائية لطلبة اللغة الانجليزية في الآونة الأخيرة تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى معرفة مدى حجم المشاكل الإملائية التي يواجهها طلبة السنة الثانية قسم اللغة الانجليزية جامعة جيجل وكذلك تحديد أنواع الأخطاء الإملائية الأكثر شيوعا وأسبابها المحتملة. كما تهدف الدراسة إلى التحقيق في آراء وطلبة اللغة الانجليزية حول المشاكل الإملائية التي يواجهها الطلبة. إضافة إلى ذلك تحاول الدراسة إبراز الاستراتيجيات الإملائية المستعملة من قبل الطلبة. تستند الدراسة على فرضية انه لو أن الطلبة كانوا مدركين لمشاكلهم الإملائية واستعملوا استراتيجيات إملائية لما عانوا من صعوبات إملائية. للإجابة عن هذه التساؤلات تم استعمال اختبار إملائي اختبار في الترجمة واستبيان موجه للطلبة وآخر للأساتذة. أظهرت النتائج ارتكاب الطلبة لأخطاء إملائية كثيرة وهذا يدل على وجود صعوبات كبيرة في الكتابة الإملائية. تبين أن الأسباب الرئيسية وراء ضعف الأداء الإملائي يكمن في طبيعة الرسم الإملائي في اللغة الانجليزية لكونه غير منتظم مليء بالقواعد و الاستثناءات والكلمات المركبة. كما أثبتت النتائج استعمال الطلبة لاستراتيجيات محدودة مع اعتماد كبير للاستراتيجية الصوتية وهذا ما زاد المشكل تعقيدا ومنه تم إثبات الفرضية المذكورة. ومن هذا المنطلق خلصت الدراسة إلى توصيات للاهتمام أكثر بالمشاكل الإملائية التي يواجهها الطلبة للتقليل من أخطائهم.