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**A Cross-sectional Study of the Effect of Topic Familiarity on Variability in
Learner's Oral Output:**

The Case of License LMD Students of English
at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel University

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Running Head: TOPIC FAMILIARITY'S EFFECT ON VARIABILITY

The Effect of Topic Familiarity on Variability in Learner's Oral Output

The Case of First, Second, and Third Year License LMD Students

at the English Language Department

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Dedications

*After praising God almighty the greatest, I dedicate this work to my dearest person, whose words of encouragement are still echoing in my head, the only person with the exception of God nothing is important: **My Mother**. To the person who was always next to me and supported me, the person who has helped me to make my dream a reality: **My Father**. To my dearest sisters: **Fadia, Mounira**, and the little **Djo**, without forgetting my beloved brother: **Mohcine**, a big thanks for their support during this hard journey. To all the extended family. To my dear friends each one by his name.....**Amal***

*In the Name of Allah, Most Merciful. All the praise is due to God alone, the sustainer of the world. I dedicate this modest piece of work to the most precious people to my heart, to the ones who gave birth and meaning to my life, to the persons who gave me strength and hope: to my beloved father “**Abdallah**” and my lovely mother “**Nouara**”. To my adorable Brothers and Sisters each one by his /her name. To my teachers and friends and all people who love me.....**Asma***

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Abstract

This study operated within a sociolinguistic framework to investigate the extent to which familiarity of the topic being discussed may systematically influence the levels of fluency and accuracy in learners' oral output. Moreover, this study has attempted to study both synchronically (at each level of the curriculum) and diachronically (as the learners advance across the different levels of the curriculum) the relationship between topic familiarity and learners' variability in the levels of accuracy and fluency. A test comprising three oral tasks was designed and administered in the order of expected decrease in the levels of accuracy and fluency to a randomly selected cross-sectional sample of 18 students belonging to three different levels (1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year). Each student participant was asked to talk about three different topics, namely: familiar (family life), less familiar (traditional culture), and unfamiliar (post-structuralism). Their performances were audio-recorded then transcribed and analyzed in terms of fluency and accuracy levels in the discussion of each topic. Fluency was measured in terms of pauses and hesitations, repetitions and corrections, length of talk, and subject specific vocabulary. Whereas, Accuracy was operationalized in terms of grammatical errors (syntax, morphology), and pronunciation errors (word pronunciation). It was hypothesized that the learners' levels of accuracy and fluency will decrease as learners move from the discussion of the familiar to the unfamiliar topics. It was also hypothesized that learners' levels of accuracy and fluency when discussing each topic will increase as these learners advance across the different levels of the curriculum.

The analysis of the results has partially confirmed the first hypothesis: the more the topic is familiar to the foreign language learners, the higher the level of fluency he will display in the discussion of this topic. However, no systematic relationship has been found to exist between the degree of topic familiarity and variability in learners' level of accuracy. Moreover, the

subjects' levels of fluency and accuracy in the discussion of each topic did not improve as these learners advance across the curriculum.

List of Abbreviations

CA:	Contrastive Analysis
CAH:	Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis
CSR:	Confusion of Sense Relations
EA:	Error Analysis
EAH:	Error Analysis Hypothesis
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
FL:	Foreign Language
IL:	Interlanguage
L1:	First Language
L2:	Second Language
MT:	Mother Tongue
SLA:	Second Language Acquisition
TL:	Target Language

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Résumé

الملخص

General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

Along with the study of transfer, staged development, systematicity, and fossilization, the variation that learners manifest in their interlanguage productions is one of the core phenomena that have been studied by researchers in the field of second language acquisition. However, different theoretical explanations have been developed to explain this phenomena. Those operating within a sociolinguistic perspective based on a “heterogeneous competence model” claim that a large amount of the observed variability in learners’ performance is systematic because it is affected by the contextual factors in which learners produce interlanguage forms (Romaine, 2003; Bayley & Preston, 1996; James, 1990; Tarone, 1988; Ellis, 1987; Littlewood, 1981). Tarone (1988) (as cited in Brown, 1980: 37), for example, argued that linguistic and situational contexts may help to systematically describe what might otherwise appear simply as unexplained variation.

One of the most important contextual factors that have been identified as causes of variability in learners’ output is the nature of the topic discussed. Learners may produce the target language forms with higher levels of accuracy and fluency in one context, and not in another, depending on the degree of their familiarity with the topic under discussion. For instance, Ranko Bugarski, a distinguished Yugoslav/Serbian Professor of English and Linguistics (Cited in Philipson, 2000: 96) writes that “as a non-native speaker who has used English almost daily for decades I tend to get increasingly reluctant to engage in protracted serious argument with native speakers over subtle non-professional-e.g. philosophical or political — issues. In this regard, Tarone (1988: 119) states that “the topic of communication... is one of the most under-researched areas in the study of interlanguage variation” and “the precise effects of topic upon variation have yet to be established”.

Given that learners of English cannot discuss all the topics with equal levels of fluency and accuracy in the target language, it has been observed by students and teachers that the process of the selection of the topics for instruction and testing in the module of oral expression is subject to a great deal of improvisation and, hence, does not take into consideration the real life future communicative needs of Algerian students of English. This may affect negatively these learners' communicative efficiency in the domains that are most relevant to their needs. Moreover, the failure to establish a strong and direct link between the topic used in instruction in oral expression and those used in oral tests may affect negatively the validity and reliability of those tests.

2. Aims of the Study

The aim of this study is twofold. It seeks to investigate the extent to which synchronic (at one point in time) variability in learners' levels of accuracy and fluency are affected by the contextual factor of topic familiarity. Second, it aims at determining the extent to which learners' levels of accuracy and fluency in the discussion of the same tasks display increasing levels as these students advance across the curriculum.

3. Research Questions

This study seeks to answer two questions:

- Do learners' levels of accuracy and fluency vary systematically depending on the degree of the familiarity of the topic being discussed?
- Do learners' discussions of the topics in question display increasing levels of accuracy and fluency as these learners advance across the curriculum?

4. Hypotheses

- Hypothesis one:

The subjects' levels of accuracy and fluency will decrease along the sequence of topics being discussed

- Hypothesis two:

The subjects' levels of accuracy and fluency will increase in each topic being discussed as these learners advance across the different levels of the curriculum.

5. Methodology and Means of the Study

In order to put the above hypotheses to test, an oral test comprising a sequence of three tasks was designed. These three tasks require each student to discuss three different topics with three different levels of familiarity (familiar, less familiar, and unfamiliar) respectively. It should be noted that the degree of familiarity of the topics was determined on the basis of a written list of topics presented to a randomly selected sample of sixty students at different levels of the curriculum who were asked to classify fifty different topics to three categories depending on their degree of familiarity. As a result, three topics (family, traditional culture, and post structuralism) have been selected to represent familiar, less familiar, and unfamiliar categories respectively. After that, the oral test was administered to a cross-sectional sample of 18 students comprising six students from each level of the license curriculum picked-up randomly from the sixty students who participated in the topics classification task. It should be noted that each student was asked to discuss the sequence of the three topics in question in the order of expected decrease in fluency and accuracy. Fluency, on one hand, was operationally defined in terms of pauses and hesitations, repetitions and corrections, length of talk, and subject specific vocabulary. Accuracy, on the other hand, was operationalized in terms of grammatical errors (syntax, morphology), and pronunciation errors (word pronunciation) compared to the number of obligatory contexts for the production of these features.

6. Subjects of the Research

Eighteen LMD students of English (13 females and 5 males) from three different levels at the University Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia in Jijel have been selected as the subjects for this study. The sample comprises six students randomly selected from each level on the basis of each group's names list. The participants' ages ranged between 19 and 23.

7. Structure of the Study

This dissertation comprises three main chapters. The first two chapters are theoretical. The first chapter presents a historical overview of the development of the field of second language acquisition (SLA). Chapter two presents the different perspectives on interlanguage studies with a specific focus on "the Sociolinguistic perspective" within the framework of which the topic of this study, namely Topic Familiarity, has been tackled. The third chapter presents the methodology as well as the analysis of the data generated by the test.

Chapter One

A Historical Overview of the Study of Second Language Acquisition

Introduction

Language Acquisition refers to the process by which humans acquire the capacity to perceive and comprehend language, as well as to produce and use words and sentences to communicate using a range of tools, including: phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, in addition to an extensive vocabulary. Second Language Acquisition as a field of study aims at describing and explaining the learners' competence in a second language. Studies of the field often employ analytical concepts defined relatively to the target language (such as obligatory context, errors, etc.).

This chapter presents a historical overview of the field of second language acquisition with a specific focus on the evolution in the conception of learners' errors that have accompanied the major theoretical shifts from contrastive analysis to error analysis, and then finally to interlanguage theory.

1.1. Contrastive Analysis (CA)

1.1.1. Definition of Contrastive Analysis

Contrastive Analysis (CA) has been the first major contribution of linguistics to language teaching and learning. This theory was first proposed by Fries (1945), and then developed and popularized by Lado (1957) (Ellis, 1994). This approach proposed an assortment of procedures aimed at comparing and contrasting the linguistic system of two languages. In other words, CA compares the phonological, the lexical, and the grammatical system of two languages, or even comparing between two cultures. CA aimed at shedding the light on the structural similarities and differences between two languages so as to account for the errors made by FL learners.

Moreover, CA has sought to explain the reasons that make some language features more difficult to learn than others so as to raise the level of the effectiveness of teaching materials.

1.1.2. Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)

The contrastive analysis theory was built on the behaviorist view of language learning as a mechanical process of habit formation. It was believed that the aspects of second language which were different from those of the first language are consequently more problematic to the learners because they represent a set of new habits that are different than those acquired when learning the mother tongue. According to MacDonald Lightbound (2005: 66), the logic was that “when learning a second language a person will tend to use mother tongue structures in second language production, and where L1 structures differ from the L2, mistakes will be made”. In the field of first language acquisition, the main question which has been the object of hot debate for centuries is: whether language is innate in humans, or on the contrary, if it is learned (nature-nurture controversy). Chomsky (1959) published his critical review of Skinner's *Verbal Behavior* (1957) in which he maintained that language acquisition is more than a set of habits that are acquired at the beginning of children's life. Skinner suggested likens the basic mechanisms for language acquisition to the responses produced by rats to a particular stimulus in experimental conditions, proposing that we were also controlled by external stimuli that induce certain physical or verbal actions like those laboratory rats. “The basic process and relations which give verbal behavior its special characteristics are now fairly understood. Much of the experimental work responsible for this advance has been carried out on other species, but the results have proved to be surprisingly free of species restrictions. Recent work has shown that the methods can be extended to human behavior without serious modification.” (Skinner, 1957; as cited in Smith, 1994). In contrast, Chomsky supported that children's language is

innate by considering its rules and parameters and their ability to produce infinite number of sentences from a finite number of words and structures.

Therefore, first language acquisition is one of rule formation where the children take an active part in the process and not simply a product of habit formation. According to this theory, "habit" plays an important role in the acquisition of the first language as the learner is considered to have mastered his mother tongue through the imitation of adult utterances. In other words, from the behaviorist's perspective, the learner uses his previous MT experiences as a means of organizing the SL data. So, if the structure of both languages is similar, the learning process will be easier. But, when the system of both languages is different, it creates problems. Applied linguistics used the CA distinction between the learner's first and second language to predict errors. The bulk of contrastive analysis claimed as stated initially by Lado (1956) and then reiterated by others is that "the errors and difficulties that occur in our learning and use of a foreign language are caused by the interference of our mother tongue". CA is founded on the assumption that L2 learners will tend to transfer to their L2 utterances the formal features of their L1, exactly as the behaviorist view considered transfer in terms of habit formation.

With regard to the framework of CAH, two distinct views were developed in order to analyze L2 learners' errors, namely: strong and weak view. The strong version of CA was very strict, it assumed that all the errors of the L2 learner are caused by L1 transfer, thus by comparing the two languages, these errors will be predicted. This version, however, could not maintain its validity for long and was later replaced by a weaker version as a result of the Chomskyan revolution. The weak version of CA did not take a strict position like the first one and only claimed that it can give explanations to some observed errors rather than predicting them.

1.1.3. Contrastive Analysis and Language Transfer

The analysis of learners' IL, have shown that only a tiny proportion of learners' errors can

be explained by the notion of negative transfer.

1.1.3.1. Language Transfer

Skehan (2008) defined language transfer as the influence of the MT or any other languages which have been learned previously. In other words, FL learners tend to transfer some features from their MT to the other language. Ellis (1994: 341) assigned the notion of transfer to different categories: "Transfer is to be seen as a general cover term for a number of different kinds of influence from languages other than the L2. The study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance of target language forms and their over-use."

- **Positive Transfer**

Positive transfer can generally imply a process of underlying learning and is also referred to as facilitation. For Wolfram (2007: 80), positive transfer means: "the incorporation of language features into a non-native language based on the occurrence of similar features in the native language". Positive transfer influences FL learning positively due to the existence of similarities between the features of the new and the already acquired knowledge system. However, positive transfer is difficult to be observed and hence to be proved since the transferred forms are also correct in the FL.

- **Negative Transfer**

It has been widely agreed upon that negative transfer or, in the most common terminology, interference is the faulty application of one's language structures in a FL (Trauth & Kazzazik, 2006). It has been presented as the major cause of learning difficulties and errors by the proponents of the strong version of CAH. That is to say, FL learners may use the MT or other known languages in a non-native language context that leads to a non-target-like form. Gass and Selinker (2001) suggested two types of interference: the first type is a "retroactive

inhibition” where learning acts return to previously learned material causing someone to forget. Whereas the second is a “proactive inhibition” where a set of responses that already have been learned are likely to appear in situations where a new set is entailed. Thus, this phenomenon was equated with difficulty in learning a L2 as an outcome of differences of the two languages’ structures.

1.1.4. Avoidance

CA found out that L2 learners avoid using certain structures that are very different from that of their L1. In a study, Schachter (1974) found that Persian and Arab students committed a lot of errors in English relative clauses than Chinese and Japanese did. It was thought that English relative clauses were less difficult for the Chinese and Japanese students than for the Arab and Persian students because the placement of relative clauses in Chinese and Japanese differs so much from their position in English. Schachter also found that the number of relative clauses produced was much lower for the Chinese and Japanese students compared to the Persian and Arab ones. This difference, however, was attributed to an avoidance strategy followed by Chinese and Japanese learners which resulted in the production of fewer errors (as cited in Xiaoling & Mengduo, 2010).

1.2. Error Analysis (EA)

1.2.1. Error Analysis Hypothesis

In the late 1960s and early 1970s emphasis was shifted from CA to EA developed by Corder and his colleagues as a reaction to the strong version of CAH. It showed that CA was unable to predict all types of errors. EA studies revealed that a big amount of learners’ errors are due to learners’ failure to fully grasp the rules of the new language. So, EA shifted the attention to the L2 learners themselves and the strategies that they use to perform in the target language. EA investigated the language system of learners by identifying, describing and explaining their

errors (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

This method was widely used in the seventies as a technique of measuring the patterns of difficulty that may face learners in learning an L2 or an FL. In other words, it was the study of the faulty learners' output, either written or verbal. (Richards, 1974; & Corder, 1981; as cited in Stern, 2001).

It is important to provide a brief definition of what an error is, and what is the obvious distinction between errors and mistakes before discussing the different procedures of error analysis.

1.2.2. Definition of Errors

As it was pointed out by Ellis (1994) that an error is an aberration in learners' language which results from insufficiency of correct rules' knowledge. He added also that an error can be covert or overt. Beginning with the covert error, Ellis meant that the aberration is obvious unless the intended meaning is accounted. While in the overt error, the aberration is obviously seen in the surface form of the learner's performance.

An error was defined by Lennon (1991: 182) as: "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 speakers' native speaker counterparts." (As cited in Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005)

Furthermore, Piske and Young-Scholten (2009: 261) have defined an error as "a non-target form which represents a systematic stage of development". Errors, accordingly, became a valid object of enquiry in 1967 impacted by Corder's positive stance across errors in contrast to early views in the field of SLA. (As cited in Piske & Young-Scholten, 2009: 4).

Sanz (2005) pointed out that, since errors provide a window into IL, they can be seen as a natural and important phase in learners' IL and, more importantly, the source of information

about how learners are ameliorating their learning processes and what are the required skills and rules that were taken through the observation of learners' errors. Consequently, learners' errors should receive much importance than correct aspects. In other words, since learners' errors can guide teachers to deduce that the learner is progressing normally toward the mastery of the whole language system, learners' errors are regarded as instances of learning and not non-learning as was the case in the heyday of CAH. The definition of errors, however, may be problematic since the notion of "error" is often confused with that of "mistake". Thus, it is very necessary to set briefly the distinction between mistakes and errors.

1.2.2.1. Errors vs Mistakes

Any learner may produce a faulty output that is distinct from the ordinary forms. Any spoken or written piece of language also may display items which break the norms and rules of a standard language. This rule-breaking was classified by many scholars such as: Corder (1967), Littlewood (1998), Ellis (1994), Coulthard (2001), and others, into two categories: competence errors and performance mistakes (As cited in Gass & Selinker, 2008: 102). On one hand, involving all the rule-breakings that have been consciously done by any speaker or writer under some circumstances are performance mistakes. That is to say, speakers/writers have broken the rule although they know the perfect form and know that they are breaking it. Furthermore, mistakes are only related to learners' performances which are close to slips of the tongue, tiredness, carelessness, and lack of attention. A learner who makes a mistake is able to correct it. According to Ellis (1994), learners can apply other rules which are easier for them to access when mistakes occur because learners are not capable to use their background knowledge about the target language rules. Competence errors, on the other hand, are those non-trivial drifts that result from an insufficiency of knowledge of the correct rules of an L2 learner. Because learners have not yet mastered the standard rules of the TL, they follow non-standard structures built by

themselves in this case. Besides, learners over and over commit the same deviations from the TL norms and the learner cannot recognize that those deviations are errors, that is to say, errors are systematic. Errors, in turn, were classified according to error analysts into two major types.

1.2.2.2. Types of Errors

EA assigned errors to two different types: interlingual and intralingual errors.

- **Interlingual Errors**

This kind of errors was attributed to transferring rules and structures from L1. These errors were also called interference errors because they are due to the negative impact of the L1.

- **Intralingual Errors**

The majority of errors that learners commit are intralingual errors, as argued by many error analysts such as Dulay and Burt (1974) (As cited in Gass & Selinker, 2008).

In addition, Littlewood (1998) pointed out that errors of this category illustrate that learners are processing only the L1. That is to say, they cannot be attributed to negative transfer from the native language since the native speakers of L2 also may commit such errors. Moreover, intralingual errors are said to be universal because they can be produced by learners of different first language backgrounds (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

1.2.3. Procedures of Error Analysis

According to the EA's view, the investigators should follow a specific set of procedures in directing its technique. Firstly, the researcher has to analyze errors in a sample of learner's language. Then, after the errors are identified, the researcher should describe errors and proceed with their categorization. Finally, the causes of these errors are explained and the quantification to their frequency occurrence is presented.

1.2.3.1. Collecting a Sample of Learner Language

Collecting a sample of learner language is usually the premier step to involve in an EA

research. Ellis (1997) argued that in order to help researchers to achieve the two essential aims in L2 learning, collecting and analyzing samples of learner language is very essential. Ellis emphasized on important goals which are performed in explaining the procedure and factors influencing L2 learning, as well as describing the linguistic systems that are structured by learners at several phases of developing their language. Moreover, In order to reach the intended outcomes, the latter requires a base data on which error analysts will rely. The data that are interested in this case are mainly written, but also oral data can be used (Gass & Selinker, 2008).

Ellis and Burkheizen (2005) pointed out that we should be aware that the nature of learners' errors and their distribution investigators can be influenced by the nature of the sample that is gathered. In other words, many factors such as the language being used, either written or oral, whether it is used in conversation, argumentative, narrative, essay etc., if the output produced is spontaneously or under certain conditions, and the learner proficiency level, can affect errors in samples of learner language.

1.2.3.2. Identification of Errors

The identification of learners' errors is an operation that follows the collection of data in EA. A comparison between what the learner has produced and the standard norm of TL is carried out in order to identify and recognize errors that have been gathered from the samples.

1.2.3.3. Description of Errors

Identifying the errors alone is not sufficient because each error should be simply analyzed and described. As mentioned before, when a student produces an erroneous (incorrect) form, the first step is asking whether the learner's sentence is intelligible. i.e., what is the intended meaning that the learner wants to convey. The erroneous sentence should go through several interpretations then reconstructions, and all that happens of course with the help of the learner if he/she is present; otherwise, the teacher will do a possible interpretation and reconstruction

of the sentence based on the capacity of the teacher to infer the intended meaning from the learner's production.

The process of comparing original sentences with their possible constructions yields a set of categories. According to Corder (1973: 277): "difference of this sort can be classified into four categories: omission of some required elements, addition of unnecessary or incorrect elements, selection of an incorrect element, and miss ordering of elements". (As cited in Chelli, 2006: 58)

- **Omission**

Learners often leave out the third person singular morpheme in present simple tense "S", the "S" of the plural, and the final "ed" of the past simple. In syntax, learners may omit certain elements which are necessary in the sentence uttered. These are some examples given by learners which illustrate what is mentioned above: "Mobile is means of communication", "There are many language in this world, but famous is English", "It described my status", "My mother work all the day", "There are a lot of plant in here", "Two days ago, I clean my car" (As cited in Chelli, 2006).

- **Addition**

In contrast to omission, some learners may erroneously add certain elements. For example, in morphology, students tend to overuse the third person singular morpheme of the present simple tense "S". At the syntactical level, learners may use the definite article with the place name such as "The Algiers". At the lexical level, learners may add an unnecessary word. For example, I stayed there during five years ago. These are some examples given by learners which illustrate what is mentioned: "The classroom is a group of students", "In the writing we use some letters.....", "The English is the most useful language in the world", "Speech it is a way

of communication between the human”, “The causes of pollution are: the factories are near for houses”, “I can to play the piano” (Chelli, 2006)

- **Selection**

In addition to omissions and additions, learners may commit errors in morphology, syntax, and vocabulary due to the selection of the wrong phoneme, morpheme, structure or vocabulary item. At the phonological level this may be explained by interlingual transfer. The learner transfers and imitates a familiar phoneme from the mother tongue, like Arabic students who substitute “p” with “b” e.g., saying “broblem” instead of “problem”. An error in morphology can be committed like the selection of “est” instead of “er” e.g., Algeria is biggest than Tunisia. In syntax, the learner may choose a wrong structure. At the lexical level, learner often selects words which do not convey the meaning. These are some examples: “I was surprised by my succeed”, “You can saw what is there”, “I can ate all this plate”, “The giraffe is the taller animal” (As cited in Chelli, 2006).

- **Miss-Ordering**

Miss-ordering may occur in pronunciation by shifting the position of certain phonemes, e.g., a speaker may say “fignificant” instead of “significant”. Less frequent at the morphological level, but in the example: he’s get upping now, the learner attaches “ing” form to the particle of the two word verb get up. At the syntactical level, miss-ordering is much more common as in the sentence: “He’s a dear to me friend”, where the elements of a single noun phrase are inversed. At the lexical level, the learner may reverse the elements of a compound noun word; “A car key” may become “a key car”, which may be regarded as a car carrying keys. These are some examples: “English is the best language international”, “I am years 20 old”, “This cat is

my”, “Each summer to swimming pool I go”, “She wake ups late all the time” (As mentioned in Chelli, 2006)

Any language learner may commit one or all of these deviations which are considered as errors: omission, addition, selection, or miss-ordering.

1.2.3.4. Explanation of Errors

The final and the most important step in an EA study is the explanation of errors. The goal of explaining errors is to identify why such errors have occurred and to determine their causes. Ellis (1994) suggests that errors committed by learners may be due to different reasons. These reasons can be epistemic, sociolinguistic, or psycholinguistic. In addition, the place of errors in the structure of discourse may also represent a source of these errors. Epistemic source, refers to the absence of learners' world knowledge whereas sociolinguistic sources of errors refer on the incapacity to adapt the L2 forms to the social context. Psycholinguistic sources are related to the obstacles that learners encounter when processing the L2 knowledge system.

Although there are many different sources, EA concentrated only on the psycholinguistic one. As an illustration, EA has already tried to provide an explanation of errors depending solely on psychological factors. Ellis (1994) pointed out that there are two kinds of errors, competence errors, and performance mistakes, which originated from psycholinguistic sources. Furthermore, he cited two main categories of performance mistakes: communication strategies and processing problems in which learners attempt to recompense their lack of knowledge of the L2 rules. Instead of performance mistakes, error analysts are interested only in competence errors. The latter includes intralingual, interlingual, or unique errors that cannot be classified either as intralingual or in interlingual.

1.2.3.5. Evaluation of Errors

Since the study of learners' errors has a practical significance to language pedagogy,

error analysts and teachers need to evaluate errors with a view to decide which ones should serve as a basis for instructions. According to Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005), error evaluation involves determining the gravity of different errors because some errors can be considered more serious than others, for they are more likely to violate the legibility of learners' production. Ellis (1997) pointed out that errors are evaluated as being either "global errors" or "local errors". The former means the most serious errors, however, the latter concerns the least serious ones. Thus, teachers can take decisions about which errors have to be addressed.

In fact, there are different criteria on which the errors are to be judged. The most commonly used criterion is "gravity", i.e., "seriousness", but others can also be used, such as "intelligibility" or "irritability" (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005: 67). Error evaluation studies have dried up entirely for it is already regarded as a supplementary stage in EA and because of the inconclusive results about the definite scale for predicting error gravity. As the present study is about lexical EA, it is necessary to discuss some different taxonomies which are relevant to this area and to choose the appropriate one to analyze the data collected.

1.3. Interlanguage Theory

1.3.1. Definition of Interlanguage

Interlanguage is neither an incomplete version of the learner's language that is full of random errors, nor a language completely based on errors introduced from the learner's first language. It is rather a language in its own right, with its own systematic rules consisting of elements from both the speaker's original language and TL. Reinecke (1935), used the term "interlanguage" to refer to a "non-standard" variety of language that is used in communication. (As mentioned in Rustipa, 2011). Tarone (2006), in her article "Interlanguage" stated that the term "Interlanguage" was coined by Selinker in 1972, and referred to as: the unique separate linguistic system that appears when second-language learners seek to perform linguistic

meaning in the learning process. She claimed that although it is linked to both Native language and Target language, but it is neither like the first nor like the second. Larsen, et. al. (1992) claimed that, Interlanguage is a continuous sequence in which adjacent linguistic elements are not perceptibly different from each other, although the extremes are quite distinct between the first language and the target language. Rustipa (2011: 20) claimed that: "An interlanguage is developed by a learner of a second language who has not become fully proficient yet but is approximating the target language: preserving some features of their first language, or overgeneralizing target language rules in speaking or writing the target language and creating innovations."

1.3.2. Characteristics of Learners' Interlanguage

According to Selinker (1972), interlanguage typically displays a range of principal features and characteristics:

1.3.2.1. Permeability

Selinker (1972) stated that Interlanguage is permeable. That is to say, rules which constitute this linguistic system at any stage of language development are not completely constant, but are rather prone to be modulated and changed. In fact, all language systems are permeable, and it is noticeable that the main difference between IL and other language systems is the degree of permeability. (As stated in Song, 2012).

1.3.2.2. Dynamicity

Dynamicity was introduced by Selinker (1972) as another aspect of Interlanguage. He claimed that interlanguage is dynamic in the sense that it is "constantly changing", or continuously varying over time. However, when introducing a new rule in the learning process, first in one context and then in another, learners consult the provisional linguistic systems to

conform to the new rule of the target language system, rather than passing from one stage to the other. The new rule that is introduced extend to cover a specific area of linguistic contexts. This previously-mentioned process of steady revision and expansion of rules can be considered as a major feature of the “inherent instability of interlanguage” and its tendency for change (Song, 2012).

1.3.2.3. Systematicity

Another important characteristic of learners' interlanguage is systematicity. Although interlanguage is dynamic, i.e. varies over time, learner's IL is to a large extent rule-governed. The learner bases his performance on the rule system which exists in his mind (Song, 2012).

1.3.2.4. Variability

Variability in interlanguage is a very important feature that has attracted growing interest among second language researchers. Variability in language use means that “each learner's interlanguage contains alternative rules for performing the same function”. For instance, the learner performs in accordance with the system of rules he has built-up previously in his mind at any developmental stage of language acquisition, but his rule-based performance varies from one context to the another due to many factors such as the interlocutor, the social context, the topic...etc. (Song, 2012).

1.3.3. Interlanguage Hypotheses

The concept of interlanguage is very diffuse in SLA research. This idea of interlanguage was developed to account for systematic errors after the two second language acquisition approaches, namely CA and EA failed to do so. Interlanguage was based on the assumption that there is an implicit psychological structure which is the human brain. This structure will be stimulated only when the learner tries to learn or acquire a second language. This theory was based on Larry Selinker's work who suggested that when seeking to transmit the same meaning

or the same message, the utterances that are performed by a second language learner in a given situation are completely different from those produced by native speakers. (I.e. the meaning is the same but the way is variant.) This comparison between the L2 learner's performance and that of native speakers demonstrated the existence of a separate linguistic system. The latter can be observed when studying the utterances of the learners who attempt to produce a target language norm.

According to Selinker (1972), interlanguage is modeled by five main psycholinguistic processes, namely: 1. "native language transfer" (some items, rules and subsystems of a learner's interlanguage may be transferred from the first language); 2. "Overgeneralization of target language rules" (some interlanguage elements are the result of a clear overgeneralization of TL rules and semantic features); 3. "Transfer of training" (when applying rules that are learned from instructors or textbooks or some interlanguage elements that are derived from the way in which the learners were taught); 4. "Strategies of communication" (according to Selinker (1972: 217), we are dealing with strategies if the items, rules and subsystems are a result of an identifiable approach by the learner to communication with native speakers of the TL); and 5. "Strategies of learning" (The learner's conscious attempts to master the target language. Selinker (1972: 216) stated that "if the fossilized items, rules and subsystems are a result of an identifiable approach by the learner to the material to be learned", then we are dealing with such strategies.) (Dong, 2013)

According to Griffiths and Parr (2001), the significance of interlanguage theory that makes it worthy of attention is based on the fact that this theory is the first that have tried to take "the possibility of learner conscious attempts to control their learning" into consideration. This view in turn has led to an extension of psychological processes research in interlanguage development, the major aim of which was to set the ways by which learners try to facilitate and

simplify their second language learning, by indicating the appropriate effective learning strategies to do so. (As mentioned in Takac, 2008)

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to portray in a nutshell the major developments in the field of second language acquisition with a specific focus on the evolution in applied linguistics conception of learners' errors. While the proponents of contrastive analysis considered learners' errors as instances of non-learning that language teaching should strive to eradicate, error analysts have radically rejected this view and considered learners' errors as instances of learning that should be analyzed and explained so as to determine the type of hypotheses that the learner is making about the target language rules at each stage of development. Moreover, interlanguage studies have considered learners' errors to be the product of rule-governed system which is different from either the mother tongue or the target language. This system displays a number of typical characteristics, an important instance of which is the phenomenon of variability, which is the focal issue of the present study.

Chapter Two

Variability and Systematicity in Interlanguage

Introduction

This chapter presents the different perspectives on the study of second language acquisition with a special focus on the issue of variability. Then, in order to foreground the theoretical framework of the present study, the issue of variability in interlanguage will be tackled with more emphasis on the sociolinguistic explanations of this phenomenon.

2.1. The Different Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition Research

According to Spuch (1993), the most adopted perspectives on second language acquisition are five, namely classroom research, bilingual education, neuro-linguistic, psycho-linguistic, and socio-linguistic perspectives. However, when combining these perspectives together, we should take into consideration the conclusions drawn from second language acquisition studies to be applied in language teaching. In addition, L2 acquisition cannot be exclusively studied from the psycholinguistic perspective, although this latter is considered as the “core perspective”. Thus it is necessarily required to count for the multiple “inter-disciplinary” perspectives to obtain a clear overview of L2 acquisition. (Spuch, 1993).

However, although these previously mentioned perspectives are relatedly inseparable in L2 acquisition, but when focusing essentially on the concept of interlanguage development and variation, only the two psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives are directly concerned, and mainly the sociolinguistic one.

2.1.1. Psycholinguistic Perspective

In the field of second language acquisition, many investigation areas which deal with the psychology of language are available, among these scopes is the study of psycholinguistics.

According to Treiman, Clifton, Meyer, and Wurm (2003), the field of psycholinguistics was based on the light of the Chomskyan work (1959) in linguistics, and his idea that since language possesses specific characteristics, it needs in turn specific techniques to process it.

According to Karimvand (2011), in SLA, English learners cannot understand a given oral or written text only by simply decoding it. But rather they need, additionally, other factors mainly: being familiar with the cultural differences between the two languages, having knowledge about the structure of the foreign language, its vocabulary development, and possessing a background knowledge about the topic of discussion (familiarity of the topic), also obtaining a clear stand toward the text, as well as taking into consideration the learner's mental situation.

Psycholinguistics was originated from both education and philosophy, it sees language in a more sophisticated way. Thus it allows us to understand the process by which learners can produce grammatically structured and meaningful utterances out of vocabulary and grammar, but rather by regarding both context and learners' psychical competence and ability. In other words, it seeks for the meaning behind the sentence boundaries.

The main interest of the psycholinguistic researches is directly related to the structure of language, as well as how such structure is represented and used in appropriate settings. In turn, psycholinguists stress on factors that enable humans to acquire, use, comprehend, produce, and represent language.

The psycholinguistic perspective have shifted from stressing on the learners' behavior to focusing on their mental capacities. It changed from viewing language as a "set of habits" (Chomsky's view), to considering it as a mental representation for the grammatical rules existing in the mind. (Spuch, 1993)

2.1.1.1. Psycholinguistic Perspective and Interlanguage

When dealing with the issue of how learners develop their language, Seliger (1975) based his assumptions on multiple concepts, namely: interlanguage (Selinker, 1972), transitional competence (Corder, 1967), and approximative systems (Nemser, 1971). In addition, he focused on the issue of the processes involved in such an action, concluding that hypothesis testing is the elementary process of L2 acquisition. In the same scope, Seliger came with the idea that acquiring a language consists of acquiring its grammar, this means a mental representation of his knowledge. This in turn reflects the idea of learning consists of building other mental grammars developed by the learner, which are different from that of the target language when acquiring the grammar of this latter. Thus developing a unique linguistic system for each learner, namely Interlanguage. (As mentioned in Spuch, 1993)

Ellis (1997), defined psycholinguistics as “the study of the mental structures and processes involved in the acquisition and use of language”, in which he cited some psycholinguistic major factors of interlanguage namely: L1 Transfer which refers to the influence that the learner's first language applies over the acquisition of the target language; as well as The Role of Consciousness which reflects learners' awareness in producing language. In other words, it refers to the process of attending consciously to linguistic features in the input. I.e. whether learners are conscious of acquiring new L2 elements or not.

2.1.2. Sociolinguistic Perspective

“Sociolinguistics, or the study of language in use, is itself a diverse field, with multiple theoretical perspectives” (Mitchell & Myles, 1998: 235).

This field of research aims mainly at identifying the role in which the social context affects the process of L2 acquisition. As Wardhaugh (2011) stated that to reach the purpose of understanding the structure and functions of language in different communicative settings, the

sociolinguistic field aims at exploring the direct relationship that links language to society. Thus, because acquisition and language use occur fundamentally in a social context, it is important for second-language acquisition researchers to understand the ways in which these social contexts relate to the acquisition and use of a second language.

According to Wardhaugh's view (2011: 10), language and society are directly interrelated in many ways, "There are several possible relationships between language and society. One is that social structure may either influence or determine linguistic structure and/or behavior".

He claimed that this relationship can be considered as one of the major reasons behind the denial of the Chomskyan view by most of linguists. In the sense that his view rejects the relationship between language and the social individuals who use it. According to Fishman (1972b), when studying language process, sociolinguists should take into consideration some conversational factors, mainly: the characteristics of the speaker (or writer), which variety of language he is using, to whom he is speaking (the hearer or reader), when and where (the setting). (Wardhaugh, 2011)

Starting from the fact that the way in which learners perform in the foreign language is quite different from one to the other, we can figure out that this process of SLA is directly related to each person's mental abilities, in other words their psychological efficiency. This in turn clears up why each one develops his own L2 linguistic system, namely Interlanguage. Thus, it seems clearly that SLA is a psycholinguistic process that combines both psychology and language. However, the main question that concerns sociolinguists and was proposed by Tarone (2000: 1) is: "to what extent are those psycholinguistic processes affected by social context?"

2.1.2.1. Social Context and Interlanguage

Tarone (2000) stated that the structure of “discourse domains” was first suggested by Selinker and Douglas in 1985, in order to demonstrate the relationship between interlanguage and the social and psycholinguistic processes.

According to Holmes (1992), the main interest of sociolinguists is to explain the factors that make learners of a same language speak in different ways while interacting in different social contexts.

When shedding the light on the L2 learner's mind, we ought to wonder what is supposed to be natural to that mind and what is not, as well as whether we are seeking for “a specially nativist or a generally nativist theory of second language acquisition”. Thus we must take into consideration that the aspect of innateness in SLA is not the only concern, but rather in L2 acquisition, factors which determine the learner's cognition react with different social contexts, thus this latter should be taken into consideration as well. (As mentioned in Tarone, 1998)

Pramita (2011) as well noted Saussure's view (1916) on the social significance of language which consists of the idea that speech is a two-dimensional aspect, in which both individuals and society take place. Thus, we cannot consider one of them over the expense of the other.

Second languages are acquired over time in a process that takes place in a social context (a sociolinguistic process). So the social factors have a direct impact upon that process. I.e. that mental cognitive processes of SLA have a social distance. Thus, an appropriate theory of SLA must take into consideration the influence of such social factors on the learner's interpretative and productive process of the L2 during his interactions and conversations with different individuals in different settings. Social factors in this way affect both “rate and sequence” in the learner's acquisition of an L2, this what creates variation among learners of a second

language. This in turn leads to the emergence of diverse interlanguages. Thus we can say that interlanguages co-varies with social contexts. (Tarone, 1998)

Lehtonen and Sajavaara's view (1985) consists that the cognitive knowledge of an L2 learner is naturally produced by interaction with social members. However, many SLA theories suffer from the absence of such fundamental insight. These theories consider SLA as an act that is processed completely out of context. Thus they relate the interlanguage construction to simple logical factors. In the same scope, Tarone claimed that communication and interaction between individuals is the main goal behind language use. Additionally, when processing an interlanguage, people with which the learner is interacting are the main source of information. The learner then is receiving the target language from those interlocutors from one side, and producing the variety of interlanguage that is appropriate to whom he speaks and in what social context he acts from the other side.

2.2. Systematicity and Variability in Interlanguage

In the field of Second language acquisition, two other subfields have emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The first, from one hand, refers to the "systematic investigation of second language acquisition (SLA)". Its findings were credited to researchers such as Cazden, Cancino, Rosansky & Schumann (1975) and Hakuta (1976). The second, from the other hand, was labelled "the quantitative study of linguistic variation". It was authenticated by the work of Labov (1966, 1969). The main concern for these two scopes of study was to clearly understand the implied methods of the different varieties of learners' language use. (Bayley & Preston, 2005)

Thus the main two concepts in Interlanguage have occurred, namely: "Systematicity" and "Variability". Although these two concepts might appear paradoxical at first sight, but in fact they are not.

2.2.1. Systematicity in Interlanguage

Systematicity is one of the essential features of learners' interlanguage. Myles (2011), demonstrated systematicity in the sense that second language learners pursue a static path in their language development. This path is very similar to that of children's L1 acquisition. In other words, they follow a "rigid" linguistic system.

According to Selinker (1972), although interlanguage is not stable but rather variable, but it can be possible to detect the nature of the learner's IL that is based on a set of rules. In addition, when performing in the target language, the learner does not select randomly from the rules that are previously-existing in his mind, but rather predicting those rules. (Tavakoli, 2013)

In order to demonstrate that interlanguage is systematic, we need to look-up for its characteristics. Cummins (2010: 25) suggested one characterization for systematicity, he claimed that: "A system is said to exhibit systematicity if, whenever it can process a sentence *s*, it can process systematic variants of *s*, where systematic variation is understood in terms of permuting constituents or (more strongly) substituting constituents of the same grammatical category".

Many researchers in the field of SLA claimed that interlanguage systematicity is a truthful matter that exists naturally in SLA. For instance, Matthews (1997) claims that the learner's ability to acquire a language is taken to be systematic by nature. Cummins (1996) on the other hand suggested that interlanguage systematicity is obvious and does not constitute or present any problem or difficulty. Fodor and Pylyshyn (1988) on the same concept assert that learners' linguistic abilities are a model of systematic knowledge. (As cited in Johnson, 2004).

Many studies take into consideration the “system” of interlanguages, it claims that even though interlanguage differs from both native and target language, but it can be systematic, in the sense that it can possess rules as well as systems just like the target language. However its linguistic system is said to be kind of unique.

2.2.1.1. Characteristics of IL Systematicity

An essential assumption in the concept of interlanguage systematicity was that this latter has two major characteristics, namely: “Rule-government” and “Internal Consistency”.

- **Rule-government**

Adjemian (1976: 319) stated that: “ILs are natural languages, which share all the salient properties of human languages”. He claimed that the interlanguage systematicity should be studied and analyzed in a linguistic way, which means as a behavior which is governed by rule systems. Accordingly, the inner structure of the interlanguage can be modeled linguistically, as any other natural human language. Thus as well as any linguistic system, such as that of the target language or native language, interlanguage grammars are likely to obey universal linguistic constraints and evidence internal consistency. (As stated in Tingstad, 1999)

Based on these assumptions, we can figure out that a systematic interlanguage is considered as “rule-governed” based on the fact that it has a linguistic system, even though it differs from that of the target language. This linguistic system in turn is not randomly structured, but rather has rules that govern it. These rules from the other hand are variable in the sense that they differ from one individual to the other, or even within the same individual according to some factors, such as the context, the interlocutor, the topic... etc.

- **Internal Consistency**

According to Tarone (1983), when an Interlanguage system has internal consistency (i.e. likely to be uniformed in some way), it will be in turn “impermeable for invasion from other linguistic systems”. The way in which an L2 learner performs is determined by the amount of attention and care paid to speech. So the more the speaker pays attention to form, the more his interlanguage will have internal consistency, and thus being more permeable. (As mentioned in Tingstad, 1999)

In other words, we can say that internal consistency of an interlanguage is the amount of attention and care with which a language is produced and performed by learners. Thus, whenever attention during performance is present, the interlanguage system will be kind of strong, and secure from any foreign violations of other linguistic systems that may affect it.

2.2.2. Variability

Language and variation are considered to be two inseparable concepts in the field of language acquisition. Wolfram (2006: 1), proposed the Sapirian view (1921) which consists that every individual concerned with second language acquisition can realize easily that language is variable. In his article “Variation and Language”, Wolfram stated that: “If structure is at the heart of language, then variation defines its soul”.

As mentioned in Mitchell and Myles (2004), Sociolinguists such as Towell and Hawkins (1994) consider variability as one of the major features of learners' language, thus theorists in the field should give more importance to its explanation. They are more interested in explaining why learners of a foreign language produce different versions of the same constructions, in accordance to different social contexts. Many quantitative research methods have been

developed by sociolinguists and used to study the different patterns of interlanguage and variability.

In fact, according to Pramita (2011: 2), language variation was given less admission by the linguistic description, until the emergence of sociolinguistics when it became a “most rapidly expanding subfields of linguistics”.

2.2.2.1. Definition of Variability

Sociolinguists such as L, Geeslin and Y, Long (2014) claimed that “Sociolinguistic Variation” can be referred to as the possible options of linguistic forms that may be used by a speaker when transmitting a specific message in a particular concept. Usually speakers do not pay much attention when making such choices and selections.

According to Song (2012), variability occurs when a second language learner produces different versions of the same linguistic element. This latter in turn should normally be realized in one single manner in the target language. Labov (1972) also stated that variability is said to be systematic in which factors such as the context formality and the nature of linguistic context are functioning. (As stated in Johnson & Johnson, 2007)

On the other hand, Mitchell and Myles (2004: 237) defined variability as follow: “By variability, we refer to the fact that second language learners commonly produce different versions of particular constructions, more or less close to the target language form, within a short time span (even, perhaps, within succeeding utterances)”.

Generally speaking, interest in language variation focuses on differences that have some social significance in terms of group behavior rather than the personal mode of behavior, though socially meaningful aspects of individual speaker performance are of interest to those interested in language variation.

2.2.2.2. First Language Variability

Conversation is a universal human activity performed routinely in our daily living. When expressed, individual native speakers show considerable variation even when performing in their native language, however, according to Wardhaugh (2011), there must be limits for such a variation in the sense that whenever language is concerned, we, as speakers, cannot be completely free in producing whatever form of language we want, only to please our expressive desires.

In the view of Wardhaugh (2011), the best way to identify variation is by recognizing that language is a tool used by people to express, and not only an “abstract object of study”.

In fact, not only children show variation in their speech, but also adult native speakers do so. Their English seem to be so varied in many ways to the extent that one could argue that ‘Standard English’ can be used also between native speakers as a language that is adopted as a common language between native speakers of English who use different dialects. Wardhaugh (2011) mentioned two types of dialects that are related to language variability, namely: “regional dialects” and “social dialects”. He stated that the first one distinguishes people of a given region from those of the other regions, while the latter is related to one of many social groups which belong to one single region. In the same study, Wardhaugh stated that although many sociolinguists pay more attention to social variation over the regional one, but when studying the first one it will be necessary to shed the light on at least the background knowledge of the second.

In accordance to the issue of dialects, Meyerhoff (2015) made a distinction between the two notions: accents and dialect. She claimed that the first refers to the way speakers perform specific words, while the second refers to different characteristics of pronunciation, vocabulary, and the structure of sentences.

a. Types of L1 Variability

According to Labov (1972), there are two types of variation namely: "Interspeaker Variation", and "Intraspeaker Variation". The first one refers to the different notions of the same linguistic element, performed among different individual speakers. While the second refers to the different variants of the same linguistic element performed by the same speaker in different instants. In the same study, Labov mentioned two other types of variation namely: "synchronic" and "diachronic". The first one refers to variation caused in the actual moment, while the other is the variation caused overtime. Thus we can consider that "Synchronic Variation is very often the root of Diachronic Change." (As stated in Meyerhoff, 2015)

Another variant of language mentioned by Wardhaugh (2011) may seem a bit unusual. However it has a significant role in expressing ideas. So as well as using talk to communicate, one can also make use of silence to do so (the absence of talk). So silence is another way of talk. It is sometimes more communicative and more expressive than speech. It can be used in specific circumstances, such as: when expressing respect, when supporting someone's ideas, or even when showing disagreement and uncertainty.

Speech is used in different ways among different societies. For instance people of some societies prefer not to over-talk, but instead talking only when having something important to express. However in other societies, people talk only for the pleasure of talking without any specific intention (Wardhaugh, 2011).

b. Causes of L1 Variability

The main concern of sociolinguists was to identify the issues behind the phenomenon of variation. In a study conducted by Wardhaugh (2011), the main causes of variation were: identity, group membership, power, and socialization. These four issues are interrelated in the

sense that every individual possesses an identity, if not a set of identities. In addition, this identity is the result of one's socialization that he formed from his experiences in interaction with the outside world, in which he acts as an active member of a specific social group. In fact both groups and individual have identities. For instance, the group identity can be summed-up in the ways in which the members of a given social group show solidarity among each other.

To clarify the fourth issue which is power, Bourdieu (1991), (As stated in Wardhaugh, 2011) stressed on its considerable role in individuals' variability of speech. He claimed that some language varieties have more figurative power and more value given to it by some forces in society rather than other varieties. The most evident example is the Standard English which is considered as the formal variant of all English languages, and the language of power used by government.

Another major cause of variability mentioned by Wardhaugh, is related to whom you are speaking. Labov (1972b) tried to identify the way a person talks in different situations, and with different individuals. For example: when talking at home vs when talking outside, and when talking with a friend or a family member vs when talking to outsiders. (As stated in Wardhaugh, 2011)

When interacting with each other familiarly, native speakers make use of different existing possibilities of the same notion in relation to different causes and according to variant circumstances. For instance, they tend to use the local styles in some situations, however in some cases they prefer employing the Standard English especially when communicating with outsiders. They change their style to make it suitable for whom they talk to. In other words, they accommodate in a natural way to their interlocutors.

Accommodation is the modification of one's speech style in order to adapt to different situational conversations, and thus attend to the listener's conversational needs, by respecting

each other's role and the specific aim of the task. These previously-mentioned aspects can be modified and adjusted during the interaction process depending on the listener's actual competence. The speech style may also be changed depending on the interlocutors' way of talk.

Meyerhoff (2015: 24), putted four main causes or in other words motivations for variation of L1 use as follow:

- “(i) A desire to show how you fit in with some people and are different from others;
- (ii) A desire to do things that have value in the community (and associate yourself with that value);
- (iii) A desire not to do things that are looked down on in the community (and have others look down on you);
- (iv) A desire to work out how others are orienting themselves to the concerns in (i)–(iii).”

Additionally to the previously mentioned causes of variation, other reasons are to be cited such as geographical location, ethnic background, social class, and gender.

Freeman and McElhinny (1996) discussed the issue of sexism in language, and gender differentiated language. They considered gender differences as one of the significant causes of variability in speech. They claimed that the speech of a woman differs culturally from that of a man. Thus they stressed also on the dominance of man over woman. (As mentioned in Abbas, 2010)

2.2.2.3. Interlanguage Variability

Selinker (1971) came with the concept of interlanguage which is described by its systematicity and dynamicity during its developmental stages. As well as its variability

indifferent social contexts. In other words, both learners' linguistic and contextual varieties are part and parcel of his learning process. (Cevik, 2010).

On the other hand, in his article "Sources of Variability in Interlanguage", Ellis (1985), stated that: even when performing the same function, each learner's language holds other substitutional rules for such a process. Sometimes he uses one rule, while other times he uses its alternative, depending on the context and some other factors.

As claimed by Johnson and Johnson (2007), a number of explanations of L2 variability can be proposed by many researchers in the field mainly: learners possess a set of L2 grammars (one is that of the native language, the other belongs to the target one), each one is suitable for a specific contexts (Tarone, 1983); when acquiring a second language, learners pass through a developmental stage of variability (Ellis, 1985); variability results from using two different sorts of knowledge (knowledge of L1 and knowledge of L2), the first is acquired naturally in an unconscious way, while the other is learned in a more conscious and circumspect way (Krashen, 1981); variability is the result of the different ways by which capacities are processed in different types of tasks (Hulstijn & Hulstijn, 1984).

a. Types of Interlanguage Variability

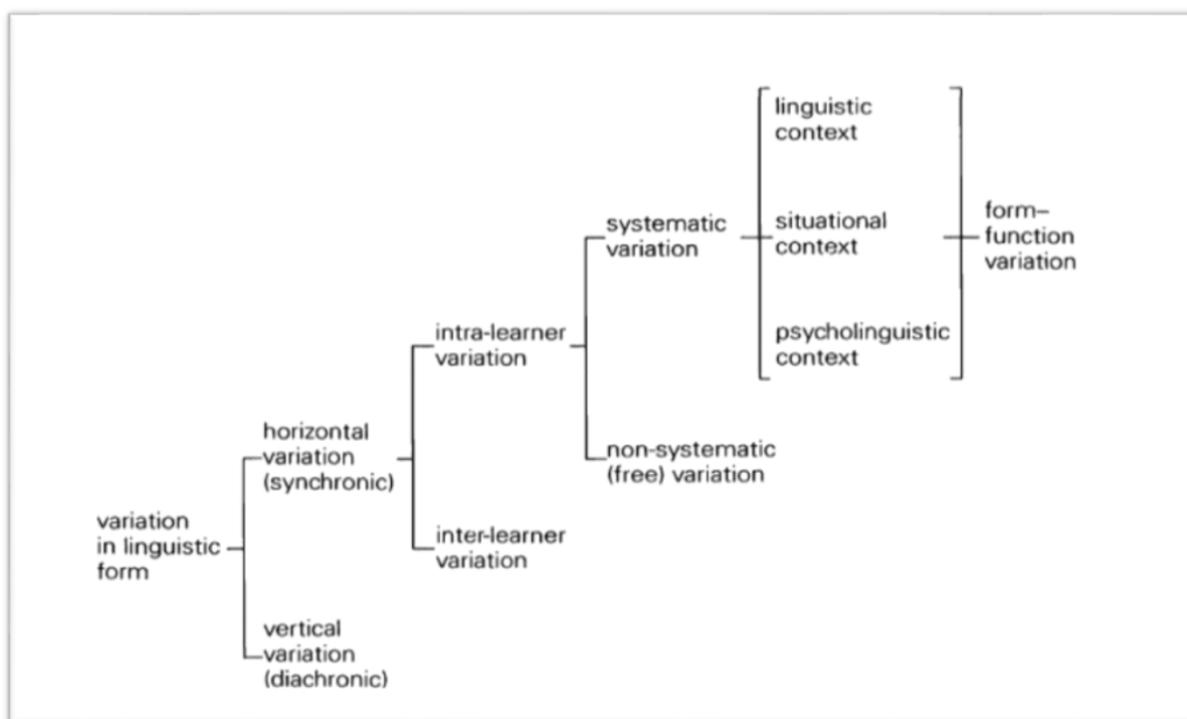
Thouesny (2011) clarified the issue of variation. He brought up a number of claims of researchers in the fields. For instance, Ellis (2008b) talked about a division of variation, namely "horizontal, and vertical variations". For example, Corder (1981) claims that the horizontal variation from one hand can be found whenever two or more different dialects are compared. While, the vertical one occurs when learners tend to shift from one linguistic form to the other. However, these terms may cause ambiguity, because each one may have two or more diverse meanings in the same scope. For instance, Ellis (1989) pointed out that vertical variation may refer to linguistic changes that occur overtime, he calls it also "diachronic variations".

Horizontal variation from the other hand unlike the vertical one was referred to as the linguistic changes that occur at a single point in time. It was labelled “synchronic variation”.

Following James's model (2007), Synchronic and Diachronic variations can be divided in turn into “inter-“and “intra-learner variations”. Inter-learner variation from one hand refers to differences and diversities which occur among learners in language use. Intra-learner variation from the other hand designates the linguistic variables that appear within the same individual learner. Another sub-division occurred from the Inter- and intra-learner variations. It consists of both systematic and free variations. The first consists of variation of learner's interlanguage that can be predicted and then explained in a full way because it has a rule system which follows. The latter according to Ellis (2008b), which is called also unsystematic variation, reflects “random linguistic alternatives unpredictable by rules”. However, there have been a huge debate among researchers about these types of interlanguage variation. Some of them disagreed about it. For instance, Preston (1996) claims that unsystematic variation does not exist, and is even considered as being a “chimera”. Labov (1971) in contradiction, supposed that systematic and unsystematic variations are two essential factors in language use. (As mentioned in Thouesny, 2011)

The Following figure represents the types of variability previously-cited, which are based on Ellis' (2008b) typology of variation. It may be investigated from a synchronic and/or diachronic point of view. (Thouesny, 2011)

Figure.1. A typology of variation (adapted from Ellis 2008b: 129)



b. Approaches and Models of IL Variability

Thouesny (2011) in his Thesis “Modeling Second Language Learners’ Interlanguage and its Variability”, proposed a caption for the main approaches and models for investigating variability in learners’ interlanguage based on previous research on the field. Yet, he stated that approaches of interlanguage variability are usually taken to be sub-divided by Ellis (1994b) into three main areas, mainly: “linguistic”, “psycholinguistic”, or “sociolinguistic” perspectives. Concerning the linguistic research on SLA, some researchers insist on the concept of variability as an essential feature of interlanguage, however others deny it. For instance, according to Romaine (2003), competence has the possibility to be considered as variable. She supported the idea of Ellis’ (1984) “variable competence model” which stresses on variability in learner’s interlanguage performance and consider it as being revealing a competence variable in itself. Opposed to this belief, Gregg (1990) refuses the perspectives which admit the variability of

learners' competence. He claims that SLA theories should not explore the aspect of variability. He claimed that "the variable competence model" of Ellis does not supply us with any specific explanation of the nature of learners' knowledge. But also as he asserted: "explicitly erases the line between linguistic knowledge and linguistic output". He, therefore, considered interlanguage competence as "a stable underlying structure" which is not likely to change, in other words invariable. Thus, variability was attributed to interlanguage performance rather than competence.

In the same study of Thouesny, he proposed Ellis's (1994b) view that the main concern of Psycholinguistic researchers to identify "the internal mechanisms" which cause variability in learners' performance. As Tarone (2000) stated: the aim is to explain "how an interlanguage grammar gets acquired over time". Thus, on the light of these interpretations, the main focus of the psycholinguistic studies will be then either on interlanguage "performance" or on interlanguage "competence". For example, Ellis (2005) investigated learners' interlanguage performance by means of accuracy on planned and unplanned tasks. While Maritxalar et al.'s (1997) model of second language learners' interlanguage investigates the structure of learners' knowledge, i.e. the interlanguage competence. By comparing an "ideal language grammatical structure" with "real learners' interlanguage performance". However, one of the limitations of this model is based on the idea that when comparing the interlanguage performance of the real learner to that of the ideal learner, we cannot get a clear vision about the real learner's knowledge. Because learners' performance may not represent truthfully the learner's knowledge. (Thouesny, 2011)

Sociolinguistic approaches also are essentially concerned with the study of language in use within social contexts. In fact they are more concerned with language use than interlanguage competence. For instance, Tarone (2000) pointed out that: sociolinguistic studies "demonstrate

the impact of social factors on interlanguage use at a single point in time and do not show that those social factors affect the acquisition of specific linguistic features of [interlanguage]”.(Thouesny, 2011)

In addition to the previously-mentioned perspectives of research in the field of SLA, others, namely “dynamic system theory” or “sociocultural theory”, are concerned with both learners’ cognitive capacities as well as the social factors that affect their performance. Thouesny tried to differentiate between these two approaches. He came with the idea of Lantolf (2007) that the “dynamic system theory” considers the social factors as resources from which the learner can benefit. Whereas the “sociocultural theory” considers it as “the source of development” .In addition to these claims, Yan and Fischer (2002) shed the light on the significant importance of variability in developing learners’ cognitive skills. Thus, variation was considered as an explicit aspect of dynamic processes. However, variations were researched in terms of the interlanguage performance, rather than interlanguage competence. Another approach to be discussed is the sociocultural theory. According to Thouesny, this theory does not differentiate between the two aspects competence and performance. It rather defines them accordingly as two inseparable linguistic aspects. Thus it sees competence as “having the necessary ability or knowledge to perform something successfully”. (As mentioned in Thouesny, 2011)

To sum up, Thouesny (2011) claimed that approaches of interlanguage variability show that the latter is considered only in terms of learners’ performance. The main reason behind is that eliciting learners’ knowledge of competence from their performance is seen to be a difficult task. Therefore, researchers in the field suppose that aspects that are correctly performed are those that learners know, while incorrect aspects results from learners’ unawareness with rules. As noted by Amaral and Meurers (2008), “usually taken for granted that linguistic errors are

caused solely by a lack of linguistic competence”, although not all incorrect forms are competence-dependent errors (Corder, 1967).

c. Factors Affecting IL Variability

Learners in the field of second language acquisition, as well as native speakers, tend to use different versions to refer to the same linguistic phenomenon in their performance. These varieties of language use occur accordingly with different situations and with various tasks. However, when dealing with interlanguage variation, one should give more interest and more awareness for the implied factors that lead to such an issue. (Chang, 1997)

Several causes of interlanguage variation have been identified and researched such as: “task type (Bygate, 1999), text form and function (Tarone & Parrish, 1988), time pressure (Hulstijn, 1989), task complexity (Robinson, 2001), planning (Yuan & Ellis, 2003), language style (Bell, 1984), and transfer of learning (James, 2007).” (As mentioned in Thouesny, 2011: 21).

In addition, other factors may influence English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' performance on tasks, among them are: linguistic contexts, interlocutor, task structure (structured or unstructured), modality of task (oral or written), planning condition (pre-planning or no-planning), and learner factors (such as gender, age... etc.). However other important and effective factors that cause interlanguage variation are still not widely-investigated, and thus under-researched. Familiarity of the topic of discourse is one such factor. Tarone (1988: 119) stated that: “the topic of communication... is one of the most under-researched areas in the study of interlanguage variation” and “the precise effects of topic upon variation have yet to be established”. (As stated in Chang, 1997)

- **Topic Familiarity**

According to Rahimpour and Hazar (2007: 204): “Topic familiarity concerns the relationship between the thematic content of the task and the individual learner’s world knowledge”. It has been studied as a variable affecting language learning.

In a study conducted by Sim (2013), he tried to evaluate the effect of topic familiarity on interlanguage production. He asserted that a number of studies in the field of second language acquisition were concerned with the evaluation of topic familiarity effect on learners’ comprehension, as well as their written and oral production. For instance, research in different areas, either comprehensive or productive, has shown that topic familiarity makes statistically significant contributions to effective performances. Yet, Pulido (2007) claimed that, learners’ familiarity with the topics of the reading tasks is a direct cause for a better comprehension of the texts under-discussion. In similar studies, Sadighi and Zare (2002); Othman and Vanathas (2004); and Chang and Read (2007) came with the conclusion that previous knowledge and familiarity with the task topic lead to a better effect on listening comprehension. (As stated in Salimi & Fatollahnejad, 2012).

Studies on learners writing skills such as those conducted by Chang (2006); Chesky and Hiebert (1987); Tedick (1988); and Winfield and Barnes-Felfeli (1982) show that familiarity with task topics can be a critical factor on learners’ performance in the writing tasks. (As mentioned in Sim, 2013)

By focusing on the oral production or the speaking skill, topic familiarity as a factor affecting learners’ interlanguage variability can effect both “fluency” and “accuracy” of the learners’ oral speech. From one hand, according to Hughes (2013), “fluency” is the ability to express oneself in a comprehensible, reasonable and accurate way without too much hesitation; otherwise the communication will break down because listeners will lose their interest.

On the other hand, "accuracy" as a feature of learners' speech can be defined as correctness of language form, or as defined by Ellis (2003), it is to what extent the task linguistic performance adapts to the standards of the target language. I.e. how well it is performed in accordance to the rule system of the target language.

For instance, in Rahimpour and Hazar's study (2007), the conclusions drawn show that familiarity with the task topic had a positive effect on the accuracy and fluency of learners' oral performance. Chang (2002) as well, discovered that topic familiarity affects positively in promoting fluency, although she found no significant effect on accuracy in oral performance.

Other studies done by Sim (2013), Robinson (2001b), and Ellis (2003) show that topic familiarity affects learners' oral performance in the sense that it promotes oral fluency.

Lange (2000) also, concluded that there is no considerable influence of topic familiarity in improving learners' accuracy.

Thus, based on the above mentioned studies, the effects of topic familiarity or prior knowledge on L2 learners' comprehension and production are obvious. However, as stated by Rahimpour and Hazar (2007), because of the significant importance of topic familiarity, it should be given more concern as being an essential feature of tasks in syllabus design and materials development.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic perspectives on interlanguage studies with specific reference to two core and interrelated phenomena in interlanguage, namely: systematicity and variability. The different types, models, as well as the factors which cause such variability in IL were then presented with special emphasis on the sociolinguistic variables that affect IL variability, an important element of which is topic familiarity.

Chapter Three

The Effect of Topic Familiarity on Synchronic and Diachronic Variability in Learners' Oral Output

Introduction

After reviewing the literature related to the study of the effects of topic familiarity on variability in learners' output, this chapter presents both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of subjects' discussions of a sequence of three topics (family, traditional culture, and poststructuralism). Following this sequence, the participants were supposed to move from a familiar, to a less familiar, and finally to an unfamiliar topic respectively.

The aim of this study is twofold:

1. It seeks to investigate the extent to which synchronic (at one point in time) variability in learners' levels of accuracy and fluency are affected by the contextual factor of topic familiarity.
2. It aims at determining the extent to which learners' levels of accuracy and fluency in the discussion of the same tasks display increasing levels as these students advance across the curriculum.

3.1. The Sample

An oral test requiring the discussion of a sequence of three topics in the order of expected decrease in both the levels of accuracy and fluency was administered to a cross-sectional sample of eighteen students. The sample consists of three sub-categories and each sub-category consisted of six students representing first, second, and third year license students of English at the department of Letters and English in the University of Mohammed Essedik Benyahia, Jijel.

The cross-sectional design of the sample was aimed at stimulating the longitudinal development of the subjects with regard to the features under study, considering that the time limits of a master dissertation cannot allow us to conduct a longitudinal study. The Eighteen LMD students of English (13 females and 5 males) have been randomly selected from each level on the basis of each group's names lists. The participants' ages ranged between 19 and 23.

3.2. Methodology and Means of Research

An oral test comprising a sequence of three tasks was designed. These three tasks require each student to discuss three different topics with three different levels of familiarity (familiar, less familiar, and unfamiliar) respectively. It should be noted that the degree of familiarity of the topics was determined on the basis of a written list of topics presented to a randomly selected sample of sixty students at different levels of the curriculum who were asked to classify fifty different topics to three categories depending on their degree of familiarity. As a result, three topics (family, traditional culture, and post structuralism) have been selected to represent familiar, less familiar, and unfamiliar categories respectively. After that, the oral test was administered to a cross-sectional sample of 18 students comprising six students from each level of the license curriculum picked-up randomly from the sixty students who participated in the topics classification task. It should be noted that each student was asked to discuss the sequence of the three topics in question in the order of expected decrease in fluency and accuracy. Fluency, on one hand, was operationally defined in terms of pauses and hesitations, repetitions and corrections, length of talk, and subject specific vocabulary. Accuracy, on the other hand, was operationalized in terms of grammatical errors (syntax, morphology), and pronunciation errors (word pronunciation) compared to the number of obligatory contexts for the production of these features.

In the very familiar task students were required to talk about the broad meaning of family, as well as their personal relationships and experiences with their families.

During the less familiar task, every individual participant was supposed to talk about the notion of traditional culture, with a specific reference to the aspects of the Algerian traditions, as well as its importance in their lives.

Post-structuralism was the subject of the unfamiliar task. Participants were required to give any definition or information about the topic. All the participants were totally unfamiliar with this notion, thus they were given a short definition for both "structuralism" and "post-structuralism" to clarify the idea. Then, based on the definitions, students were asked about the advantages and importance of such movement.

The allotted time for each student was 9 minutes, i.e. 3 minutes per topic. When the participants faced some difficulty in expressing themselves, they were given some hints in the form of questions about the topics in order to assist them to resume the talk. The students' oral performance has been audio recorded, then, transcribed. After that, the data were coded, scored and analyzed with regard to the research question which the study set out to address. 'Fluency' measurement has been operationalized with regard of the average of pauses and hesitations, the percentage of repetitions and corrections, length of talk, and subject specific vocabulary. 'Accuracy' measurement, on the other hand, was established on the basis of errors' classification into: grammar errors (syntax, morphology), and pronunciation errors (word pronunciation) compared to the number of obligatory contexts for the occurrence of each feature. In terms of syntax, the performance was analyzed with regard of the percentage of complex clauses and disorganized sentences in the total number of clauses for each task. Morphology as well was measured by calculating the percentage of incorrect word forms and

grammar conjugations in the total number of clauses for each task. Word pronunciation, from the other hand, was scored in terms of the percentage of mispronounced words in the total number of clauses in each task response.

3.3. Analysis and Interpretation of Results

The analyses of the oral tasks is presented in the form of two major sections: the first section deals with “fluency” and the second one concerns “accuracy”.

3.3.1. Fluency

3.3.1.1. Pauses and Hesitations

TNC: Total Number of Clauses

TNHP: Total Number of Hesitations and Pauses

AHPTNC: Average of Hesitations and Pauses in the Total Number of Clauses

Less. F: Less Familiar

Table 1

Average of Hesitations and Pauses of 1st Year Students across the Three Topics

Level	Topics	TNC	TNHP	AHPTNC
	Familiar	77	62	0.80
1st Year	Less Familiar	68	96	1.41
	Unfamiliar	28	47	1.67

The table above, representing the average of hesitations and pauses of 1st year students among the three tasks, reveals that 0.80 of the hesitations and pauses generated out of the

familiar task topic (family life), and 1.41 of the less familiar topic (traditional culture), followed by an average of 1.67 in the unfamiliar task (post-structuralism). A comparison of these averages among the three tasks that are presented in Table 1 show that 1st year students' average of hesitations and pauses increases once the familiarity of the topic decreases. Thus, the more students are familiar with the topic, the less they hesitate. So, as much as they know the topic, they produce a more fluent discourse.

The aspects of hesitations and pauses of 1st year students results in items such as:

Familiar: "Brothers, sisters, umm parents, it's the relation between these people."

Less. F: "Traditional culture, umm, well it's just traditional, let's say umm culture."

Unfamiliar: "I didn't understand (pause), umm, I have no idea (pause)."

Table 2

Average of Hesitations and Pauses of 2nd Year Students across the Three Topics

Level	Topics	TNC	TNHP	AHPTNC
	Familiar	55	56	1.01
2nd Year	Less Familiar	47	97	2.06
	Unfamiliar	21	50	2.38

The results in table 3.2 demonstrate that 2nd year students' average of hesitations and pauses was higher in the unfamiliar task performances compared with the other tasks, with an amount of 2.38. Followed by the less familiar task with a rate of 2.06, than the familiar task which reveals the lowest average of hesitations and pauses by 1.01. Consequently, 2nd year students

from one hand were more fluent in the familiar task in the sense that they hesitated less. From the other hand the unfamiliar task's performance was the less fluent.

The aspects of hesitations and pauses of **2nd year** students results in items such as:

Familiar: "And eh, also it's reminds me of my parents, my sisters and brothers."

Less. F: "Traditional culture maybe umm, (pause) like in our Islamic culture."

Unfamiliar: "Umm, maybe to generate, umm (pause). To know eh, to know the source maybe."

Table 3

Average of Hesitations and Pauses of 3rd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNHP	AHPTNC
	Familiar	57	90	1.57
3rd Year	Less Familiar	51	112	2.39
	Unfamiliar	34	86	2.52

The data presented in table 3 as well state the average of hesitations and pauses of 3rd year students in the three variant tasks, namely familiar concerning family life, less familiar concerning traditional culture, and unfamiliar concerning post-structuralism. So the rates are by order from the lower to the higher as follow: an average of 1.75 hesitations and pauses for the familiar task, 2.39 for the less familiar, then 2.52 belongs to the unfamiliar task performance. Thus, the results tell that 3rd year students like 1st and 2nd years performed the lowest average of hesitations and pauses during the execution of the familiar task, unlike the unfamiliar task's performance that was the less fluent.

The use of hesitations and pauses results in items such as:

Familiar: “Yeah, I do. Eh for example like how my, how my father is patient and how my mother is hard working and so kind.”

Less. F: “Eh, (pause), for example it's, it's not something which is really traditional.”

Unfamiliar: “Post-structuralism, eh, (pause), really eh (pause), I have no idea.”

Table 4

Average of Hesitations and Pauses of the Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNHP	AHPTNC
	1 st Year	77	62	0.80
Familiar	2 nd Year	55	56	1.01
	3 rd Year	57	90	1.57

Concerning the familiar task performance which is about family life, in an unexpected way, the results presented in table 4 show a descending order of the three levels, in the sense that the more students are high in level the less they are fluent. 1st year students show the lowest average of hesitations and pauses in their performance of the familiar task, with a value of 0.80, thus they were more fluent compared with the two other levels. Followed by 2nd year students who executed an average of 1.01 hesitations and pauses. Pursued by 3rd year students who were the less fluent with a rate of 1.57. The hesitations and pauses concerning the **familiar task** among the three levels are represented in items such as:

1st Year: “Umm, well I don't think that friends are good for me.”

2nd Year: “Eh, it's the most thing I like (pause).”

3rd Year: “Yes I am, (pause) eh, just because, eh, it doesn't bother me that I'm living in eh.”

Table 5

Average of Hesitations and Pauses of the Less. F Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNHP	AHPTNC
	1 st Year	68	96	1.41
Less. F	2 nd Year	47	97	2.06
	3 rd Year	51	112	2.39

This table above, showing the Average of hesitations and pauses of the less familiar task which is about traditional culture among the three variant levels. It displays that 1.41 of the hesitations and pauses were performed by 1st year students, and an amount of 2.06 for 2nd year students, followed by an average of 2.39 by 3rd year students. In this case, an increase in the average of hesitations and pauses is observed in the less familiar task's performance in this progressive order: 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year. Therefore, in a surprising way, 3rd year students were the less fluent, followed by 2nd year students who are located in the middle of the series, and 1st year students who maintain the fore of the ranking with the lowest average of hesitations and pauses.

Ex: Progression of hesitations and pauses of the **less familiar** task among the three levels

-**1st year:** "You cannot set a goal, eh, for your future without knowing where do you come from, or where are you know."

-**2nd year:** "Culture is eh, I know is the mother of the country, without it eh the country would disappear (pause)."

-3rd year: “Eh, I said is, eh, maybe is relating to the clothes that we are wearing, eh, the way of talking, the, eh, the, err, how we act with each other.”

Table 6

Average of Hesitations and Pauses of the Unfamiliar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNHP	AHPTNC
	1st Year	28	47	1.67
Unfamiliar	2nd Year	21	50	2.38
	3rd Year	34	86	2.52

Table 6 demonstrates the averages of hesitations and pauses of the unfamiliar task (post-structuralism) between the three variant Levels (1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year). Unexpectedly, the averages of the students' performance in each one of the three tasks, show that 1st year students were the less hesitators compared with 2nd and 3rd year students, with an average of 1.67, and thus the more fluent. Followed by 2nd year students with a rate of 2.38, while 3rd year students who are supposed to be higher in level committed the higher averages of hesitations and pauses during all the three different tasks (2.52), compared with the two other levels. Thus they were the less fluent.

Ex: Comparison of the average of hesitations and pauses in the **unfamiliar** task of the three levels:

-1st year: “Umm, well no body is like us, like humans, you're special and this makes us special, language.”

-2nd year: “Eh, language is very important to study (pause), eh, we communicate with it.”

-3rd year: “Post structuralism, eh, (pause) really, eh, (pause) I have no idea.”

3.3.1.2. Repetitions and Corrections

TNC: Total Number of Clauses

TNRC: Total Number of Repetitions and Corrections

PRCTNC: Percentage of Repetitions and Corrections in the Total Number of Clauses

Less. F: Less Familiar

Table 7

Percentage of Repetitions and Corrections of 1st Year Students across the Three Topics

Level	Topics	TNC	TNRC	PRCTNC %
	Familiar	77	20	25.97
1st Year	Less Familiar	68	33	48.52
	Unfamiliar	28	16	57.14

Table 7 presents the Percentage of 1st year students' repetitions and corrections among the three task topics. It shows that 1st year participants tend to repeat and correct their utterances in the unfamiliar task (post-structuralism) more than the other two tasks with a percentage of 57.14 %. Followed by the less familiar topic (traditional culture) with a rate 48.52 %, subsequently the familiar task (family life) with a percentage of 25.97 % repetitions and corrections in the total number of performed clauses. So, first year students followed a pretty logical order, since they were more fluent in the familiar task. In the sense that the less repetitions and corrections are committed, the more fluent students will be. From another insight, the more students are familiar with the topic, the more they utter fluently.

The use of repetitions and corrections by 1st year students among the three tasks, results in examples such as:

Familiar: "I am, I always say that I am an open book."

Less. F: "Well, it is eh, let's say eh it is related to eh."

Unfamiliar: "Language for me, to learn a language, it's eh necessary to learn a language because, eh, also to develop it."

Table 8

Percentage of Repetitions and Corrections of 2nd Year Students across the Three Topics

Level	Topics	TNC	TNRC	PRCTNC %
	Familiar	55	11	20
2nd Year	Less Familiar	47	21	44.68
	Unfamiliar	21	6	28.57

The above table 8 unlike table 7, shows unexpected percentages of repetitions and corrections concerning the unfamiliar task. Although 2nd year students execute more repetitions and corrections in their unfamiliar task performances (28.57%) than the familiar one (20%), but this rate was lower than that of the less familiar task (44.68%). So we estimate that 2nd year students were less fluent in the less familiar task than the unfamiliar one.

Ex: The use of repetitions and corrections by 2nd year students among the three tasks

Familiar: "When it comes about, eh, about you know the house things..."

Less. F: "They have every, eh, every, eh, (pause) every part in Algeria have special clothes."

Unfamiliar: “To know, eh, to know the source maybe, or...”

Table 9

Percentage of Repetitions and Corrections of 3rd Year Students across the Three Topics

Level	Topics	TNC	TNRC	PRCTNC %
	Familiar	57	17	29.82
3rd Year	Less Familiar	51	26	50.98
	Unfamiliar	34	13	38.23

Symmetrically the same results of table 8 are reflected in table 9. So, similar to 2nd year students, 3rd year students as well show more fluency in their performance of the familiar task (family life), with a low percentage of repetitions and corrections estimated by 29.82%. Then this rate increases in the unfamiliar task to reach 38.23%, thereafter it rises once again in the less familiar task to attain the highest value of repetitions and corrections of third year students, which is 50.98%.

Thus, 3rd year students' utterances were more fluent in the unfamiliar task than the less familiar one.

Ex:

Familiar: “It's not so big, eh, you mean the members, six, eh, seven.”

Less. F: “In wedding days like, eh, the, eh, the woman, the married woman...”

Unfamiliar: “In order to get, eh, to know, eh, how, eh, how...”

Table 10

Percentage of Repetitions and Corrections of the Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNRC	PRCTNC %
	1st Year	77	20	25.97
Familiar	2nd Year	55	11	20
	3rd Year	57	17	29.82

The data presented in tables 10 state the percentage of repetitions and corrections of the familiar task (family life), that are constructed by 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students. According to it, 3rd year students show less fluency in their performance in the sense that they tend to repeat and correct their utterances more than 1st and 2nd year students do, represented in a value of 29.82%. Followed by 1st year students who are situated in the middle of the class by an average of 25.97% repetitions and corrections in the familiar task. While surprisingly, 2nd year students committed the less amount of repetitions and corrections represented by a rate of 20%, so they were the more fluent in the familiar task.

Ex: Comparison between the three levels in terms of repetitions and corrections performed in the familiar task.

1st Year: “Well a little bit of both, yeah both, I think both.”

2nd Year: “Big, big family. I have five sisters, father, mother, and grandmother.”

3rd Year: “... Because I prefer to live, umm (pause), I prefer to live poor rather than rich. Eh, poor and happy rather than rich and sad.”

Table 11

Percentage of Repetitions and Corrections of the Less. Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNRC	PRCTNC%
	1st Year	68	33	48.52
Less. F	2nd Year	47	21	44.68
	3rd Year	51	26	50.98

The levels of repetitions and corrections for the less familiar topic (traditional culture) are somehow unexpected. This is reflected in the numbers presented in table 11. So, 48.52% was the percentage of repetitions and corrections which occur in 1st year students' speech in the less familiar topic. This percentage decreases with 2nd year students who show a higher tendency to avoid using repetitions and corrections compared with the two other levels, this was reflected in the percentage of 44.68%. Thus, they were the more fluent. However, 3rd year students who are supposed to be the most proficient since they are higher in level, were the less fluent, with a percentage of 50.96% repetitions and corrections in the total number of performed utterances.

Ex: Comparison between the three levels in terms of repetitions and corrections performed in the less familiar task.

1st Year: "Now we follow very, we are very, eh, interesting about European, we follow the European style..."

2nd Year: "Actually I'm not impressed by it that much. Because, eh, their culture is, eh, doesn't go with our culture..."

3rd Year: “Culture is important in our life because, eh, because when one, eh (pause) umm because the person is known by his culture.”

Table 12

Percentage of Repetitions and Corrections of the Unfamiliar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNRC	PRCTNC%
	1st Year	28	16	57.14
Unfamiliar	2nd Year	21	6	28.57
	3rd Year	34	13	38.23

From the results shown in the above table, we conclude that the lowest percentage of repetitions and corrections in the unfamiliar task (post-structuralism) belongs to 2nd year students (28.57%). What can be inferred from this rate is that 2nd year students were the most fluent in this task. Followed by 3rd year students with a percentage of 38.23% repetitions and corrections in the total number of performed utterances. However, there have been an extreme use of repetitions and corrections by 1st year students measured by 57.14%, thus they were the less fluent in this task. This can apparently be reflected in the following example of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students' performance of the unfamiliar task:

1st Year: “Language for me, to learn a language, it's, eh, necessary to learn a language because, eh, also to develop it...”

2nd Year: “To know maybe, umm, to know more about it...”

3rd Year: “In order to get, eh, to know, eh, how, eh, how we produce our language.”

3.3.1.3. The Total Length of Utterances between Complete Pauses

The length of utterances is measured by seconds, and reflects the duration of students' speech before a complete pause (Before the need of assistance by questions).

TTT: Total Time of Task.

TLTBCP: Total length of Talk between complete pauses.

PTLTTT: Percentage of Talk Length in the Total Time of Task.

S: Seconds

Table 13

Percentage of Talk Length in the Total Time of Task of 1st Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TTT(s)	TLTBCP(s)	PTLTTT%
	Familiar	1035	890	85.99
1st Year	Less Familiar	960	750	78.12
	Unfamiliar	770	440	57.14

Table 13 illustrates the percentage of talk length in the total time of each task of 1st year students, measured by seconds. It shows a logical relation between the percentage of talk length and the familiarity of the task topic. 1st year students were more talkative in the familiar task reflected in 85.99% of talk time in the total time of the familiar task. Followed by the less familiar task (78.12%). However the length of their unfamiliar task's utterances was the lowest compared with the two other tasks, with a total amount of 57.14% of the total time. Thus, the more students are familiar with the topic, the more they show fluency in their speech.

Table 14

Percentage of Talk Length in the Total Time of Task of 2nd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TTT(s)	TLTBCP(s)	PTLTTT%
	Familiar	1035	825	79.71
2nd Year	Less Familiar	1000	750	75
	Unfamiliar	525	275	52.38

Parallel to table 13, table 14 as well shows a high performance of 2nd year students in the familiar task with a percentage of talk measured by 79.71% of the total time of talk. Then the less familiar task comes next with 75% as an amount of talk. And as expected, 2nd year students were less talkative in the unfamiliar task reflected in the number of 52.38%, as it is demonstrated in the table above. Therefore as much as 2nd year students' familiarity with the topic increases, as much as their fluency increases too.

Table 15

Percentage of Talk Length in the Total Time of Task of 3rd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TTT(s)	TLTBCP(s)	PTLTTT%
	Familiar	990	795	80.30
3rd Year	Less Familiar	780	605	77.56
	Unfamiliar	750	410	54.66

Third year students as first and second year students were more fluent in the familiar task response. As the numbers in table 15 reflect the Percentage of 3rd year students' length of talk

in the three variant tasks (familiar, less familiar, unfamiliar). As it can be noticed they were more talkative in the familiar task (80.30%), followed by the less familiar task (77.56%), after that the unfamiliar task with the lowest percentage (54.66%). So as much as they are familiar with the topic, they produce more lengthy utterances.

Table 16

Percentage of Talk Length in the Total Time of the Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TTT(s)	TLTBCP(s)	PLTTT %
	1st Year	1035	890	85.99
Familiar	2nd Year	1035	825	79.71
	3rd Year	990	795	80.30

Table 16 shows the percentage of talk of the familiar task concerning the three levels (1st, 2nd, 3rd years). As it can be noticed, third year students seem to be the more talkative in the familiar task by a percentage of 80.30% compared with second year students who show an amount of 79.71%. This seems logical since they are higher in level than them. However surprisingly, first year students who are supposed to be lower in level than 2nd and 3rd year students, show the highest percentage of fluency, reflected in 85.99% of talk length.

Table 17

Percentage of Talk Length in the Total Time of the Less Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TTT(s)	TLTBCP(s)	PTLTTT%
	1st Year	960	750	78.12
Less. F	2nd Year	1000	750	75
	3rd Year	780	605	77.56

According to the results exposed in the above table, the order of the percentage of talk length in the less familiar topic (traditional culture) is exactly the same as displayed in the previous table of the familiar topic among the three levels. It shows that 1st year students are the most fluent in talk length (78.12%), then 3rd year students (77.56%), followed by 2nd year students who were the less talkative and thus the less fluent (75%).

Table 18

Percentage of Talk Length in the Total Time of the Unfamiliar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TTT(s)	TLTBCP(s)	PTLTTT %
	1st Year	770	440	57.14
Unfamiliar	2nd Year	525	275	52.38
	3rd Year	750	410	54.66

Table 18 follows the same flow of tables 16 and 17. The data presented show that first year participants were more fluent in the unfamiliar task response, in the sense that their utterances were lengthier, with a value of 57.14%. Although the percentages were convergent, but third

year participants' utterances were more extended with an amount of 54.66%, compared with those of second year students (52.38%) who seem to produce shorter utterances.

3.3.1.4. Subject Specific Vocabulary

TNSSV: Total Number of Subject-Specific Vocabulary.

AUV: Average of Used Vocabulary.

PUV: Percentage of Used Vocabulary.

Table 19

Percentage of Used Vocabulary in the Total Number of Subject-Specific Vocabulary of 1st Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNSSV	AUV	PUV %
	Familiar	20	7.83	39.15
1st Year	Less Familiar	20	4.16	20.8
	Unfamiliar	20	1.5	7.5

Subject-specific vocabulary usage above shows a small number of used vocabulary by first year students in the three tasks. As far as the percentage of vocabulary usage is concerned, table 19 indicates remarkable differences between the three topics: 39.15% regarding the familiar topic, 20.8% concerning the less familiar topic, and 7.5% for the unfamiliar one. As we can notice from these numbers, first year students' subject-specific vocabulary usage was high in the familiar task, followed by the less familiar, then the unfamiliar one with the lowest amount of vocabulary usage. Thus, with the increasing of topic familiarity, the usage of subject-specific words increases too.

Table 20

Percentage of Used Vocabulary in the Total Number of Subject-Specific Vocabulary of 2nd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNSSV	AUV	PUV%
	Familiar	20	6.33	31.65
2nd Year	Less Familiar	20	3.66	18.3
	Unfamiliar	20	1	5

Statistics in the table above show that second year students employ a low percentage of topic-specific vocabulary in the three tasks (familiar, less familiar, unfamiliar). It establishes that 31.65% regarding the familiar topic, and 18.3% in the less familiar one, as well as 5% in the unfamiliar task. This percentage of topic-specific vocabulary use indicates that 2nd year students like 1st year were more fluent in the familiar topic since they produced the highest number of topic-specific vocabulary. However they show low fluency in the unfamiliar task.

Table 21

Percentage of Used Vocabulary in the Total Number of Subject-Specific Vocabulary of 3rd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNSSV	AUV	PUV%
	Familiar	20	7.83	39.15
3rd Year	Less Familiar	20	4.16	20.8
	Unfamiliar	20	1.83	9.15

From the results shown in table 21, as far as 3rd year students are concerned, 39.15% of subject-specific vocabulary use belongs to the familiar topic (family life). In the less familiar topic (traditional culture), the percentage was 20.8%, moreover, 9.15% of subject-specific vocabulary belongs to the unfamiliar topic (post-structuralism). From the previously-mentioned statistics, third year students' results show, from one hand, the highest percentage of topic-specific vocabulary use in the familiar task, and from the other hand, the lowest amount was in the unfamiliar task. These rates matches those of 1st and 2nd year students, it demonstrates that in terms of subject-specific vocabulary use, students' fluency rises with the rising of topic familiarity.

Table 22

Percentage of Used Vocabulary in the Total Number of Subject-Specific Vocabulary of the Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNSSV	AUV	PUV%
	1st Year	20	7.83	39.15
Familiar	2nd Year	20	6.33	31.65
	3rd Year	20	7.83	39.15

Regarding the results obtained from table 22 above, in the familiar topic, First and third year students show the highest percentage of topic-specific vocabulary use, with an amount of 39.15% against 31.65% produced by second year students. Thus 1st and 3rd year students were the most fluent compared with 2nd year students. Subject-specific vocabulary of the familiar topic (family life) results in terms such as: "brother, mother, share, members, blood link, unity, society... etc."

Table 23

Percentage of Used Vocabulary in the Total Number of Subject-Specific Vocabulary of the Less Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNSSV	AUV	PUV%
	1st Year	20	4.16	20.8
Less. F	2nd Year	20	3.66	18.3
	3rd Year	20	4.16	20.8

The table above exhibits the percentage of topic-specific vocabulary use in the less familiar topic among the three levels. Accordingly, the same order of the familiar topic is demonstrated in this table of the less familiar topic. 20.8% of the total number of subject-specific vocabulary was produced by both 1st and 3rd year students, inferring that they were the most fluent compared with 2nd year students who used only 18.3% of the total number of subject-specific vocabulary of the less familiar topic. Subject-specific vocabulary of the less familiar topic (traditional culture) results in terms such as: “ancient, beliefs, customs... etc.”

Table 24

Percentage of Used Vocabulary in the Total Number of Subject-Specific Vocabulary of the Unfamiliar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNSSV	AUV	PUV %
	1st Year	20	1.5	7.5
Unfamiliar	2nd Year	20	1	5
	3rd Year	20	1.83	9.15

Table 24 above displays the results of topic-specific vocabulary use of the unfamiliar task (post-structuralism) among the three levels (1st, 2nd, 3rd year). The results show that about 9.15% of the vocabulary was articulated by third year students, and 7.5% by first year students. However, only 5% of the total number of topic-specific vocabulary of the unfamiliar task was produced by second year students. As explained by these numbers, third year students were the most fluent, with the highest percentage of topic-specific vocabulary usage. Followed by first year students, however, unexpectedly, second year students were the less fluent compared with first year students. Subject-specific vocabulary of the unfamiliar topic (post-structuralism) results in terms such as: “language, movement, literature, approach, philosophy, theory, structure... etc.”

3.3.2. Accuracy

3.3.2.1. Grammatical Errors

In order to measure the language accuracy in terms of Grammar, we need a syntactical and a morphological study of each language structure of each individual student. In the syntactical measurement, the focus was on studying the Percentage of disorganized sentences and complex

sentences. While in the morphological measurement the focus was on all the morphological errors committed by students.

TNC: Total Number of Clauses

TNDS: Total Number of Disorganized Sentences

PTNDS: Percentage of Total Number of Disorganized Sentences

TNCS: Total Number of Complex Sentences

PTNCS: Percentage of Total Number of Complex Sentences

TNME: Total Number of Morphological Errors

PTNME: Percentage of Total Number of Morphological Errors

Less. F: Less Familiar

Table 25

Percentages of Disorganized Sentences of 1st Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNDS	PTNDS%
	Familiar	77	21	27.27
1st Year	Less Familiar	68	25	36.76
	Unfamiliar	28	6	21.42

The results of the syntactical measurements recorded in the table 25 show that 1st year students have the lowest percentage 21.42% of using disorganized sentences in the unfamiliar

task, followed by 27.27% in the familiar one. While in the less familiar task the percentage was 36.76% of disorganized sentences, which is the highest compared with the other percentages. As a result, students were very accurate in the unfamiliar task since they use more correct structured sentences. And totally not accurate in the less familiar task because they tend to use a lot of disorganized sentences.

The use of disorganized sentences results in items such as:

- _ Who is really my friend that I can.
- _ People do think that, well maybe if we just imitate them.
- _ It's necessary to learn a language because, also to develop it by.

Table 26

Percentages of Disorganized Sentences of 2nd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNDS	PTNDS%
	Familiar	55	11	20
2st Year	Less Familiar	47	17	36.17
	Unfamiliar	21	5	23.80

The results of the syntactical measurement recorded in the table 26, demonstrate that 2nd year students have a convergent percentage of disorganized sentences in the familiar task 20% and 23.80% in the unfamiliar one. While it is the highest in the less familiar task compared with the others. It stretches to the value of 36.17%. As a result, students were totally accurate in both the familiar and the unfamiliar tasks in the sense that they use more correct structured sentences.

And they are not accurate in the less familiar task because they use lot of disorganized sentences.

The use of disorganized sentences results in items such as:

- _ It means a lot for us and a lot for our parents exactly for our parents.
- _ My relation between people, eh, love shared between them.
- _ You know the house things or house like marriage parties, they ask me for help.

Table 27

Percentages of Disorganized Sentences of 3rd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNDS	PTNDS%
	Familiar	57	17	29.82
3rd Year	Less Familiar	51	15	29.41
	Unfamiliar	34	7	20.58

The table above exhibits that the percentages of the disorganized sentences of 3rd year students during the familiar task is 29.82% and during the less familiar task 29.41% are very close. While in the unfamiliar task they produce less disorganized sentences, with an amount of 20.58% disorganized sentences in the total number of clauses. That is to say, 3rd year students tend to be more accurate during the unfamiliar task than both the familiar and less familiar tasks. 3rd year students produce disorganized sentences such as:

- _ I have three brothers and my mother and my father.
- _ The western countries are for example most dominant.

– So grammar rules and so and so forth.

Table 28

Percentages of Disorganized Sentences of the Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Level	TNC	TNDS	PTNDS%
	1st Year	77	21	27.27
Familiar	2nd Year	55	11	20
	3rd Year	57	17	29.82

Table 28 exhibiting the percentages of disorganized sentences used by students of the three different levels during the familiar task. The data tell that second year students use the lowest number of disorganized sentences in a value of 20%, followed by first year students with 27.27%, then third year students with 29.82% of disorganized sentences. That is to say, second year students are more accurate than first and third year students in terms of using correct structures of sentences whenever the topic is familiar.

Table 29

Percentages of Disorganized Sentences of the Less Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNDS	PTNDS%
	1st Year	68	25	36.76
Less. F.	2nd Year	47	17	36.17
	3rd Year	51	15	29.21

According to the results demonstrated above, it can be seen that first year students produce the highest percentage of disorganized sentences in a value 36.76%, followed by second year students with a close amount (36.17%). However, third year students use less disorganized utterances than the other two levels in a value of 29.21%. As a result, third year students are very accurate when a topic is less familiar while first year students were the less accurate in the less familiar topic.

Table 30

Percentages of Disorganized Sentences of the Unfamiliar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNDS	PTNDS%
	1st Year	28	6	21.42
Unfamiliar	2nd Year	21	5	23.80
	3rd Year	34	7	20.58

As it is apparent from the results in the above table, the percentage of third year students is 20.58% in using disorganized sentences in a the unfamiliar task, it represents the lowest rate among the three levels. Followed by first year students' percentage (21.42%), then second year students with the highest value of disorganized sentences, represented in the percentage of 23.80%. Consequently, third year students were more accurate during the unfamiliar task comparably with the other levels, and first year ones are more accurate than second year students, however, second year students' performance was the less accurate with the highest percentage of disorganized utterances. So these results indicate a similarity between this case

and the one we have dealt with in the previous task with regards of third year students' percentages.

Table 31

Percentages of Complex Sentences of 1st Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNCS	PTNCS%
	Familiar	77	57	74.02
1st Year	Less Familiar	68	45	66.17
	Unfamiliar	28	22	78.57

According to the results recorded in table 31, first year students tend to produce a considerable amount of complex sentences in all the three topics, but still there is a difference of producing them from one topic to another. First year students produce less complex sentences when dealing with a less familiar topic than with the other topics. Complex sentences reach the percentage of 66.17% during the less familiar topic, 74.02% during the familiar topic, and 78.57% during the unfamiliar one. That is to say that first year students were very accurate in the unfamiliar topic in which they used the highest amount of complex sentences.

First year students used a lot of complex sentences such as:

- _ It's good to know about other people's culture but you should not imitate.
- _ Well I have no comment on them because it's the first time I hear the word.
- _ Among those precious moments, when we are around the dinner table with mom and dad.

Table 32

Percentages of Complex Sentences of 2nd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNCS	PTNCS%
2st Year	Familiar	55	38	69.09
	Less Familiar	47	30	63.82
	Unfamiliar	21	15	71.42

From the results obtained in table 32 above, we can notice that second year students tend to use less complex sentences when dealing with a less familiar topic than with the other two topics, with a percentage of 63.82% of complex sentences' use. Complex sentences reach the percentage of 69.09% during the familiar topic, which is somehow high compared with the rate of the less familiar task. However, surprisingly the numbers show that 2nd year students were more accurate in the unfamiliar task with the highest percentage of complex sentences' use (71.42%).

Second year students used a lot of complex sentences such as:

- _ My mother is the closest one to me and she understands me.
- _ I prefer spending time with my friends, practicing sport or doing something that boys do.
- _ I think if you would like to acquire a language you have to learn how to produce it.

Table 33

Percentages of Complex Sentences of 3rd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNCS	PTNCS%
	Familiar	57	45	78.94
3rd Year	Less Familiar	51	36	70.58
	Unfamiliar	34	28	82.35

Table 33 shows the Percentages of complex sentences used by third year students. The results exhibit that third year students produce a lot of complex sentences when dealing with an unfamiliar topic. They reach the Percentage of 82.35 % of producing complex sentences in the unfamiliar topic, while they tend to produce a less amount during the familiar topic in a Percentage of 78.94%. However, they produced the lowest number of complex utterances during the less familiar task, with a percentage of 70.58%. This case is similar to the two previous cases in tables 31 and 32 which show that students were accurate when dealing with the unfamiliar topic than the two other topics, since they produce the highest number of complex sentences in the unfamiliar task.

Third year students used a lot of complex sentences such as:

- _ So when I hear the word family the first thing that comes to my mind is the members you live with.
- _ Of course culture is so important in our life because it describes our, eh, personality.
- _ It's the first time I hear this word.

Table 34

Percentages of Complex Sentences of the Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNCS	PTNCS%
	1st Year	77	57	74.02
Familiar	2nd Year	55	38	69.09
	3rd Year	57	45	78.94

According to data presented in table 34, third year students produce the highest number of complex sentences in the familiar task by a percentage of 78.94%, followed by first year students with 74.02%, then second year students with 69.09% of complex sentences. Second year students got the lowest percentage of producing complex sentences which confirms that they were the less accurate in familiar task, while third year students were the most accurate since they produced the highest number of complex sentences.

Table 35

Percentages of Complex Sentences of the Less Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNCS	PTNCS%
	1st Year	68	45	66.17
Less. F.	2nd Year	47	30	63.82
	3rd Year	51	36	70.58

Table 35 shows that third year students produce the highest number of complex sentences in the less familiar task by a percentage of 70.58%, followed by first year students with 66.17%, then third year students with 63.82% of complex sentences. Results indicate that second year students were the less accurate during the less familiar task, followed by first year students who produced more complex sentences, then third year students who tended to be the most accurate since they produced the highest number of complex sentences when they dealt with the less familiar task.

Table 36

Percentages of Complex Sentences of the Unfamiliar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNCS	PTNCS%
	1st Year	28	22	78.57
Unfamiliar	2nd Year	21	15	71.42
	3rd Year	34	28	82.35

Results in the table above show that second year students produce the lowest number of complex sentences in the unfamiliar task by an percentage of 71.42%, followed by first year students with 78.57%, then third year students who produced the highest number of complex sentences with an percentage of 82.35%. Results indicate that there is a similarity between the previous cases in tables 34 and 35 and this case in which third year students show the highest percentage of producing complex sentences. Thus, they were the most accurate compared with the two other levels.

Table 37

Percentages of Morphological Errors of 1st Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNME	PTNME%
1st Year	Familiar	77	29	37.66
	Less Familiar	68	23	33.82
	Unfamiliar	28	4	14.28

The results of the morphological errors in the table 37 show that the percentage of committing morphological errors by first year students in the less familiar task is 33.82%, while it increases in the familiar task to reach 37.66%. However, in the unfamiliar task they committed the lowest number of morphological errors with a percentage of 14.28%. Thus, 1st year students were less accurate in the familiar task, but mostly accurate in the unfamiliar one.

Some examples of morphological errors:

- _ And other foods which is tradition
- _ My grandmother still wear traditional clothes
- _ He know I love English

Table 38

Percentages of Morphological Errors of 2nd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNME	PTNME%
2nd Year	Familiar	55	25	45.45
	Less Familiar	47	28	59.57
	Unfamiliar	21	4	19.04

The results of the morphological errors in table 38 demonstrate the percentage of committing morphological errors by second year students. In the unfamiliar task, it was only 19.04%, thus it represents the lowest percentage of the morphological errors, followed by the percentage 45.45% of the familiar task. The highest percentage of morphological errors was recorded in the less familiar task with a value of 59.57%. Thus, 2nd year students' performance was mostly accurate during the unfamiliar task than the two other tasks (less familiar and familiar). Students commit many morphological errors such as:

- _ Maybe it's the basic of every society.
- _ I like him and they like me.
- _ I never heard about it.

Table 39

Percentages of Morphological Errors of 3rd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNME	PTNME%
3rd Year	Familiar	57	23	40.35
	Less Familiar	51	19	37.25
	Unfamiliar	34	5	14.70

The results shown in the table 39 tell that the percentage of committing morphological errors by third year students in the less familiar task is 37.25%, which is close to that of the familiar task with 40.35%. However, in the unfamiliar task they committed the lowest percentage of the morphological errors with a value of 14.70%. Thus, 3rd year students were less accurate in both familiar and less familiar tasks and mostly accurate in the unfamiliar one.

Students commit many morphological errors such us:

- _ She comes in me.
- _ It show us
- _ When produce our language.

Table 40

Percentage of Morphological Errors of the Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNME	PTNME%
	1st Year	77	29	37.66
Familiar	2nd Year	55	25	45.45
	3rd Year	57	23	40.35

From the results recorded above, the percentage of morphological errors in the familiar task between the three levels is as follow: 37.66% committed by first year students, it represents the lowest amount. Followed by third year students' percentage 40.35%, then second year students' percentage which is 45.45%. Thus, we can deduce that first year students were the most accurate during a familiar task sine they got the lowest percentage comparably with second and third levels.

Table 41

Percentages of Morphological Errors of the Less Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNME	PTNME%
	1st Year	68	45	66.17
Less. F.	2nd Year	47	30	63.82
	3rd Year	51	36	70.58

The results above reveal that first and third year students produce a convergent amount of morphological errors in the less familiar task, with a percentage of 66.17% for 1st year students, and 63.82% for 2nd year ones. However, third year students committed a lot of morphological errors represented in the Percentage of 70.58%. So it is clearly obvious that third year students were totally inaccurate in the less familiar topic as they got the highest percentage of morphological errors.

Table 42

Percentages of Morphological Errors of the Unfamiliar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNME	PTNME%
Unfamiliar	1st Year	28	4	14.28
	2nd Year	21	4	19.04
	3rd Year	34	5	14.70

From table 42 that represents the percentages of morphological errors of the three levels during the unfamiliar task, the results indicate a similarity between this case and the one we have dealt with in table 40. First year students got the lowest percentage 14.28%, followed by third year students in a value of 14.70%, then the highest percentage belongs to second year students in a value of 19.04%. First and third year students produce a convergent number of morphological errors less than second year students production. Thus, second year students show the lowest percentage of accuracy.

3.3.2.2. Pronunciation Errors

To measure language accuracy in terms of pronunciation we have to study each individual student's phonological features in terms of mispronounced words.

TNC: Total Number of Clauses

TNMW: Total Number of Mispronounced Words

PTNMW: Percentage of Total Number of Mispronounced Words

Table 43

Percentages of Mispronounced Word of the 1st Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNMW	PTNMW%
1 st Year	Familiar	77	3	3.89
	Less Familiar	68	4	5.88
	Unfamiliar	28	0	0

According to the data of phonological feature measurement presented in table 43, the rates are by order from the highest to the lowest as follow: 5.88% for the less familiar task, 3.89% for the familiar, then 0% belongs to the unfamiliar task. Thus, first year students were more accurate in the unfamiliar task than in both the familiar and the less familiar tasks. In other words, accuracy in terms of phonology presents strongly whenever the subject is unfamiliar.

Some examples of the mispronounced words:

- _ Share /tʃæɪr/
- _ Hear /hæɪr/
- _ Just /ʒʌst/

Table 44

Percentages of Mispronounced Word of the 2nd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNMW	PTNMW%
2 nd Year	Familiar	55	11	20
	Less Familiar	47	10	21.27
	Unfamiliar	21	3	14.28

The table above displays the results of the mispronounced words by second year students among the three tasks. They show that second year students perform a percentage of 14.28% during the unfamiliar task, than 20% during the familiar task, and 21.27% during the less familiar one. The results indicate that 2nd year students display a low rate of accuracy during the familiar and the less familiar tasks compared with the unfamiliar one.

Some examples of the mispronounced words:

- _ Big /bi:g/
- _ Solution /sɒləʃən/

Table 45

Percentages of mispronounced words of the 3rd Year Students across the Three Tasks

Level	Topics	TNC	TNMW	PTNMW%
3 rd Year	Familiar	57	2	3.50
	Less Familiar	51	5	9.80
	Unfamiliar	34	0	0

Table 45 above displays the results of the phonological features' measurement. They show that third year students tend to produce the best words' pronunciation by a percentage of 0% during the unfamiliar task. Besides, during the familiar task they produce only 3.50% of mispronounced words compared with the less familiar task which shows the highest percentage of mispronounced items with 9.80%. The results indicate that third year students are very accurate in the unfamiliar task, however less accurate in the less familiar one.

Some examples of the mispronounced words:

- _ Many /mɪni/
- _ Relation /rɒleɪʃən/
- _ Foreign /fɔːrɪwɪŋ/

Table 46

Percentages of Mispronounced Words of the Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNMW	PTNMW%
	1st Year	77	3	3.89
Familiar	2nd Year	55	11	20
	3rd Year	57	2	3.50

The results recorded in table 46 show that first and third year students committed a close number of mispronounced words in the familiar task; their percentages are: 3.89% for first year students, and 3.50% for third year students. However, second year students performed a lot of mispronounced words in the familiar task compared with the two other tasks, by a percentage of 20%. Third year students then were the most accurate since they uttered the lowest number of mispronounced words than the other two levels.

Table 47

Percentages of Mispronounced Words of the Less Familiar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNMW	PTNMW%
	1st Year	68	4	5.88
Less. F.	2nd Year	47	10	21.27
	3rd Year	51	5	9.80

The numbers recorded in table 47 exhibit that first year students tended to commit mispronounced words rarely in the less familiar task by a percentage of 5.88%. Third year students produce a lower number with 9.80%, compared with second year students who produced a percentage of 21.27%. Thus, we can deduce that first year students were the most accurate since they showed a low number of mispronounced words. However, second year students show the lowest rate of accuracy with the highest percentage of mispronounced words.

Table 48

Percentages of Mispronounced Words of the Unfamiliar Task across the Three Levels

Topic	Levels	TNC	TNME	PTNME%
	1st Year	28	0	0
Unfamiliar	2nd Year	21	3	14.28
	3rd Year	34	0	0

According to table 48, first and third year students did not commit any mispronounced words in the unfamiliar task with 0%, while second year students uttered a considerable number of mispronounced words in the unfamiliar task comparably with first and third levels, with a percentage of 14.28%. Thus, second year students' speech in the unfamiliar task was the less accurate compared with 2nd and 3rd year students' speeches who were totally accurate.

3.4. Discussion of the Results

To discuss the results obtained in the above tables, we ought to return back to our research question. It addresses the impact of topic familiarity on the variability of learners' oral output. The independent variable was "topic familiarity", while dependent variables measured were "fluency" (measured with regard of the average of pauses and hesitations in the total number of clauses, the percentage of repetitions and corrections in the total number of clauses, length of talk in the total number of the tasks, and the percentage of subject-specific vocabulary use). "Accuracy", was operationalized in terms of grammar errors from one hand, which in turn are divided into syntactical errors (measured with regard of the percentage of disorganized sentences and the percentage of complex clause in the total number of clauses.), morphological errors (measured with regard of the percentage of incorrect word forms and grammar conjugations in the total number of clauses.) Pronunciation errors from the other hand (measured with regard of the percentage of mispronounced words in the total number of clauses in each task response).

3.4.1. Fluency

The experiment found a positive effect for topic familiarity in promoting participants' performance in terms of "fluency", with regard of the previously-mentioned measurements. These findings matches those of Chang (1999); Robinson (2001b); and Rahimpour and Hazar (2007) studies which indicate a positive effect of topic familiarity on promoting fluency. Ellis (2003); and Sim (2013) also argued that familiarity of the topic improves learners' performance in terms of fluency.

3.4.1.1. Hesitations and Pauses

The results obtained from the previous data analysis indicate that whenever the topic is familiar, participants perform a low average of hesitations and pauses. In other words, whenever learners' familiarity with the topic under-discussion increases, their susceptibility to commit hesitations and pauses decreases, thus their fluency increases in turn. This can be due to the fact that since they are familiar with the topic, they are accustomed to deal with it, therefore they have a background knowledge about it, this in turn helps them in committing less hesitations and pauses, and thus being more eloquent and fluent when speaking.

3.4.1.2. Repetitions and Corrections

In the previous tables, the numbers displayed show that in the familiar task topic, participants committed a low percentage of repetitions and corrections compared with the two other tasks (less familiar, unfamiliar). Therefore they were more fluent during the familiar task response. Because knowing the topic means that you are sure of the information you are performing, so there is a low or even no need to repeat your utterances or correct them. However, surprisingly, a percentage of 66.66% of the data obtained, show a deviation in this result among the less familiar and the unfamiliar tasks. It shows that participants were more fluent in the unfamiliar task (post-structuralism) than the less familiar one (traditional culture). This can be noticed in tables 8 and 9 which show the percentage of repetitions and corrections of 2nd and 3rd year students among the three tasks. This can be due to the fact that, in the less familiar task, students were "fumbling" for the right words in their minds since the topic was not completely new for them, i.e. they had some background knowledge about it. This fumbling in turn, leads them to repeat and correct their utterances more. However, in the unfamiliar task, students were completely "frustrated", they were unable to find any words to express since the topic was

completely new for them. So, without speaking, there is no opportunity to commit such repetitions and corrections.

3.4.1.3. Talk Length

Concerning the length of utterances, our sample tended to perform lengthier utterances whenever the rate of topic familiarity rises. Thus, their length of talk was high in the familiar task, while short in the unfamiliar one. Because when you are accustomed to deal with a certain topic, you will speak with less or even without interruption, then your utterances will be lengthier and your speech more fluent.

However, the participants' utterances were short in general. Because when the participants received the first question as an aid, they kept on expecting other questions, thus their utterances became shorter, and the task turned to look more like an interview.

3.4.1.4. Subject-specific Vocabulary Use

Speaking about vocabulary use, students show a high percentage of topic-specific vocabulary use in the familiar task, while this value decreases whenever their familiarity with the topic decreases too. This goes back to the fact that in the familiar task, participants employed their background vocabulary that is related to the topic. However they had no background knowledge about the unfamiliar task, and thus no topic-specific vocabulary to be used since the topic was completely new for them.

3.4.2. Accuracy

Concerning accuracy, our experiment drove us to the conclusion that topic familiarity had no significant impact in correctness of the participants' syntactical, morphological, and phonological oral output, and thus it has no influence on its accuracy. This finding is similar to

the findings of Chang's (1999), and Lange's (2000) studies in which no significant effect of topic familiarity in promoting accuracy was observed. However, it opposes the outcomes of Rahimpour and Hazar's (2007) experiment, which found a positive effect for topic familiarity in promoting participants' performance in terms of accuracy.

3.4.2.1. Grammatical Errors

a. Syntax

- **Disorganized Sentences**

The previously-obtained results demonstrate that our participants' susceptibility to produce disorganized sentences was higher in the familiar task than in the unfamiliar one. This can be traced back to the consideration that students were "fumbling" for the right words to be used in their minds in the performance of the familiar task. Thus, they committed more disorganized utterances compared with the unfamiliar task in which students were completely "frustrated", and unable to find any words to express since the topic was completely new for them. So, their utterances were short and most of them were in the form of "I don't have any idea, I don't know what is it... etc."

- **Complex Sentences**

In terms of complex sentences, unexpectedly students tended to produce more complex sentences in the unfamiliar task response compared with the familiar and less familiar tasks. Because in the unfamiliar topic students were completely uninspired to talk since they have no idea about the topic. So, they tend to speak only for the sake of speaking and showing their linguistic abilities, by producing some complex sentences even though most of these sentences were out of topic.

b. Morphology (Morphological Errors)

Results concerning morphological errors are quite the same as those of syntax. It shows that participants performed more incorrect word forms and grammar conjugations in the familiar task than the unfamiliar one. We can relate this result to the fact that in the unfamiliar task, students were almost speechless and wordless, they found nothing to say since the topic was completely obscure for them. So, there has been less possibility for them to commit such errors compared with the familiar task in which they had more information to deliver.

3.4.2.2. Pronunciation Errors (Phonological Errors)

Same results, and same explanations of the morphological errors can be reflected in the errors of pronunciation. As usual, participants were more accurate in the unfamiliar task with the lowest percentage of phonological errors compared with the two other tasks. The explanation of this result is as mentioned previously. Since there has been no considerable uttering in the unfamiliar task, there would be less possibility to commit errors. All what participants performed was just some sentences that are accustomed to use such as: "I don't know what is it, because we didn't study it."

3.4.3. Cross Sectional Comparison

Concerning the comparison between the three levels, we noticed a variation in their performance, this can be related to the fact that they belong to different generations of students, and thus different proficiency levels (1st, 2nd, 3rd year). The data obtained indicate in general that third year students' performance was more accurate and fluent than that of second year students. This looks pretty logical since third year students are higher in level than second year ones. However, the results show in a surprising way that first year students' performance in the majority of the tasks was better than both third and second year students in terms of fluency

and accuracy. This can be turned back to the logical explanation which states that since third and second year students are higher in level than first year ones, they pay more attention to the correctness of their speech. This in turn leads them to an excessive use of their monitor, i.e. they become monitor "over-users" (Krashen's monitor model). So, they become more exposed to commit hesitations, pauses, corrections, repetitions...etc.

Another explanation of these results can be turned back to the limited sample of our experiment. Since we selected only from three groups.

In summary, all the data gathered from the oral tasks' analysis were presented in tables then discussed in order to arrive to the desired results. The data obtained from the tasks revealed that students' familiarity with the topic affects in a variable way their oral output's fluency. However, it has no effect on their accuracy.

Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to analyzing and interpreting the results of the students' oral tasks (familiar, less familiar, unfamiliar), in order to investigate the impact of topic familiarity on the variability of learners' oral output in terms of fluency and accuracy. The research methodology was based on only the oral task.

On the whole, the results have partially supported our first hypothesis, which supposes that familiarity with the topic promotes students' oral output's fluency. However, the experiment found no relevance between topic familiarity and the participants' oral output's accuracy. Moreover, the findings did not confirm the second hypothesis which supposes that learners' accuracy and fluency increase with the increasing of proficiency level, in the sense that first year students were more fluent and accurate than second and third year ones.

Limitations of the Study

During the conduction of this research paper, we encountered various constraints; among them, the very limited amount of time that was not sufficient for us to accomplish this work in a more appropriate way. We were confronted with the inevitable limitation related to the sample size. The sample size for this study was not large, it has been almost impossible to deal with a large sample of students; thus, the number has been reduced to cover only 18 students. Extra time would be helpful to use a larger sample of students who study at the department of English at Mohammed Seddik BenYahia University. Also, we could have covered more than fluency and accuracy measurements of the task topics. In addition, the language laboratories were not available, this obliges us to look for empty rooms to perform the oral task, and thus record the data using personal smart phones.

Actually, the nature of the topic under-research, which deals with familiarity imposes a demanding practical part with various difficult stages from conducting the written task, to the oral one, to transcribing the learners' oral performance, to analyzing and quantifying fluency and accuracy according to both the tasks' nature (three different tasks), and the students' levels (three different levels). Accordingly, the present study may appear to lack the required in-depth treatment that would have yielded an exhaustive analysis at all levels of variability measures of the participants.

General Conclusion

A foreign language learner may display higher levels of fluency and accuracy when discussing certain topics rather than others. Tarone (1988), who adheres to a sociolinguistic perspective on the study of IL, suggests that second/foreign language learners' observed variability in the levels of accuracy and fluency when discussing different topics can be proved to be systematic when related to the contextual factor of "the degree of familiarity of the topic" to the learners in question.

This study operated within a sociolinguistic framework to investigate the extent to which familiarity of the topic being discussed may systematically influence the levels of fluency and accuracy in learners' oral output. Moreover, this study has attempted to study both synchronically (at each level of the curriculum) and diachronically (as the learners advance across the different levels of the curriculum) the relationship between topic familiarity and learners' variability in the levels of accuracy and fluency.

In order to develop the theoretical the necessary framework for the design of and analysis of the results generated by the test used in this study, the existing literature on second language acquisition in general and variability in particular was reviewed. The first chapter dealt with the evolution in second language researchers' view to learners' errors. The second chapter tackled the issue of variability in IL with a specific focus on the sociolinguistic explanation of this phenomenon.

In the light of the reviewed literature, a test comprising three oral tasks was designed and administered in the order of expected decrease in the levels of accuracy and fluency to a randomly selected cross-sectional sample of in which 18 students belonging to three different levels (1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year). Each student participant was asked to talk about three

different topics, namely: familiar (family life), less familiar (traditional culture), and unfamiliar (post-structuralism). Their performances were audio-recorded then transcribed and analyzed in terms of the levels fluency and accuracy in the discussion of each topic. Fluency was measured in terms of pauses and hesitations, repetitions and corrections, length of talk, and subject specific vocabulary. Whereas, Accuracy was operationalized in terms of grammatical errors (syntax, morphology), and pronunciation errors (word pronunciation).

It was hypothesized that the learners' levels of accuracy and fluency will decrease as learners move from the discussion of the familiar to the unfamiliar topics. It was also hypothesized that learners' levels of accuracy and fluency when discussing each topic will increase as these learners advance across the different levels of the curriculum.

The analysis of the results has partially confirmed the first hypothesis: the more the topic is familiar to the foreign language learners, the higher the level of fluency he will display in the discussion of this topic. However, no systematic relationship has been found to exist between the degree of topic familiarity and variability in learners' level of accuracy. Moreover, furthermore, the subjects' levels of fluency and accuracy in the discussion of each topic did not improve as these learners advance across the curriculum.

Although second language acquisition research is not supposed to have immediate and directly applicable pedagogic pay-off, the results of this study suggest that the oral expression course currently in use in the department of Letters and English at the university of Mohammed Seddik Benyahia, Jijel is not effective enough in improving learners' levels of fluency and accuracy when discussing different topics. Hence, some action need to be taken to render this course more effective in the development of these aspects. Moreover, future longitudinal

research is needed to ensure a more rigorous study of the central problem tackled in this dissertation.

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Appendices

A. Directions for the Tasks

A.1. The Familiar Task (Family Life)

You have already dealt with “family” as a topic in your speaking course. You will be required to think about “Family Life” and talk accordingly. You may talk about your own family and your family life, your relationship with your family members, and your role in your family. You are not allowed to take notes before talking. You will have 3 minutes to talk.

A.2. The less Familiar Task (Traditional Culture)

How do you define “traditional culture”? You will be required to think about “traditional culture” and talk accordingly. You may talk about the aspects of our Algerian traditional culture, as well as the importance of culture and traditions in our life. You are not allowed to take notes before talking. You will have 3 minutes to talk.

A.3. The Unfamiliar Task (Post-Structuralism)

What do you think “post-structuralism” is? You will be required to think about “post structuralism” and talk accordingly. You may give its definition, its importance, as well as any concepts that are related to it. You are not allowed to take notes before talking. You will have 3 minutes to talk.

B. The Written Pre-test Topics

Topics	Very familiar	Less familiar	Unfamiliar
Technology	46	14	0
Traditional Culture	25	30	5
Capital punishment	7	17	36
Euthanasia	5	10	45

Teacher education	44	12	4
Terrorism	32	14	14
Friendship	50	7	3
Success	50	6	4
Family life	54	5	1
Public Transport	36	19	5
Global warming	19	29	12
Brain draining	10	17	33
Cloning	6	13	41
Travel	36	19	5
Social Media	52	6	2
Public Smoking	39	11	10
Hobbies	44	11	5
Post modernism	4	19	37
Tourism	32	20	8
Daily routine	43	9	8
Childhood memories	41	12	7
Schizophrenia	4	11	45
Children abuse	30	20	10
Post structuralism	3	4	53
Violence	44	8	8
Suicide	40	11	9
Educational system	46	10	4
Telemarketing	7	20	33

Unemployment	37	9	14
Adolescent depression	29	17	14
Globalization	35	16	9
Vegetarianism	16	15	29
Pollution	40	11	9
Population explosion	29	18	13
Inflation	6	19	35
Corruption	39	11	10
Gambling	12	13	35
Patriotism	9	11	40
Internet addiction	48	8	4
Alternative medicine	27	25	8
Cloning	7	15	38
Plagiarism	15	15	30
Economic development	26	22	12
Blood donation	16	15	29
Peer pressure	5	19	36
Honesty	43	12	5
Ageism	2	13	45
Abortion	13	10	37
Deforestation	25	9	26
Atheism	12	13	35

C. Topic Specific Vocabulary

Family Life	Traditional Culture	Post-Structuralism
Child/ children	Ancient/ old/ past	Language
Father/ dad	Beliefs	Movement
Mother/mom	Society	Literature
Brother	Traditions	Approach
Sister	Civilization	Culture
Share	Customs	Production
Members	Heritage	Knowledge
Close to	Food	Historical
Relationships/ links	Music	Diachronic
Unity	Art	France
Society	Clothes	Structuralism
Parents/ grandparents	Religion	Philosophy
Grandmother	Language	Phenomenology
Grandfather	Identity	Theory
Blood link	Values	System
Connection	Relationships	Structure
Home/ house	Norms	Texts
Love	Environment	Linguistics
Life	History	Psychoanalysis
Care	Personality	Meaning

D. Transcription of the Tasks

1st Year Students

- **1st Student**

Familiar Topic “Family Life”

Family means parents, especially the mother. Well that's the first thing that comes into my mind when I hear family. It's totally related to let's say family links. Brothers, sisters umm parents, it's the relation between these people. (Pause)

-How big is your family?

Not that big. Umm I have two brothers and parents and me. (Pause)

-Are you satisfied about your family living conditions?

Yeah. Because I live happy, simply because I'm happy with it. (Pause)

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yeah. They always ask my opinion. I have a really important role. Well in actually all the fields concerning the house, you know, for example changing something, umm, well making a rule. Anything, like anything. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

No, I prefer spending time with my family, or I, well or. Well friend are not really, for me is (pause) It's really complicated. Umm well I don't think that friends are good for me. I've never met a good friend, that's why. I feel like I am umm what to say. Well I trust my family more than anything in the world. But, eh, concerning friends outside I do speak with everybody, but I don't consider as a person like a precise one who is really my friend that I can... Well I can talk, I can say whatever I want. I am, I always say that I am an open book, but, umm, like, eh,

when, when you just imagine that someone you cannot live without like, I don't this sort of people in my life.

Less familiar Topic "Traditional Culture"

Traditional culture. Umm, well it's just traditional, let's say, umm, culture. (Pause) Well let's say culture is what we all know. Well it is, eh, let's say, eh, it is related to, eh, well, eh, let's say it is related to groups, there are different groups, each one has its own particular culture, eh, let's say knowledge. Let's say we can relate culture to knowledge. Eh, well the aspects of life, how people see life, How people, umm, what people know about life, about their environment. For example here in Algeria we have in our culture, for example religion, we care about religion. Umm, we may not know other things like, umm, in northern, for example in the northern world, people have things that we don't. We are in Africa, so let's we are related, our culture is related to Africa, our environment, nature. (Pause)

-Why do you think culture is important in our lives?

Culture is important because, umm, it describes, it defines who we are. Because culture is heritated. Let's say I, umm, take this culture from my parents, my grandparents, my grand grandparents. This culture is a big rich heritage, that's why it is important. (Pause)

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Because they think that, well western is modern, it is, eh, it has technology, technology is like now a fundamental thing in the world, so, eh, and because if this technology, because of science, the development they got to. Umm, people do think that, well maybe if we just imitate them we can be like them, we can be more developed, or let's say, umm. So they try to imitate the way they live. But it's wrong, I think it's wrong. If you want to imitate, let's say why don't you imitate, well why don't you study instead, know about their culture, it's good to know about

other's people culture. But you shouldn't imitate, you should always keep your, umm, your personality, because it's original, it makes you special.

Unfamiliar Topic "Post-structuralism"

I have no idea. (Pause) well I have no comment on them, because it's the first time I hear the word. (Pause)

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Do you think that studying the way in which language is produced can be useful?

Well, it makes people know about their language better, I think and, umm. Well if you know about language. Well I think like we're studying linguistics, it is really, eh, important to know about this miracle, let's say we call it miracle because. Umm, well no body is like us, like humans, you're special and this makes us special, language. So we should, eh, study it with details, with more details to know more about us, about our culture, about our intelligence, well I think that's it. (Pause)

- **2nd student**

Familiar Topic "Family Life"

When I first hear the word family I think about home, safety, and food. Because, you know, family which our most precious moments in our life are with family, and among those precious moments are when we are around the dinner table with mom and dad. Family, I don't have any brothers and sisters, so I cannot speak of that side. As far as I consider family is just me and my mother, father, grandmother, grandfather. My grandmother died, so I felt like there is someone missing of my family, is just, yeah. And people who are not linked by blood to us, you know we don't have any blood link, can be also a part of our family, it's like. I have a friend of seven

years, and, umm, him and I were just like brothers, and yeah. He's in Algiers right now, but I still like, I feel like one of my family members is missing. (Pause)

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Well, personally I make sure to have a good relationship with all family members. I prefer to be, eh, good with every one, because, yeah at times of need, we only have our family to support us, and yeah that's it. (Pause)

-Do you usually have an influence on your family matters?

Well I'm still young, I'm the youngest member, so nobody cares about my opinion. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Well a little of bit of both, yeah both, I think both. Well, but I mostly prefer time with my friends, because I spend most of my life with my family, so yeah I miss them less than I miss my friends.

Less Familiar Topic "Traditional Culture"

Traditional culture are the group of customs and activities that people hang on to, that come from our history. Traditional culture involves thing like, traditional clothing, traditional songs, traditional dishes. Yeah there are many things in tradition that we can talk about, yeah. (Pause)

-What do you like most in our Algerian traditional culture?

Algerian culture (pause). Food, eh, I'm not falling into Algerian music, umm, even the clothes. Actually I dislike some other things in our Algerian relationships. I don't like the idea that all the family like, from the grandfather to the grandson, like they have to live in the same house. I believe that every family deserves to live a separate life, I don't want to, I like my father and mother, but I don't want to live with my uncle and aunt, you know. So I believe that every

family needs a space where the children and kids can grow and develop their own personality without being influenced of, you know, the aunts and the influence of other people around us.

(Pause)

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

Well, culture is really important in our life because, I remember someone saying: “you cannot set a goal, eh, for your future without knowing where do you come from, or where you are now”. So our tradition and culture give us a lot of experience from our, yeah, you just get experience from. (Pause)

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Well because, umm, I blame the elders, because they do not put enough effort in order to (pause) I don't want to say enforce the old culture, but do not put enough, eh, efforts to, you know, teach and, yeah, teach the old culture and traditions. So, yeah, when, ok everyone is a blank page when he's born and, umm, if the parents and our elders, our community doesn't write good things on that blank page, it will be written eventually by someone else, in this case it is the European an American culture. And also the influence, you know, social media, TV, internet, Facebook, etc.

Unfamiliar Topic “Post-structuralism”

I demand an explanation for this word. (Pause)

- Can you define structuralism?

Well I know the word structure, it is how something is built. (Pause)

(After defining structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think post-structuralism is important since it focuses on studying the way in which knowledge is produced?

Well, because we must understand how language is produced, because we are people and we are curious about. (Pause)

-Do you think that post-structuralism's findings may help in improving the teaching and learning processes?

Umm, well, no I have learned English without knowing what this word is. (Pause)

- **3rd Student**

Familiar Topic "Family Life"

Well family, umm, family is a very important part in society. Nowadays you have to be in a family where you can, eh, avoid many problems. If you have a family that's mean you have who helps you, who stand with you in difficult moments. Eh, well (pause). So family it's an important thing. (Pause)

-How big is your family?

My parents, four brothers, and two sisters, we are a big family. I don't have a grandmother and grandfather, they died. (Pause)

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Yes of course, I have to be like this (pause). So we are very kind with each other, we help each other, you know. (Pause)

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Of course yes, sometimes I can, well in the order of our family I have, eh, so I am the third one (pause) yes I am the third one, I have an opinion, I can say my opinion in such topics. (Pause) Umm for example what to do on lunch, what to do on dinner, there is many topics. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

I spend a lot of time with my friends. I prefer all of them, I prefer both, but the most is family of course. Because I like to spend time with my mother, umm, speak, talk her about my problems, she helps me. (Pause) So I have to talk her about everything.

Less Familiar Topic “Traditional Culture”

(Pause) well, umm. (Pause)

-Give some aspects of the Algerian traditional culture

(Pause) There is a lot of fields in culture, we have food, we have clothes, we have entertainment.

(Pause) Well we have a lot of traditional foods. There still families who prepare traditional foods like Couscous which is, eh, we do it each Friday, this is a tradition of Algerians. We have too Asbana, we have, eh, Chakhchoukha. (Pause) About clothes, they was wear Al-Hayek for woman, and man Gandoura or, eh, yes Gandora and Barnous. But now it's change, it is very different now, you can't find a woman which wear Al Hayek, or a man which wear Gandora or Barnous, so it's change. (Pause) They follow fashion, I think they just wear Jeans and T-shirt. (Pause)

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

It's important to deserve (pause). Now we follow very, we are very, eh, interesting about European, we follow the European style, we just wear what they wear, we just eat what they eat, but this is, eh, this can, eh, destroy our culture. (Pause)

-Why are we becoming impressed by western cultures?

I don't know why. We just follow them, we, eh (pause) Maybe we likes their style or. (Pause)

Unfamiliar topic "Post-structuralism"

(Pause) I don't know what does it mean. (Pause)

-What does structure means?

Structure is the, eh, it is the (pause).

(After defining structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think post-structuralism is important since it studies the why of producing a language?

It helps, it helps you to develop your skills, to develop your pronunciation, eh, to know about the language you're studying about. (Pause) So it helps you to develop your skills. (Pause)

- **4th student**

Familiar Topic "Family Life"

I think my family it's everything for me, it's the best place for me. Family they always behind me, I found myself comfortable with my family, and of course I think my family it's a gift from my God. (Pause)

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Of course, with father, with my brother. My father it's like a friend for me, more than friends (pause) he helpful person, he stay with me in the hard problems, yes. (Pause)

-Do you usually have an influence on your family matters?

Yeah of course. (Pause) Just my big brother (pause) when I choose my decision to study English, because he also study French, but he give me an advice to study English because he know me I love English because, he know you have to study what you always love and like to be successful. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Sometimes, it's depend for the cases. But most time with my friends, because I make a relationship between my family, it's too respectful, you know this. (Pause)

Less Familiar Topic "Traditional Culture"

It's means that customs, beliefs, traditions, thinking, practices that represent the identity of the country. (Pause)

-Give some aspects of the Algerian traditional culture

Yes, (pause) like Ramadhan, Aid-Al Fitr, Ashura. (Pause) Making the delicious foods like Couscous, it's the prefer food for me. Yeah, eh, you buy new clothes, yes (pause) you go with my family to my grandparents. (Pause)

-Why do you think culture is important in our lives?

Culture (pause) yeah, because it represents my identity. Everyone have a culture. (Pause) It represents your thinking, practicing. (Pause)

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

I think there is a big difference. (Pause) Western cultures (pause). Eh, I think the western is (pause) they more opening-mind, (pause) they respect her culture, yeah. (Pause)

Unfamiliar Topic “Post-structuralism”

(Pause) I don't, I don't have any idea. (Pause)

(After defining structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think post-structuralism is important since it studies the way of producing a language?

I think to find the different between languages, to give more information about the other languages, (pause) to know more about the languages (pause), to know the culture of the other countries and the other languages (pause). Yes that's it. (Pause)

- **5th student**

Familiar Topic “Family Life”

I think love, peace, safety, care, kindness, this is it (pause). For me, it's everything, eh, my mother, father, brothers, it's everything (pause).

-How big is your family?

We are six brothers and five sisters.

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Sometimes (pause), when the subject refers to me or my sisters it's ok, I can give him or her my opinion (pause). For example, my sister when she want to, eh, to go to setif, eh, my mother and father ask me about my opinion.

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

No, with my family (pause). I think it's more comfortable and, eh, something like that (pause).

-Are you satisfied of your family living conditions?

Yes, eh, we are in a big house, with my sisters, brothers, and sisters in law, eh, (pause) it's a comfortable life (pause).

Less Familiar Topic "Traditional culture"

Culture, eh, I think culture it represents the, eh, what people do or (pause).

-Give some aspects of the Algerian traditional culture

Eh, (pause) for example, behaviors like, eh, (pause).

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

(Pause) Because it represents the way of thinking of people (pause), behaviors (pause).

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

(Pause) They follow the fashion, or the way of life in western without thinking about the, eh, disadvantages of this (pause).

Unfamiliar Topic "Post-structuralism"

(Pause) I have no idea (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying how language is produced can be of benefit?

(Pause) I have no idea (pause).

- 6th student

Familiar Topic “Family Life”

Family is love, care, happiness, safety, it's everything for me, and a person who hasn't family he has nothing, for me, I think this is my opinion. So family is a place where we share, umm, sadness, happiness, life problems, it's like a small society in one house (pause).

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Yeah, this is, umm, a normal thing, you have to have a good relation with your family. My mother is everything for me, my father also, my brother, my sister. They are, umm, they are good, we have good relation between take care of each other, help each other in, umm. When there is a problem, there is work that we should do it, we help each other together (pause).

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yes, I am the big sister in the house, so everything is, eh, they take my opinion in everything, I guess. For example when we try to do something new, or to take a decision, I can give my opinion for my father or my mother, and also with my sister. I have a good relationship with my sister, she's tell me everything about her, and I always give her advices, and (pause).

-Do you prefer spending your time with your family or with your friends?

There is, umm, sometimes I like to spend my time with my family, and sometimes with my friends. For example if we have occasion or something I prefer to spend it with my family, but sometimes I prefer to go out with my friends and joking (pause).

Less Familiar Topic “Traditional Culture”

Traditional culture, I think it's represent the person. Umm, when you contact the person, you will explain, umm, you will find, umm, how to say it, you can understand his culture from the way that he, umm, telling, umm, speak with you. So, culture it's, eh, it's, eh, represent the way of living, eating, the music that you hear, also food ...etc. And I think in our culture, in Algeria and in our family, I like our culture, our traditions, also we have specific traditions. Umm, for examples Aid Al-Adha, Aid Al-Fitr, Ramadan, and it's near from us. We feel in Ramadan and in this occasion specific, eh, we have, that is different from the other days (pause).

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Umm, yeah they, teenager in our country, they, umm, affect by the culture of European culture and, umm, they, I think they follow them (pause). I think almost of them they like this culture because, eh, their self like to be, eh, to be like them, and they design in their mind a beautiful picture for, eh, and etc. But didn't know that our culture must be to follow our religion, our tradition, culture, clothes etc. (pause)

Unfamiliar topic “Post-structuralism”

I didn't understand (pause). Umm, I have no idea (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying the way in which language is produced is important?

Language for me, to learn a language, it's, eh, necessary to learn a language because, eh, also to develop it by. We have here the session of study skills, so you can take more experience and, eh, you can learn the way of develop your language by reading, listening and watching videos. Also to learn a language is, eh (pause). Eh, for learning a language which produced, eh (pause). I have no idea really (pause). Eh, because in every time we contact with a person, we use

speaking and, eh, this is, for example now we are using speaking, and to develop your, umm, your, umm, yourself in order to be able to speak is something good. You can ask everything you want, you can, eh (pause).

2nd Year Students

- **1st Student**

Familiar Topic “Family Life”

Well maybe the family is, it's the most important thing in our life, because this is our source, eh, the source in which we come into this life. And, eh, also it's reminds me of my parents, my sisters and brothers. Also maybe it is the important thing in my life it's my family, eh, in which I study for it not for myself just. (Pause)

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Yeah, I have a good relationship with all the members of my family especially my mother, because my mother is the closest one to me, and she understands me, umm, in whatever what happen, and helps me. (Pause)

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yeah of course, because, eh, I'm, I'm the second member of this family and I didn't have, eh, the oldest brothers and sisters, so that's in everything they have my opinion, not every everything, but in the most of things. For example, sometimes my father and mother have some problems, and my mother asks me about what the solution, and she first speaks, told me about this problem and, eh, asks me for solutions to help her. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Well, I didn't have. I like both, with my family and with my friends, but of course with my family is better. Because, umm, because almost time, I spend my time at home not at broad or anything. So my family is maybe better than my friend.

Less Familiar Topic "Traditional Culture"

Traditional culture, maybe, umm, (pause), like in our Islamic culture (pause) umm, maybe traditions, our customs, eh, (pause). Maybe it's the basic of every society, and we must, umm, we must try to protect this customs and traditions to keep the elements of our society. Just to make our society as, umm, as an excellent one, or have characteristics that can, eh, which can defer it or, eh, make it different from the other societies. (Pause)

Why do you think culture is important in our life, and we should preserve it?

Maybe culture is important because it's the basic of each society. Because no culture there is no science, there is no life, there is no communication between us at all, umm, in which there is no culture, there is no way of life. Because for example our Islamic culture, if we didn't have Islamic culture, we live as an animals. So that's the culture is so important in our life. (Pause)

Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Eh, this maybe because they didn't have, eh, orientation, or, eh, control from the families, or they didn't have enough culture for our Islamic culture, umm, (pause).

Unfamiliar Task "Post-structuralism"

(Pause), I didn't study it. (Pause)

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying the language production is important?

Umm, maybe to generate, umm, (pause). To know, eh, to know the source maybe, or, eh, how, eh, how human discover this languages, or how we can produce this languages. (Pause)

It's just to know, umm, the characteristic of human, or, eh, (pause), that's it. (Pause)

- **2nd student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Well, people I live with (pause), my mom, my father, brothers, sisters. (Pause)

-How big is your family?

Eight members, and only my grandmother lives with us.

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Yes of course. Well, I don't prefer someone special, but I would choose mom and dad. (Pause)

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yeah, sometimes. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Well, of course my family comes first. Because they are close people to me, they are as a motivation. (Pause)

Less Familiar Task “Traditional Culture”

Traditional culture, (pause), well isn't it like customs and, eh, (pause)?

Actually I don't know much about traditional culture (pause), I know some traditional cultures in marriage, eh, and stuff like that. (Pause) For example, eh, el henna, couscous (pause).

-What do you like most in our Algerian culture?

Well (pause).

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

Culture is, eh, I know is the mother of country, without it, eh, the country would disappear.

(Pause)

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Actually I'm not impressed by it that much. Because, eh, their culture is, eh, doesn't go with our culture which is an Islamic culture. (Pause)

Well, I think they like the way people live, they hang out and they do whatever they want (pause), they have no rules.

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

(Pause), I never heard about it. (Pause)

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think post-structuralism is important since it studies language production?

(Pause), I think if you would like to acquire a language you have to learn how to produce it (pause).

- **3rd Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

My relation between people, eh, love shared between them, and (pause).

-How big is your family?

Not so big, I have two brothers, and two sisters (pause).

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Yes, I like my brothers, sisters, I communicate with them well, I exchange with them feelings, share with them my problems. Eh, it's the most thing I like. (Pause)

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yes, they care about me, they ask me what, eh, they ask me when I have problems, they try to help me with finding a solution, they really care about me. (Pause)

When it comes about, eh, about, you know the house things or the house, like marriage parties, they ask me for help. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Yes, I like spending time with my family, because I feel so close to them (pause), and I feel confident with them.

Less Familiar Task "Traditional Culture"

Traditional culture is things that we use to do in past, and we still do them now. They are like (pause). Eh, when it comes to religion, when, eh, you're supporting your country (pause).

-Give some aspects of the Algerian traditional culture

(Pause) They have, every, eh, every, eh, (pause) every part in Algeria have special have special clothes, they wear like, eh, (pause), their clothes are so special. When it comes to Sahara, they wear just like amama, and clothes made from (pause), yes like camel and (pause).

-Why do you think culture is important and we should preserve it?

It's important to make the country, eh, (pause) eh, to make people stay together, to live one life, no one is different from the other, and it's really important for all country.(Pause)

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Because they don't know the effect in the future.

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

I have no idea (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying language production is important?

(Pause) Because it is the way we communicate with people. Eh, language is very important to study (pause) eh, we communicate with it and, eh, (pause), it helps to feel others, what they mean and what you will understand from them (pause).

- **4th Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Umm, family is the most important thing for me, because, eh, when you live with a family, eh, you don't feel lonely. Eh, when you need for example things, family will give you all things. You live in happiness with family. It's a nice thing in our life. (Pause)

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Yes, it's good, I live with my parents and five children, umm, and I'm the third. (Pause) I like him and, eh, they like me. (Pause)

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yes of course. For example, last year my father wants to change my car, our car, yes, and he asks us all the member of the family what we want the mark, yes I said I want Dacia Duster, and my mother wants to buy a Symbol, and my sister said another thing, and, eh, we bought a symbol. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Of course with my family. Eh, because, eh, as I said I feel happy, so happy, eh, with my parents.

My mother tell us for example, eh. (Pause)

Less Familiar Task “Traditional Culture”

Umm, traditional culture, eh, is an old one which has different, eh, different, eh, (pause) aspects, or (pause) objects. For example clothes, eh, foods, eh. People they use to wear traditional clothes, like el Hayek, Lamama and, but now the culture is flourished (pause) with fashions and (pause).

-What do you like most in the Algerian culture?

Umm, the side of religion. For example the clothes, our religion, eh, not prevent but (pause) advise us to wear al Hijab. It's the most practical. (Pause)

-Why do you think culture is important, and thus should be preserved?

The culture is the mirror of each country or society, so, it's important to serve it from, eh, disappear. Umm, we must, we must take care with it.

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

I don't know (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post structuralism.)

-Why do you think studying language production can be useful?

Umm, to know, maybe, umm, to know more about it and, eh, use it in a good way, or (pause).

I don't know. (Pause)

- **5th Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Family is the most thing will affect you in your life, that’s what family for me (pause). It will affect how you will act, and how you will speak to give your personality. (Pause)

-How big is your family?

Big, big family. I have five sisters, father, mother, and grandmother.

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Somehow (pause). I have five sisters and (pause), five sisters it’s (pause).

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

No (pause).

-What about you, do you ask for their opinions concerning your personal life?

No, not really. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Friends. I have five sisters, I prefer spending time with my friends practicing sports or doing some things that boys do. (Pause)

Less Familiar Task “Traditional Culture”

It’s some habits we take it from our environment, like foods, traditional foods, and like wedding parties, traditions in it, and that’s it. (Pause)

-What do you like most in the Algerian culture?

How we deal with things in a funny way. We make jokes of everything. (Pause)

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

(Pause) It's a part of our personality. (Pause) It's important (pause), why (pause), it's a hard question, I don't know. (Pause)

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Eh, it's a matter of they, they have, eh, I don't know, eh, I don't know the word in English, they have more chances in life (pause) we don't have, eh. I don't know (pause).

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

Umm, no idea (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying language production can be of benefit?

It will help you to know the nature of language and how you will speak, and you will get the source of words. It will help you to improve your overly package. (Pause)

- **6th Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Family is everything for me, umm, because, umm, I don't know exact. I think that (pause).
Respect, eh, also (pause).

-How big is your family?

There are six. We live alone, just my parents and I.

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yes, sometimes they ask, they speak in front of us about our problem and we try to solve it, we all participate. For example when my mother wants to buy something or, she ask me, yes she take my opinion about something (pause).

-How is the relationship between you and your family members?

It is good (pause). I live alone with my father and mother, and our relation it's good. And between me and my mother it's like friends, not, we have some limits but we are like friends, I tell her all about my feelings, my decisions, and she helps me a lot, because she gives me advices. (Pause)

Less Familiar Task “Traditional Culture”

I don't know about this (pause).

We live on them, we can't, eh, we can't, eh, (pause). Our society rely on traditions, in how we deals with other people, so it based a lot on traditions, and, eh, it means a lot for us and for our parents, exactly for our parents, and they try to learn their children about traditions and, eh. (Pause)

-Give some aspects of the Algerian traditional culture.

(Pause), clothes, for example in foods, there is a lot of fields of, eh. For example in foods they like couscous and Chekhchoukha, they still use this foods. Also in clothes, not, eh, clothes it's just a small average, but like my grandmother still wear traditional clothes like, eh, (pause) Bearnous and, eh. (Pause)

-Why do you think culture is important in our life, and thus we ought to preserve it?

(Pause) Umm, because it represents us, eh, it means she, eh, it shows the (pause), it shows the personality, it shows us, because it is a symbol for us. Eh, because every society has its old

traditions. And for us Algerian, we have traditions, and it represents us and it makes us different from other societies.

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

(Pause) post-structuralism. (Pause) I have no idea about it (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying language production can be important?

Yes, it's very important to study, eh, how language is produced, because, eh, (pause). Umm, I have no idea (pause). Eh, it helps us a lot to know how to pronounce or spell the word, and, eh, how to speak, eh, the language fluently not, eh, like native speakers (pause), yes and, eh, to acquire, eh. (Pause) that's it (pause).

3rd Year Students

- **1st Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

So when I hear the word family, the first thing that comes to my mind is the members you live with. The members of your family, your father, mother, brothers, sisters that are always around you and close to you, and, eh, so that's it. (Pause)

-How big is your family?

It's not so big. Eh, you mean the members. Six, eh, seven.

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yes, sometimes when they have for example a problem or, and they don't find someone to talk or to have advice from, of course they ask me. (Pause)

-Give examples about cases where they took your opinion

Umm, for example my little sister when she has a problem, whether in school with teacher or with her friends, or something like that, she comes in me and ask me about. Maybe I have experience, coz I'm older than her. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Umm, so so, you have to spend, you have to do both of them. You need time with your friends, umm. But I prefer with family of course, because at home you have all, all, all the thing that make you comfortable and relax, so you find yourself, umm, you find everything you want.

Less Familiar Task “Traditional Culture”

Umm, traditional culture for me is what our (pause), fathers and grandfathers and mothers dis. I mean the the the the values they were, they they did in the past, or they they want us to to to still do it. (Pause)

-Give some aspects of the Algerian traditional culture

Umm, (pause), you mean an example for traditional custom, eh, culture. (Pause), eh, (pause) for example it's it's not something which is really traditional. For example to be in relationships with your relatives, and you're not be separate for them. For me is something that need to be (pause) considered as culture. (Pause)

-What do you like most in your culture?

Umm, (pause).

-For example, which food, which customs... etc?

Umm, I like especially food that was we still do it. Especially couscous, yes, and other foods of which is tradition, and we need to be really carry on with them. (Pause)

-Give some other traditions

(Pause), umm, for example, I don't know (pause), tradition, clothes, food.

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

Eh, culture is important in our lives in the sense that it always remember us about what happen in the past, in our, in the life in the past. And, eh, it has to be, it has to be, eh, I mean to to, we have to carry on with, and we do not forget it. Yes, it's really important for me.

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

Post-structuralism, eh, (pause), really, eh, (pause), I have no idea. Maybe it's a book or something like that.

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

Umm, (pause) no idea, umm, (pause). I have no exact idea (pause).

- **2nd Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Eh, well, umm, when I, when I hear this expression, the first thing that is going to my mind is the sacrifice, the love, the, eh, how I say, eh, how the members are gathered with each other, that's it, is everything good. That's it. (Pause)

-How big is your family?

Eh, we are two sisters, eh, two sisters and three brothers and my parents of course.

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Of course I do, because I'm the bigger sister, so I have a role to, to care, to care with my youngest brother. (Pause)

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yeah I do. Eh, for example like how my, how my father is patient, and how my mother is hard working and so kind. (Pause)

-Are you satisfied with your family life conditions?

Yes I am (pause). Eh, just because, eh, it doesn't bother me that I'm living in, eh, I can get what I want to, and if I couldn't I know that it's not something because my family, eh, wouldn't so, but they just couldn't.

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

With my family, and the first proof that I'm spending the whole time with them now instead of in the campus studying.

Less Familiar Task "Traditional Culture"

Eh, I said is, eh, maybe is relating to the clothes that we are wearing, eh, the way of talking, the, eh, the, how we act with each other in such community. (Pause)

-What do you like most in our Algerian culture?

I like foods, eh, especially couscous. (Pause)

-What don't you like?

So, taught. How would people really think about women that they are less than men (pause).

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

Because I believe that culture is part of our identity. So, this is why we should keep on it. (Pause)

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Eh, well maybe because the European and the foreign cultures they are more powerful, so they would be more influenced by them (pause).

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

Eh, what is this? (Pause) Structuralism in which field, I couldn't recognize it (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-What are the advantages of following such movement?

Well, I guess that, umm, (pause) by this study we can recognize the, eh, the effect that make people, eh, using, eh, a language or such a thing different and vary from the other (pause).

-Can you give some familiar theorists that are associated with this movement?

No, I don't have any idea (pause).

- **3rd Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Umm, family life mean relation between family, or the life that people lives, eh, in her family or in her society. Umm, family life maybe, eh, maybe better or bad, better for rich family, and bad for poor ones. And sometimes family life is better, eh, when the situation of life is poor, because there is happiness in poor family. And, eh, by contrast, by contrast the rich family, eh, nowadays live unhappy life, sad life (pause).

-How big is your family?

I have three sisters and I'm the fourth one, and I have three brothers, my father, and my mother.

-Are you satisfied with your life living conditions?

Yes, I'm satisfied. Umm, because I prefer to live poor rather than rich. Poor and happy rather than rich and sad.

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

No (pause).

-Why?

(Pause), I don't care about their opinions.

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

No, with my family. Because I stay here the week, and I, when I go I meet my family a lot, especially my mother and my father, because in the house I talk a lot.

Less Familiar Task "Traditional Culture"

Traditional culture means, eh, culture in, eh, ancient time. Eh, or in the past. Eh, our traditional culture nowadays exist, still exist nowadays. Umm, we eat, eh, foods like couscous and Kesra and Lben, yes. (Pause)

-What do you like most in our Algerian culture?

What I like, eh, believes, believes and tradition I like too much. For example, umm, I like, eh, nowadays, eh, no respect to, eh, like our grandfathers and old persons, yes. Eh, and I like this, we should respect them. (Pause)

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

(Pause) culture I important in our life because, eh, because when one, eh (pause), umm, because the person is known by his culture, yes.

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

Umm, maybe structuralism in linguistics, or, umm, (pause), I don't have any idea. Post-structuralism it's a part in structuralism or, eh (pause). Umm, I don't have any idea.

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying language production is important?

Umm, (pause) it's important because, umm, (pause), umm, I don't know (pause).

- **4th Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Umm, in fact family is, eh, a nice word, eh, that, eh (pause). It refers to unity, and the unity of the members of, eh, each members, father, mother, and children, eh, (pause).

-How big is your family?

Umm, I have father, mother, and four girls and two guys.

Actually I have my grandmother lives in al kannar, but she is the only one (pause).

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yes, for example when I, eh, when my mother, eh, comes into and discuss for example a topic (pause). For example do we have potato for dinner? We share the same agreement (pause).

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

In fact I'm not, eh, I don't have, eh, big relationship with my friends, I prefer my father and mother and the whole family. Because, eh, they, eh, they understand me and more, and I feel so comfortable at home.

Less Familiar Task “Traditional Culture”

Eh, (pause), eh, traditional culture is many believes. It's consist of believes, eh, that many people, eh, follows it, and, eh, and share many opinions. (Pause)

-Give some aspects of the Algerian traditional culture.

There are plenty, but, eh, I think, eh, many of them disappeared at the moment. (Pause)

-Give some aspects that still exist.

Eh, still couscous exist, eh, and Tammina, eh. In wedding days like, eh, the, eh, the woman, the married woman wear al barnous, traditional clothes (pause).

-Why do you think culture is important and we should preserve it?

Yeah, actually any country has his own culture. Eh, because it's important, eh, because it, it show the andentity of this country (pause).

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Eh, maybe because of, they prefer style, eh, stylish, to be stylish, or (pause).

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

It's too general (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-What are the advantages of studying language production?

Yes, umm, (pause), sorry I don't have any idea. Umm, (pause), it's the first time I hear this word, umm. (Pause)

- **5th Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Well, I guess family life is important in each one’s life. So family is considered as a nuclear part in our life. So, eh, if, eh, you should respect our families, you should have, eh, well connection with each, with each members of the family. Eh, what should I say about it (pause).

-How big is your family?

Do you mean the members of the family?

Well, me and my sister, and I have three brothers and my mother and my father.

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Yes, the relationship is very good, no problems alhamdolillah (pause).

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Well, actually because I am the little one they don’t take my opinion into consideration. Maybe sometimes, but not that much. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Actually I prefer spending my time alone. Well, with my family yes, we are living, eh, in the same house, so it’s common to meet your family, but, well sometimes, lunch time, and, eh, well dinner times, yes.

Less Familiar Task “Traditional Culture”

Traditional culture, so, well each country has its, eh, traditional culture. For example here in Algeria we have many traditional cultures, we have, eh, like, eh, for example the food, se we have some, well it’s very known to the Algerian people to have couscous. We have, eh, for

example the, eh. As far as concerned the dress, the clothes I mean, eh, they are very famous of the, eh, I don't know how to call it, the, eh, yes the white dresses they, eh. Well in the ancient time, they were dressing Djeba and, eh, in the weddings they are very famous of their, eh, I don't know, wedding ceremonies. (Pause)

-What do you like most in the Algerian culture?

Well, the thing that I like is that in my culture. Eh, so there is something, eh, well they are conservative somehow, we are not like the western world. So, we have our, umm, our traditions, we are not. For example the girl can nor, eh, go to have fun at night, or drinking, or something like that. So it's very unpopular here, and (pause).

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Well, maybe because, eh, so, eh, well the western countries are, for example are most dominant, so, eh, as far as concerned, eh, their wealth and so and so forth, so maybe that's why, maybe their dresses and their cultures, so (pause).

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

Structuralism is, eh, well it is related to linguistics. Well, eh, (pause). Post-structuralism is before the beginning of structuralism. So, eh, structuralism, eh, structuralism it's, eh, it's a notion, eh, that emerged, eh, well, eh. They had their own principles and their, eh (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying language production can be useful?

So, maybe they add something new, yes maybe they add something new to this field or to this (pause). I don't really know. It is very important. So, eh, when we study English in the classroom, eh. Well for example when we study the, eh, the approaches, for example the audio-

lingual approach, they are interested in studying how the native speakers produce their, eh, their sentences or their words, not what they, what someone thinks they ought to say. Eh, so, eh, this is, I don't know, eh, is artificial, to, eh, it's very artificial to speak about how someone thinks the language is supposed to be. So, we are, eh, very concerned about the rules and grammar, so grammar rules, and so and so forth. Eh, so, eh, this approach as I have said is, is interested in studying how the native speakers speak. So, eh, it's very natural to (pause). I don't know (pause).

- **6th Student**

Familiar Task “Family Life”

Eh, well family as everybody knows, it is the most important unit or, in society, it means, eh, it is the core or the heart of society. (Pause)

-Do you get on well with all your family members?

Yes of course. Umm, I'm really, umm, so attached with everybody, with everyone in my family, and, eh, it's, eh, it means, eh, everyone in my family I have, eh, something special that, eh, relates me with him, it means, eh. (Pause)

-Do you usually have influence on your family matters?

Yes, eh, of course. Eh, from childhood until, eh, I don't know, eh, we learned from my father and my mother to ask for, eh, even you know things you should ask for them. (Pause)

-Do you prefer spending time with your family or with your friends?

Eh, of course it is not the same to spend your time with your family and your friends, but I appreciate to spend my time with my family, eh, because I'm so close to them, eh (pause).

Less Familiar Task “Traditional Culture”

The traditional culture is, eh, the, eh, how to say (pause). It is, eh, the, the shared culture between all members of society or community (pause).

-Give some aspects of the Algerian traditional culture.

(Pause) the way of dressing, foods, the traditional one is couscous, especially here in jijel is couscous (pause). Eh, for example in weddings there is a traditional style of, eh, weddings, parties (pause).

-Why do you think culture is important in our life?

Of course culture is so important in our life because it describes our, eh, personality, our, eh, it means it is the most important, eh, it is, eh, it relate to our identity (pause).

-Why do you think Algerian teenagers are impressed by western cultures?

Umm, maybe because most of teenagers nowadays want to go outside, eh, some of them have their reasons, and most of them, umm, just (pause).

Unfamiliar Task “Post-structuralism”

Eh, really, I have no idea about post-structuralism, eh (pause). I know that “post” it means after, eh, (pause).

-What do you think structuralism is?

It means structures or rules (pause).

(After defining both structuralism and post-structuralism)

-Why do you think studying language production can be important?

(Pause) in order to get, eh, to know, eh, how, eh, how we produce our language, eh, it means it show us the (pause) the most important, eh, things when produce our language, we should know how we produce it, eh. (Pause) Eh, in learning, eh, I have no idea, eh, (pause).

Résumé

Cette étude a été exploitée dans un cadre sociolinguistique pour enquêter sur la mesure dans laquelle la connaissance du sujet en cours de discussion peut influencer systématiquement les niveaux de fluidité et précision de la production orale des apprenants. De plus, cette étude a tenté d'étudier à la fois synchronique (à chaque niveau du programme d'études) et diachronique (comme les apprenants avancent à travers les différents niveaux du programme d'études) la relation entre la familiarité du sujet et la variabilité des apprenants dans les niveaux de précision et de fluidité. Un test comprenant trois tâches orales a été conçu et administré dans l'ordre de la diminution attendue des niveaux de précision et de fluidité à un échantillon transversal aléatoire de 18 étudiants appartenant à trois niveaux différents (1ère année, 2ème année, 3ème année). Il a été demandé à chaque étudiant participant de parler de trois sujets différents, à savoir: familier (vie familiale), moins familier (culture traditionnelle), et inconnu (poststructuralisme). Leurs performances ont été enregistrées sur bande audio puis transcrites et analysées en termes de niveaux de fluidité et de précision dans la discussion de chaque sujet. La fluidité, d'un côté a été mesurée en termes de pauses et d'hésitations, les répétitions et les corrections, la durée de conversation, et le vocabulaire spécifique du sujet. L'exactitude ou bien la précision, d'un autre côté, a été opérationnalisé en termes d'erreurs grammaticales (syntaxe, morphologie), et les erreurs de prononciation (la prononciation des mots). Nos hypothèses proposées exigent que les niveaux de précision et de fluidité des apprenants diminuent à mesure à chaque fois que les apprenants se déplacent de la discussion du familier aux sujets peu familiers. Aussi, les niveaux de précision et de fluidité augmenteront à mesure dès que les apprenants avancent à travers les différents niveaux du programme.

L'analyse des résultats a partiellement confirmé la première hypothèse: plus le sujet est familier aux apprenants de langue étrangère, plus leur niveau de fluidité augmentera dans la discussion

de ce sujet. Cependant, aucune relation systématique n'a été constatée entre le degré de familiarité du sujet et la variabilité dans le niveau de précision des apprenants. En outre, les niveaux de fluidité des participants et la précision dans la discussion de chaque sujet n'a pas amélioré lorsque ces apprenants avancent à travers le curriculum d'études.

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى التحقيق في مدى تأثير مستوى الامام بالموضوع قيد الدراسة بشكل منهجي على مستويات الطلاقة والدقة في الاداء الشفهي للمتعلمين. وعلاوة على ذلك فان هذه الدراسة تهدف الى تقصي العلاقة بين الالفة في التعامل مع الموضوع المتناول في الحصص الشفهية واختلاف مستويات الدقة والطلاقة لدى المتعلمين. من اجل تقصي هذه العلاقة تم تصميم اختبار يضم ثلاث تطبيقات شفوية على عينة منتقاة عشوائيا تضم 18 طالبا ينتمون إلى ثلاثة مستويات مختلفة (السنة الاولى, السنة الثانية, و السنة الثالثة). اذ طلب من كل مشارك اجراء محادثات حول ثلاثة مواضيع مختلفة، وهي: المألوفة (الحياة الأسرية)، الأقل شيوعا (الثقافة التقليدية)، وغير المألوفة (ما بعد البنيوية). لقد تم تسجيل الاداءات الصوتية لكل مشارك، ومن ثم نسخها وتحليلها من حيث الطلاقة والدقة في مناقشة كل موضوع. وقد تم قياس الطلاقة من حيث مستوى التوقف والتردد، التكرارات والتصحيحات، طول الكلام، و توظيف المفردات المحددة. في حين تم تحليل دقة اداء الطلاب من حيث الأخطاء النحوية (النحو والصرف)، وأخطاء النطق. فرضياتنا اقتضت بان مستويات الدقة والطلاقة لدى المتعلمين تنخفض مع انتقال المتعلمين من مناقشة مواضيع مألوفة الى اخرى غير مألوفة. كما افترضنا أيضا أن مستويات الدقة والطلاقة عند مناقشة كل موضوع ترتفع مع تقدم هؤلاء المتعلمين عبر مستويات مختلفة من المنهج الدراسي. تحليل النتائج أكد جزئيا أول فرضية والتي تقتضي بانه كلما كان الموضوع مألوفا لمتعلمي اللغة الأجنبية، كلما ارتفع مستوى الطلاقة في ادائهم اثناء مناقشة هذا الموضوع. ولكن من جهة اخرى، لم يتم العثور على علاقة منتظمة بين درجة الالفة بالموضوع والتباين في مستوى دقة اداء المتعلمين. وعلاوة على ذلك، فانه لم يسجل اي تحسن في مستويات الطلاقة والدقة لدى عينة الدراسة مع تقدم هؤلاء المتعلمين عبر المناهج الدراسية.