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**The Role of Dictation Feedback in Enhancing students spelling Case study of first year Students at the section of English in the University of Biskra**

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*Dedication*

*I dedicate this work to:*

*My precious parents Saad and Djemaa*

*My sisters Fatima, Mouni, Lina*

*My brothers Sami, Chawki, Walid, Jawad*

*Moatasim*

*My little angel Innas*

*My friend Hafsa S*

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## **Abstract**

The aim of the current study is to investigate the impact of dictation feedback on students spelling. Spelling is an important aspect of writing that needs much more attention and practice. We hypothesize that the use of dictation feedback can improve students spelling. To achieve the objectives and confirm or refute our hypothesis the mixed method was adopted. This methodology aims to describe the variables: dictation as independent variable and spelling as the dependent one and to examine the impact of the dependent variable on the independent variable. Our research tools in collecting data were a document analysis and questionnaire for teachers. The sample of these research were 16 documents of first year student and 6 teachers, at the Department of foreign languages, field of English, University of Biskra. The results of gathered data show that dictation is a helpful and effective technique in teaching spelling to English students. Finally, on the basis of our results, some recommendations and pedagogical implications are suggested to help teachers and student as well.

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## **General Introduction**

It is well known that English as a foreign language (EFL) needs teachers to adopt certain technique to teach the four basic skills especially the spelling. Learners at the university level are supposed to learn how to spell words correctly. Actually, spelling plays a fundamental role in writing process in particular and in the educational process in general. Spelling is a complex cognitive activity, involving the integration of motor, linguistic, and memory process .However, EFL learners face many obstacles in spelling skill. Thus, we are going to investigate the role of dictation on learners spelling, which can be the suitable technique to develop their spelling.

### **1. Statement of the Problem**

Spelling has been a constant topic in educational research. Spelling is a highly complex process and is often characterized as an area of difficulty for beginners in language as well as students with learning disabilities. We suppose that first year students of English language at Biskra University need to master their spelling by using dictation as a suitable technique to improve the learner's level in spelling, which is an important aspect of writing.

In addition, it is important for students to know how to spell words correctly. In other words, spelling plays a crucial role for students to be successful in their studies. For this reason, teachers need to focus on enhancing the spelling of their student. EFL learners faced many difficulties while writing. Therefore, they need effective technique that can contribute in the development of their spelling.

### **2. Significance of the Study**

The present study deals with dictation as a method that can enhance the spelling of first year students of English at Biskra University. It is important to spot the light on this technique and its role in improving learners spelling. In reality, this research is intended to be informative so that learners can benefit from its results as well teachers. First, it is a significant in promoting teachers to use dictation as a technical method to explore learners' progress in spelling. Second, it is provide new insights into learners about the use of dictation as a technique in enhancing spelling

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### **3. Aims of the Study**

The general aim of the present study is to contribute in the development of the spelling competence of English language through the use of dictation technique. That is, it aims to investigate the role of this technique in enhancing EFL learners spelling.

More precisely, this aims:

- 1) To raise students level in spelling.
- 2) To suggest new teaching method using dictation feedback
- 3) To seek in developing learners competency in spelling by giving feedback.

### **4. Research Question**

This research seeks to answer the following research question:

- Can the use of dictation technique help EFL students of Biskra University?

### **5. Hypothesis of the Study**

The present research is based on the following hypotheses that shall be verified through this study:

- We hypothesize that the use of dictation feedback by teachers in classroom may improve the first year student level in spelling.

### **6. Research Methodology**

The research looks for a relationship between the two variables, which are dictation as a method in spelling as the independent variable and the importance of this method on enhancing learners spelling as the dependent one. The method that must be used throughout this research combines the exploratory and the descriptive method, which are dictated by the nature of the study and the research question in addition to the data that will be gathered and analyzed.

#### **6.1. Population/Sample**

The sample used in this study is limited to first year student of English and teachers at the division of English in the Department of Foreign Language at Biskra University. Due to the short and limited time of the present study, and the huge number of first year students, this

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research obliged us to choose specific and random number of student and teacher. We decided to choose 16 students for the test of document analysis because they are beginners in learning English language, so they have to master spelling. For teachers, we choose a sample of 6 to this study.

### **6.2. Data tools**

The present research was based on two data collection tools: a questionnaire and document analysis. First, a questionnaire was submitted to the teachers of written expression to know their opinion and their comment about the dictation and its role in learners spelling. The second tool was document analysis that is based on the dictation of short passage to a sample chosen from first year student at Biskra University to know their level in spelling through dictation and know if they are going to improve or not. The questionnaire and document analysis was very important and suitable technique for such type of research.

### **7. The Structure of the Study**

The research contains two chapters. At the outset, we devote an isolated part to present a general introduction, which contain an introduction, statement of the problem and the main aim of the research, In addition to, the hypothesis, the question and research methodology, population and significance of the study. Besides, the study comprises the theoretical part, where we mention an overview about the variables dictation and its effect on learners spelling. In the third part, we end up our study with representation of the methodology employed and the results of the field work.

## **Chapter One: literature review**

Dictation is an old effective technique in learning and teaching a second language. Some teachers considered it as an old fashioned teaching method. Using dictation to teach the four main skills is beneficial and helpful for learners especially for spelling because it is a complex process that needs highly efforts and power method to be successful. Therefore, this chapter attempts to present in the first part an overview on dictation by taken into consideration its definition, types, benefits, strategies to improve English skill, steps in giving dictation task, choice of the passage, the main problem faced, and at the end we spot the light on the importance of feedback. While in the second part, we present also an overview on spelling by mentioning its definition, history, spelling errors and its types, causes of spelling errors, the most effective techniques in spelling and the last element is the developmental stages in spelling acquisition.

### **I.1.1. Definition of dictation**

Dictation has been used in language learning for several hundred years and many researchers claim that it is useful technique and tool in learning/teaching a language. Nowadays dictation used as a method to measure language improvement; in other word the dictation method can be used as a mean to other ends. According to Longman dictionary of applied linguistics Richards and Schmidts (2002, p.157. as cited in A. M.p.6) dictation is” a technique used in both language teaching and language testing in which a passage is read aloud to students or test takers, with pauses during which they must try to write down what they have read accurately as possible”. This definition means that dictation is helpful technique for both learners to learn a language and teachers as well to facilitate to him the assessment of the students.

Another definition is presented by Davis & Rinvoluceri (2002) have also defined dictation as "decoding sounds in aural input and then recoding them in writing". To explain, dictation is a learning task based on decoding and recoding the English sounds. Moreover Paul nation claim that dictation as a technique in which learners receive spoken

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impute, hold it in their memory for short period of time, and then they will write what they have heard.

According to many researchers dictation is to write down what we have heard, we make the transfer from spoken to written language, this task if happened successfully prove that we have understood what have been said. To conclude, the attitudes of teachers and learners towards dictation should be taken into account while adopt it in classroom.

### **I.1.2. Types of dictation**

Dictation includes numerous kinds in which teachers may adopt one of them in language teaching. Sawyer & Silver (1961.as cited in S. Alkire) stated that dictation encompasses four kinds that can be used in language learning, which are the phonemic item/text dictation and orthographic item/text dictation.

#### **2.1. The phonemic item/text dictation:**

The phonemic item helps students to develop their abilities to recognize the sounds of language because it deals with the presentation of sounds individually to students for transcription. It is practical and useful technique for student to distinguish and comprehend the sounds. The other type is the phonemic text dictation which is considered as an extension to the previous kind, based on short text read by the teacher and transcribed phonemically by student in order to know and realize how the English sounds differ in connected speech. It helps teachers to assess learners spelling.

#### **2.2. The orthographic item/text dictation**

The orthographic item dictation is similar to traditional spelling test because it deals with the dictating of words in isolation for transcription. It is useful for learners to know the correlation between the spelling system and sound system of a language. This correlation in English language is more complex than it is in in other languages. While the orthographic text dictation is the broadest learning possibilities, in which students transcribe a unified passage rather than individual words. In another word the student are obliged in this type to deal with whole passage, paragraph, and text not with sentence or words in spelling task.

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## **2.3. The dictogloss / dicto-comp dictation**

Wajnryb & Nation (1991) state that dictogloss dictation (some time called grammar dictation) is a kind in which student reconstruct a text based on their grammatical and linguistic resources. Whereas Nation (2009.as cited in Hoare & Tanner) claim that dicto-comp dictation is similar to dictogloss, the only difference is that students work individually while in dictogloss students work in group.In addition to what has been mentioned by Sawyer & Silver, there are other kinds suggested by Oller(1979.as cited in I.AitHamouda).

## **2.4. partial/standard dictation**

Partial dictation also called cloze dictation; this type is based on students listen to the spoken material in order to fill in the gaps with the words that have been omitted in the written passage. While standard dictation is widely used by teachers. It deals with the student write the material as it is spoken by the examiner; called the simple dictation; by Takeuchi (1997. As cited in Herusatoto.H) simple because it based on when the teacher dictate a text and students write what they hear as accurately as possible.

### **I.1.3. Benefits of dictation**

Dictation is a valuable language-learning device that has been used for centuries. Therefore, as a method, it has many useful merits that help both teachers and students in their achievements. According to Alkire (2002) dictation has a several benefits:

1. Dictation makes students aware about the practice of note taking, which means that it help student to take note about the important ideas and key words.
2. Dictation develops unconscious thinking in the new language. It means that dictation support students to write words without being aware.
3. Dictation is psychologically powerful and challenging, i.e. it guide teachers to control their students and challenge them to text their abilities.
4. Dictation develops short-term memory of the students.
5. Dictation can be used as a review exercise that helps students to look again to what they have studied; such as punctuation and vocabulary.



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6. Dictation is simple practice can be done by all pupils in primary school, middle school, high school and for students at university as well.
7. It can be managed effectively by novice teacher. To explain, it is easy technique to adopt because it does not need much more experiences.

Alkire provides all benefits above, to confirm that dictation gives a pedagogical advantages to learners to practice it in the correct form of language while utilizing the four basic skills in integrative fashion. Many scholars emphasize on the use of dictation because it is suitable for all levels taking into consideration both teachers and students.

Dictation has many benefits and this what confirmed by Hoare& Tanner (2009) who believe that the use of dictation can gives some benefits for university EFL classroom management. In addition to, it can be used successfully without consideration of class size or variety of skills. In other words, dictation is a task that is used to challenge and motivate students to work together by using grammatical and context clues to complete the dictation and engage in learning by problem solving.

. Dictation has a number of advantages that contribute in the improvement of students' performance. Oller(1971) state that dictation can be considered as good indicator of overall language ability and used as a testing mechanism for evaluating learners and measuring their language proficiency. So, teachers and students should take all these advantages and benefits into account.

### **I.1.4. The effects of dictation on developing language skills**

Dictation is one of the few approaches to teaching and learning which have many advantages. Adriana (2018) argue that dictation can improve EFL learners skills in term of listening, thinking faster, understanding different accents, writing, and spelling skill.

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## **4.1. Effects of dictation on listening skills**

The effect of dictation on listening is based on listening to audio material in English and trying to process the information in the head, then writing down the sentences on a piece of paper, the student brain will start to process and improved over time and with practice. This means that dictation has a significant effect on listening comprehension. Dictation is can be aa useful listening exercise specially in note taking.

## **4.2. The effects of dictation on learners' ability to think faster in English**

It is based on listening to materials that leads learner's brain to work hard and fast in order to process new information that will be written down. This will develop learner's ability in speaking and writing. Dictation can help student to think faster in English by using stored information to think critically of the dictated exercise.

## **4.3. The effects of dictation on learners' ability to understand different accents**

English language has different accent in which learners have to be familiar with. Dictation helps learners to improve their ability in understanding and differentiate between the different accents. So, Learners willexposed more with different accents of various people speak in English. They have to listen to different audios in order to establish their ability to comprehend accents.

## **4.4. The effects of dictation on learners writing skill**

Writing skill is an important in English language and the dictation as a learning technique can help learners to improve this skill. Because, by dictation, learners are training their brains to write and recognize easily as they are writing texts. Dictation is writing down what have heard, so writing skill of students will improved easily by the dictation task.

## **4.5. Improve learners spelling skill**

Spelling is an essential aspect in writing that can be improved by consistently writing down words that have been heard by learners in target language. It is important for learners to know how to spell words and understand them because spelling words leads learner to know new terms and this act happen by dictation technique and tasks.All skills

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mentioned above can be improved to be better through dictation. As well as, it can help student to promote their grammar and vocabulary by practicing it over time.

### **I.1.5. Steps in giving dictation**

Dictation is a great tool for teaching spelling because it allows children to use their spelling skills in a “real world” application. Before starting dictation task, teachers and students should be aware of its steps in order to obtain successful outcomes. Obrin (2014) confirms that dictation require some steps that help teachers to facilitate this task:

1. Engage brain before mouth. It is important for teachers to know what they want to say before start to speak. In other word, the teachers have to be well prepared in term of task and what they want to say to learners.

2. Have plan in other word, teachers that are novice in experiencing dictation technique. They have to plan and write out all what they want to present and try to read it aloud and practice it in order to dictate it from their memory.

3. Practicing the task in which it makes perfect and better improvement for the teachers in presenting a dictation activity. For more explanation, the teachers before coming to class they have to practice the presentation and the dictated passage well then they come to class.

4. Do not babble, do not become a metronome and don't speak too softly. Teachers to adopt dictation task have to speak slowly and clearly, using clear intonation and phrasing with loud voice all this factors comes with practice. For more explanation, dictation task needs some special tips in order to be successful task. The teachers have to:

1. Read the selected text at regular speed for the students.
2. Read the passage slowly; phrase by phrase with sufficient pauses.
3. Re-read the text in a normal speed to let the student check grammatical errors and the missing words.

To sum up, dictation becomes an effective method. Only if teachers are paid attention to above guides to those tips while dictation task.

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### **I.1.6. The choice of dictation text**

Before giving the dictation activity the teacher should set up his objective from this task. Kazazoglu (2012) demonstrate that the selected passage should be appropriate to learners level to discover the difficulty of the task that faced by the learners. As well as, the text should be self contained, cohesive, short and interesting to the learners. In addition to, Rossman & Mill (2010) prove that the choice of dictation passage comes from the discussion of the teachers with their student in order to give an opportunity to teach experimentally the use of words, marks, punctuation and meet the learners' lacks. For more explanation, the teachers should use different types of activities that are suitable to the level of their student from dictating one word to phrases, then sentences, until they reach the dictation of the whole text.

### **I.1.7. Problems in giving dictation**

Dictation is considered as an uninteresting and old fashioned teaching technique, in which many students face problems when it is used by their teachers, as boredom, difficulty and accuracy when checking. In teaching English, (British council, BBC, 2005) is assert that teachers while using dictation technique may face three main problems.

#### **7.1. Boredom in dictation**

Some students become bored while doing dictation activity, and lose interest that makes them unmotivated. So, all sorts of text can be detected from a single number of words and sentences until reaching the whole passage. Using dictated texts as a precursor to further activities like this will help students to see them as an integrated part of the learning process. It is important that teachers and the students see these activities as learning experiences rather than as simply testing their ability to listen and copy words and sentences. Various students have a negative view toward dictation, but teachers can change it to a good one by using other methods and support them.

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## **7.2. Difficulty in dictation**

It is common problem that students find dictation more difficult than others, especially with multi-level class. The only way to overcome this difficulty is the teacher must think about changing dictation exercise such as games and fill in gaps activities. The language being spoken and the gender speaking the language have an effect on the accuracy of the translation and difficulty on learners understanding.

## **7.3. Checking in dictation**

Students often are not well at looking for mistakes that they make in their written product while comparing it with the original passage. It can be easier to check the errors in other work rather than in their own. So, teachers have to give their student some strategies for checking their errors.

The explanation above, show that teachers need to not dictate the whole passage directly in order avoids these problems. Besides, they should vary the dictation activities by choosing the appropriate passage that suits the students' level.

## **I.1.8. Feedback conception**

Feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning. It is defined by Hattie. J & Timperley. H (2007) as an information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, self, experience) regarding aspects of one's performance or understanding. A teacher or parent can provide corrective information, a peer can provide an alternative strategy, a book can provide information to clarify ideas, a parent can provided encouragement, and a learner can look up the answer to evaluate the correctness of a response. Also defined by Susan E. Defranzo (2015) as a term that is used to describe the helpful information or criticism about prior action or behavior from an individual, communicated to another individual (or a group) who can use that information to adjust and improve current and future actions and behaviors.

## **I.1.9. The importance of written feedback**

Feedback on performance is essential element of the language learning process. It plays a crucial role in opening and maintaining a dialogue between teachers and students. According

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to Bellon *et al.* state that 'academic feedback is more strongly and consistently related to achievement than any other teaching behavior...this relationship is consistent regardless of grade, socioeconomic status, race, or school setting.' Feedback can improve a student's confidence, self-awareness and enthusiasm for learning. Effective feedback during the first year in university can aid the transition to higher education and may support student retention. Providing students engage with feedback, it should enhance learning and improve assessment performance.

### **I.2.1. Definition of spelling**

Spelling is an important aspect in writing skill. It is viewed as something that can be learned through rote memorization and practice. The current view implies that spelling is the study of words and how the English language is work. Thus to assess this skill, many researchers and linguists try to define the spelling concept. According to Oka Arizona (2013) spelling is the one of the language aspects that cannot be neglected in teaching process. As well as, it is a part of foreign language. This means that the students must know about alphabets and receive single word by using letters or clues (such as context) for word recognition.

spelling is an essential aspect of writing that is confirmed by Van hell et al (2003) & Alber & Walsh (2004, as cited in Mandi, M .2013.p.5) who said that Spelling is an essential and complex skill involving multiple components, including visual memory, phoneme-grapheme awareness, as well as, orthographic and morphophonemic knowledge. It is also defined by Perfetti (1997,as cited in T. Kernagham 2007,p.16) as "the encoding of linguistic forms into written forms". This mean that the students in spelling try to encode the oral language sounds into the written form.

Furthermore, Beers (2003. As cited in Oka.A. p.1) stated that spelling is a developmental process and consists of stages that are compatible with students' understanding of letter-sound relationships. These letter-sound relationships become more meaningful to students as their understanding increases. Since spelling has the essential part in study English, therefore the teacher needs to know how to spell the letters correctly and give good example to their students. Definition presented above show that learning to spell is important because it predicts the amount and quality of written composition in all students' level.

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### **I.2.2. A brief history of English spelling**

According to English spelling society, English has grown from the language brought to Britain in the 5th century by Anglo-Saxon invaders from North Germany. Its history is usually divided into three main phases: old English, Middle English and modern English. Also, M. Habibullayev (2016) confirms that the first English writing system using the Roman alphabet was developed in the 7th century, after St. Augustine brought church Latin to the Saxons in Kent in 597. The language and spelling have both changed a great deal since then. They did not start to resemble current usage until 1348, when a series of plagues helped to end French domination over England and the English language. The system from which current English spelling conventions have developed was the one used by the poet Geoffrey Chaucer, who died in 1400.

Sadly, the orthography he used began to be diluted even during his lifetime. English became re-instated as the official language of England around 1430, after the 100 years war with France ended, and many of the scribes and clerks of court, who had hitherto written only French or Latin, had trouble switching to it. Their difficulties are chiefly responsible for most of the still surviving French spellings in words of French origin (table, double, centre) and spelling inconsistencies, such as 'label - table', 'bubble - double', 'enter - centre'. Most words of French descent have been respell to show their changed, anglicized pronunciation (e.g. 'beef, battle, budge, count, government, mountain' - from 'boeuf, bouger, bataille, compter, gouvernement, montagne'), or respell unfathomably (people - people). Chaucer's spelling system became even more seriously corrupted after 1476, when Caxton returned to London after 30 years on the Continent, to set up the first English printing press. To help him in this enterprise, he brought with him printers from Belgium who spoke little or no English and therefore made numerous spelling errors (e.g. 'any, busy, citie' for 'eny, bisy, cittie').

They were also paid by the line and fond of lengthening words to earn more money, or to make margins look neater. Many words with earlier simpler spellings became more complex and longer (frend - friend, hed - head, seson - season; fondnes - fondnesse, bad - badde, shal - shall). English spelling is complex process so that it had changes over time.

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### **I.2.3. Spelling errors**

It is important to distinguish first between errors and mistakes. According to Ellis (1979, as cited in Amir Kusuran, p.5) who confirms that Spelling errors are when a learner consistently makes the same misspellings over and over again, because they do not know what is correct. Spelling mistakes, on the other hand, are when a learner only occasionally misspells a word which they most of the time spell correctly. Cook (1999) concluded that English spelling errors can be classified into four main types of spelling errors; namely, omission, substitution, transposition and insertion errors.

### **I.2.4. Types of spelling errors**

Spelling errors is an essential part of linguistic analysis that is classified by Cook (1999, as cited in Al-Oudat, A 2017) into four types: Substitution errors, Omission errors, Insertion errors, Transposition errors.

#### **2.4.1. Substitution errors**

This type of errors is the automatic replacement of one item in a sentence, strategy, word, or phoneme when the specific information is forgotten or unknown. It mainly deals with letters (consonant) replaced by incorrect one. Chomsky (1959, as cited in Bosiwah (2015)) asserted that most learners in their error testing, tend to add certain letters which are not required or in other cases, substitute certain letters which are rather required in a word with other different letters which are rather not required.

#### **2.4.2. Omission errors**

Omission errors happen when learners miss a letter out of a word. This is common when words contain a double letter somewhere. The word 'misspell', for example, is often misspelled as 'mispell'. It has to do with exclusion of letters from words spelled. Based on the written form of the participants,

#### **2.4.3. Insertion errors**

This type of errors mainly appeared because of the addition of extra letters in a word as a result to the lack of knowledge and learners tend to write the words as they heard it. In other words, the insertion errors have a strong relationship with pronunciation errors, because the students write as they hear.



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### **2.4.4. Transposition errors**

Also called miss ordering, it is the errors that deals with letters when switched places such as in 'frined' for 'friend', this error type could be attributed to students' carelessness. To conclude, the process of spelling in a second language is challenging where learners are expected to be talent and aware, far from this errors and teachers as well.

### **1.2.5. Causes of spelling errors**

Spelling is the ability of the learners to write word correctly, because English spelling system is a complex process that comprises many errors from different couses. Al-Bereiki (2016, pp.21.24) asserted that spelling errors influenced by many causes:

#### **5.1. Influence of mother tongue:**

ESL/EFL learners are influenced by their particular mother tongues. For example, the Chinese language is a character based script that employs the visual route in its writing system. Whereas other languages such as Spanish are alphabet-based scripts that follow the phonological route in their writing systems. According to Cook, a Chinese learner of English who has largely acquired language symbols for different Chinese words may therefore find it relatively easy to learn English spellings visually.

English spelling can be influenced by many factors that lead learners to face many difficulties. Corder(1993) explained that the L1 of the learner causes serious difficulties if the two languages are 'linguistically distant' like English and Arabic. Specifically, an Arab learner of English will most probably look for sound-letter relationships since s/he is used to rely greatly on phonetic bases. Arabic is a semantic language with non-Roman alphabet. Its script is cursive and written from right to left. There are 28 letters in Arabic. Out of the 28 letters, there are 3 vowels, 15 letters that are dotted: 10 have one dot, 3 have two dots and 2 have three dots. The Arabic language does not have capital letters and does not use hyphens. To sum up, ESL and EFL learners have their first language as an additional resource making their spelling development different from English monolinguals.

#### **5.2. Nature of the English language**

It is important to understand the nature of the English language or orthography in order to gain insight about the difficulties learners face when learning English spelling. It is crucial to know the meaning of orthography. In Merriam-Webster electronic dictionary

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(2012), orthography is “a part of language study that deals with letters and spelling”. In other word it means the correct combinations of letters that make up accurate words. Cook (1997) believes that the complexity of the English spelling system is merely a matter of regularities of letter combinations not a matter of sound-letter correspondences or individual visual forms. In English language there is a various number of letter combinations for a single sound that can be a serious cause of learners’ misspellings, because the English spelling has many rules with different exceptions.

### **5.3. Syllabi and classroom instruction**

Students’ difficulties in spelling may be attributed to lack of appropriate classroom instruction. Most of the teachers believed that “spelling was not adequately addressed in the elementary curriculum” and “that students today spell worse than students did in the past”. Warda (2005) added the point that teachers can no longer provide individualized instruction because of loaded curriculum requirements, increasing classroom sizes and decreasing education budgets. Furthermore, individuals in one classroom prefer different learning styles. Some are visual learners, others are auditory or kinesthetic. Most classroom environments lack the use of various teaching methods that realize the various learning styles of the individuals which may contribute to learners’ low level in spelling skills.

### **5.4. Teachers’ education and training**

Teachers and methods of teaching play a crucial role in the success of learners. Likewise, teachers’ education and training may contribute to learners’ difficulties. Teachers are not fully aware of how to teach spelling and they may as well lack the knowledge on how to deal with learners’ misspelling. In addition to, they were not taught many spelling rules during their college study and they did not receive a specified training in the topic of spelling. One can conclude that teachers’ insufficient knowledge about spelling rules and patterns may affect classroom instruction negatively as teachers would not be able to deal with learner’s’ apparent spelling difficulties. The different causes mentioned above are referring to the lack of adopting different techniques of teaching spelling in classroom. In other words, learning spelling is described as multi-sensory process, this mean that it involves different strategies.

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## **I.2.6. The most effective learning technique in spelling**

Good spellers are simply those people who learn the most effective spelling strategies and apply them on a routine basis. According to Richard (nd) who said that learners who wants to improve their spelling, they have to follow the effective learning technique which are five: self-testing, Self-explanation, Elaborative interrogation, distributed practice, and interleaved practice.

### **6.1. Self-testing**

In this technique the student have to take a pretest on the very first day in every weekly unit. They found out what words they need to learn, focus on studying these unknown words, and take a Friday test to find out if they have mastered the unknown words. In other words the learner has to rely on himself in learning, repeating and using the new words. Students can really benefit from testing themselves as they study by using something as simple as flashcards. However, the key is to not drop a flashcard once you feel you have mastered the material. Keep it as part of your guide and keep practicing retrieval of that information.

### **6.2. Self-explanation**

Self-Explanation is the practice of thinking out loud. In which learners talk to themselves as they work on a problem, in order to force a conscious awareness of the process they mind are going through. They ask questions, work on specific answers, try different solution paths, comment on mistakes, identify changes in approach, and so forth. As the name implies, they are explaining to them self what they are doing and thinking. In other words, the student needs to explain to themselves how a particular spelling pattern works for English spelling. For example, we have them explain how a word sort relates to what they already know. With self-explanation, students are building on what they already know and relating it to what they are learning.

### **6.3. Elaborative interrogation**

The strategy is one that focuses on enhancing memory. It brings out facts that are learned by encouraging students to generate “Why” questions after reading the material. It is

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based on each week students have to explain to themselves why patterned words are spelled in certain ways. In other word the students asked and interrogate themselves about the spelled words in order to master spelling they should learn together to feed each others.

### **6.4. Distributed practice**

Distributed practice is a process in which the teacher deliberately arranges for their students to practice a skill or use knowledge in many learning sessions that are short in length and distributed over time. For more explanation, this techniques deal with the distribution of practice across the instructional week by offering strategies for students to practice their words in different ways. It is considered as the most effective technique for students.

### **6.5. Interleaved practice**

Interleaving is a process where students mix, or interleave, multiple subjects or topics while they study in order to improve their learning. It is based on each week and each unit that contains efficient, daily practice activities in which the student revisits the words every day. This “leave it and come back to it” approach is a very effective learning technique. The above techniques are the most ones that are suggested by psychologists and educators in order to adopt by students in learning spelling.

### **I.2.7. The developmental stages in spelling acquisition**

Learners progress through certain stages Learners spelling develop through stages that allow teachers to compel it by instructions. According to Westwood (2005) the developmental stages are restricted by the age level that has been suggested by each bellow stages. students progress through stages of spelling development. This progression allow teachers to compel it by instructions because understanding spelling is a matter of understanding word study that seeks to teach student at their own level of development. According to Westwood (2005) the developmental stages are restricted by the age level that has been suggested by each stage.

**Pre- phonemic:** 3+ years to 5+ years.

In this stage the child imitates writing by copying down or inventing random strings of letters. The letters are used strongly related to the child’s own name at early age. In

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addition to the use of letters from the alphabet but it shows no knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. The child may also lack knowledge of the entire alphabet, the distinction between upper- and lower-case letters, and the left-to-right direction of English orthography. It is also called pre-communicative stage.

**Early phonetic:** 4+ years to 6+ years.

In this stage the child begins to understand letter-sound correspondence — that sounds are assigned to letters. At this stage, the child often employs rudimentary logic, using single letters, for example, to represent words, sounds, and syllables (e.g., U for *you*). In addition the child begins to use incidentally acquired knowledge of letter names and sounds in an attempt to write words. It is also called semi phonetic stage.

**Phonetic:** 5+ years to 7 years.

This phase is described that Children use a letter or group of letters to represent every oral sound that they hear in a word. Although some of their choices do not conform to conventional English spelling, their attempts to spell words are systematic and easily understood (e.g., the letter *en* for *in*).

**Stage 4: transitional:** 6 years to 11+ years.

At this stage there is evidence that students have received a much more sophisticated comprehending of word structure. The speller begins to assimilate the conventional alternative for representing sounds, moving from dependence only or mainly on phonology (sound) for representing words, to evidencing a greater understanding of common letter patterns in words and the structure of words.

**Independence:** From 11+ years.

At the independent stage students are competent. Independent spellers are able to use multiple strategy approach when trying to spell unknown words. At the stage of independence most students do comprehend and can apply a wide range of complex grapho-phonetic principles. Occasionally a word will still give the individual some difficulty; but he or she will have available for use a very wide range of strategies for checking and self-correcting words.

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To sum up, the children move through all above phases at different age. Development in spelling is individual ability and learning style.

### **Conclusion**

To conclude, dictation and spelling are interrelated part because dictation is a powerful testing and teaching technique. It may give important information. In addition to, it support and motivate learners. This technique has numerous factors that help teachers to select the appropriate task for different classes with different levels; but the most important benefit is that it enhances the spelling which is an important aspect of writing and a complex system that needs a lot of practice to be mastered by EFL learners.

## **Chapter Two: Data Analysis and Findings**

### **Introduction**

This chapter represents the English practical part which includes the collection of Data from first year LMD students and teachers at the Department of Foreign Languages at Biskra University. Therefore, we have prepared a questionnaire were administered to teachers and test done to the students. Besides, this chapter includes the description and analysis of questionnaire, in addition to documents analysis.

### **II.1. Research tools**

In exploring the role of dictation on students spelling, a structured Questionnaire is designed and administered for teachers. It consists of closed question and document analysis of student that based on written passages.

#### **1.1. Description of teacher questionnaire**

In the current research, we used a structured questionnaire, which is easy to be understood by everyone. This questionnaire includes close ended questions. The former aims are made to give the opportunity to the participants to present their viewpoints about dictation feedback. This instrument consists of 14 questions divided into three sections. The first section deals with teachers general information contains two questions that aim to identify teachers' experience in teaching English language and their degrees (Q1 Q2). The second section contains seven questions. It is the most important part of the questionnaires which inspects the frequency of using dictation, teachers' point of views and perceptions towards dictation feedback use and its importance. Finally, the last section contains four questions. It seeks teachers' perceptions of spelling and its importance.

#### **1.2. Description of document analysis**

Concerning the document analysis we used 16 documents. It is based on short passage chosen from middle school book of English dictated to first year students in order to discover their error in spelling. In this study we are supposed to analyze their document before and after giving a feedback.

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### II.2. Document analysis before the feed back

This section offers the analysis of documents in order to gather the spelling errors committed by 16 English students at Biskra University after dictation of a short passage. We examine each type of errors (substitution, omission, addition, transposition) as follows:

Type of spelling errors	Frequency
Substitution	12
Omission	11
Insertion(addition)	8
Transposition(miss ordering)	1

**Table 1: student spelling errors before feedback**

Table3.4.1 indicates that the students make different types of spelling errors while writing before feedback. The errors of substitution were the most frequent errors in the samples produced by the students (12). While, the omission errors is less than the substitution type (11). Whereas, the insertion type is (8) and transposition error is the least one (1). As a results this different spelling errors among first year student lead teacher to adopt dictation as an effective method to discover their weaknesses in spelling in order to work on improving their spelling level by giving them a feedback.

### II.3. Document analysis after the feedback

After discovering the spelling errors and give on it a feedback we re-dictate the same passage for the second time in order to reanalyzed it and see if they are take the comment into consideration and check if they are improved or not. The results are illustrated as the following:

Type of spelling error	Frequency
Substitution	3
Omission	1
Insertion	1
Transposition	0

**Table 2. Student spelling error after feedback**



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Table 3.1 shows the results of the student spelling error after the feedback. We notice that all type of error is decreased after the feedback. The substitution is declined to ( 3). While, omission and insertion are equally reduced to (1) and for the transposition type is totally disappeared (0). Thus, the noticeable decline in spelling error among first year student after the feedback mean that the students are improved and benefit from the feedback.

### II.4. Student spelling error without feedback

In this part we are going to analyze document of another group in which we dictate the same passage twice without giving any feedback in order to know their spelling errors. The results were demonstrated in the table below:

Type of spelling error	Frequency
Substitution	13
Omission	4
Insertion	6
Transposition	1

**Table 3. Student spelling errors without feedback**

The table above reveals the student spelling errors committed by student without any feedback. As such, substitution errors 13, the omission errors 4, the insertion 6 and the transposition 1. The results are near to the results of students before feedback this confirm that feedback on dictation is beneficial to enhance student spelling.

### II.5. The comparison between students spelling errors before, after, without feedback

In this part we are going to compare the results obtained from document analysis before, after and without feedback in order to know if the feedback is important for student or not.

Types of spelling errors	Before the feedback	After the feedback	Without the feedback
Substitution	12	3	13
Omission	11	1	4
Insertion	8	1	6
Transposition	1	0	1

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**Table5.1. Students spelling errors before, after and without feedback.**

The table above shows the results of students spelling error in different condition before, after and without feedback. If we compare the three student spelling errors, we find that the student commit higher number of spelling error before and without giving any feedback while they commit less number of spelling errors after giving feedback to them. This means that the students are benefit from the feedback and they improved to the best. To conclude, the feedback is important for learners to enhance their spelling.

### II.6. Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers serve the researcher with helpful answers that are analyzed as follows:

#### Section one: General Information

The first section aims to identify teachers' diplomas and experience in teaching English Language at university.

**Question1:** Experience in teaching English at university:

<b>Teachers</b>	Teacher1	Taecher2	Teacher3	Teacher4	Teacher5	Teacher6
<b>Years of experience</b>	15	12	10	8	7	4

**Table 4. Teachers teaching experience.**

The table above shows the teachers experience in teaching at the university ordered from the long experience (15year) to the short one (4years). From the answers provide in the table 3.8.1 we notice that each individual in the sample (6 teachers) has his/her own experience in teaching. This data indicate that the three first teachers has a long experience because they have teaching at the university more than ten years (teacher1:15, teacher2:12, teacher3:10). However, the other three teachers have a medium and short experience because it is less than 10 years (teacher4:8, teacher5:7, teacher6:4).

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Question2: Degree:

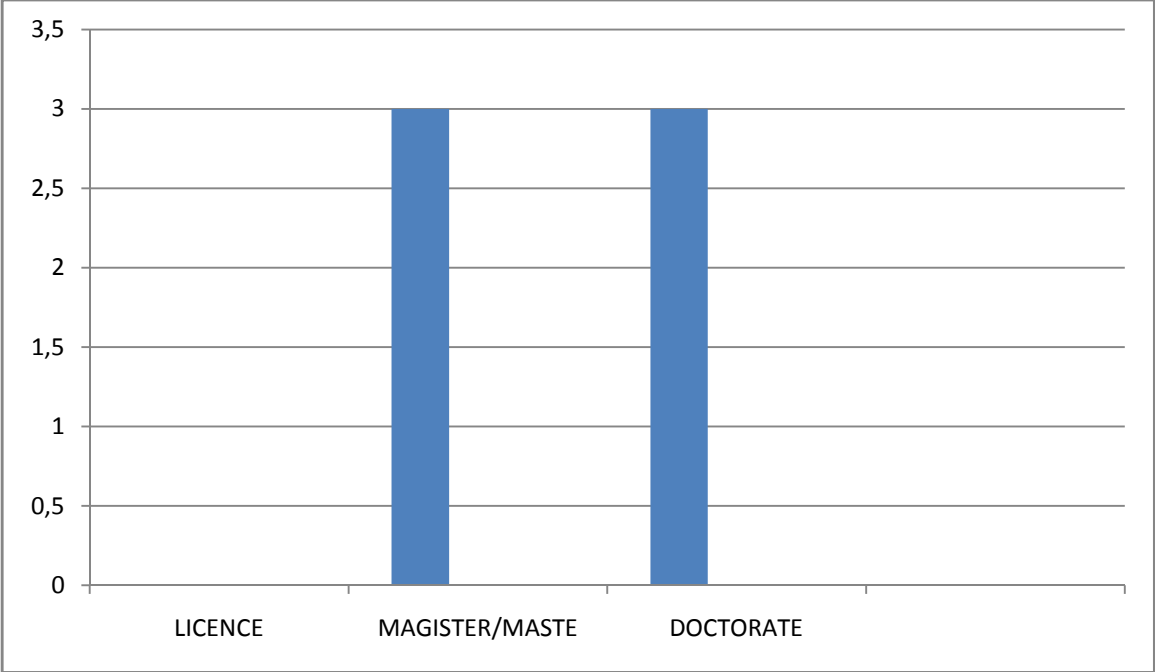


Figure6.2. Teachers’ diplomas

The teachers who participated to answer this questionnaire hold various degrees: three (3) from six teachers have magister degree. While have a doctorate degree the other three teacher. None of participants have a licence degree. This data shows that the participants will serve us with different opinion about dictation and spelling.

## Section two: Dictation

Question3: do you use dictation in the classroom during the course?

Option	frequency
Yes	6
No	0

Table 5. Teachers use of dictation in the classroom

The table above reveals that the most participant (6) answered positively, and none of them answer negatively. This clearly shows the importance of dictation.

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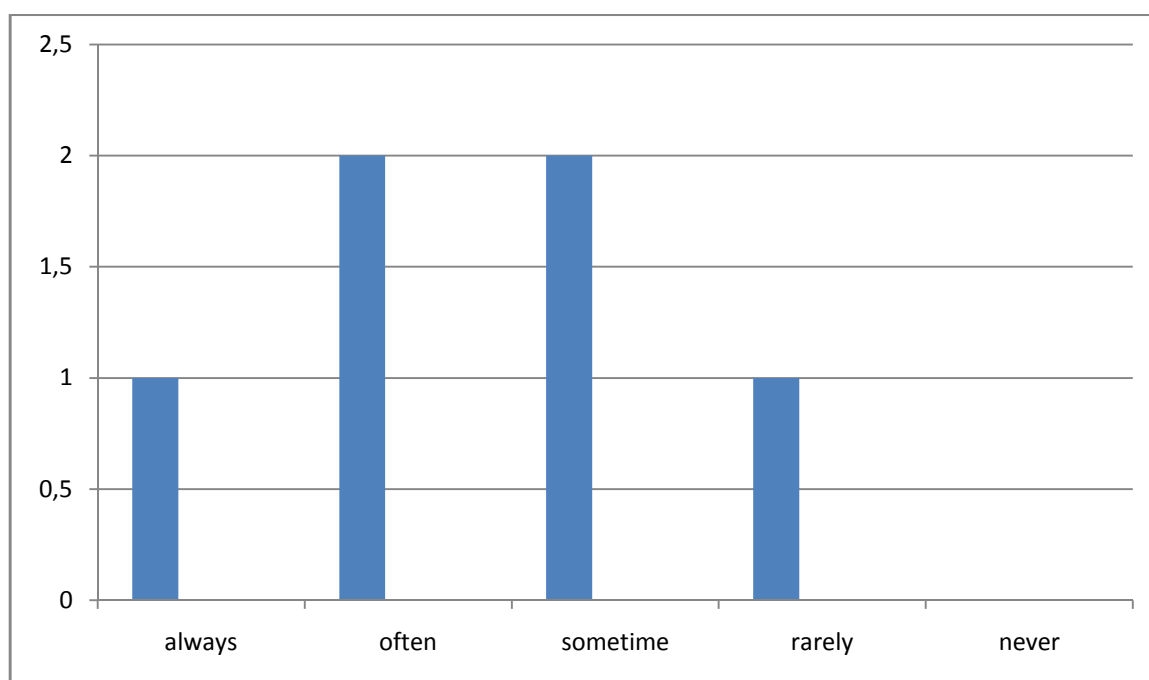
**Question4.** If yes, what type of material you prefer to use from:

option	Frequency
handout	0
books	2
Both	4

**Table6.** Frequency of teachers kind of material used

The table 3.8.4 present kinds of material used between handout and books. The data shows that none of teacher used them and two teachers use books material. While the other four teacher are relying on both handouts and books.

**Question5:** How often do you give dictation to your student?



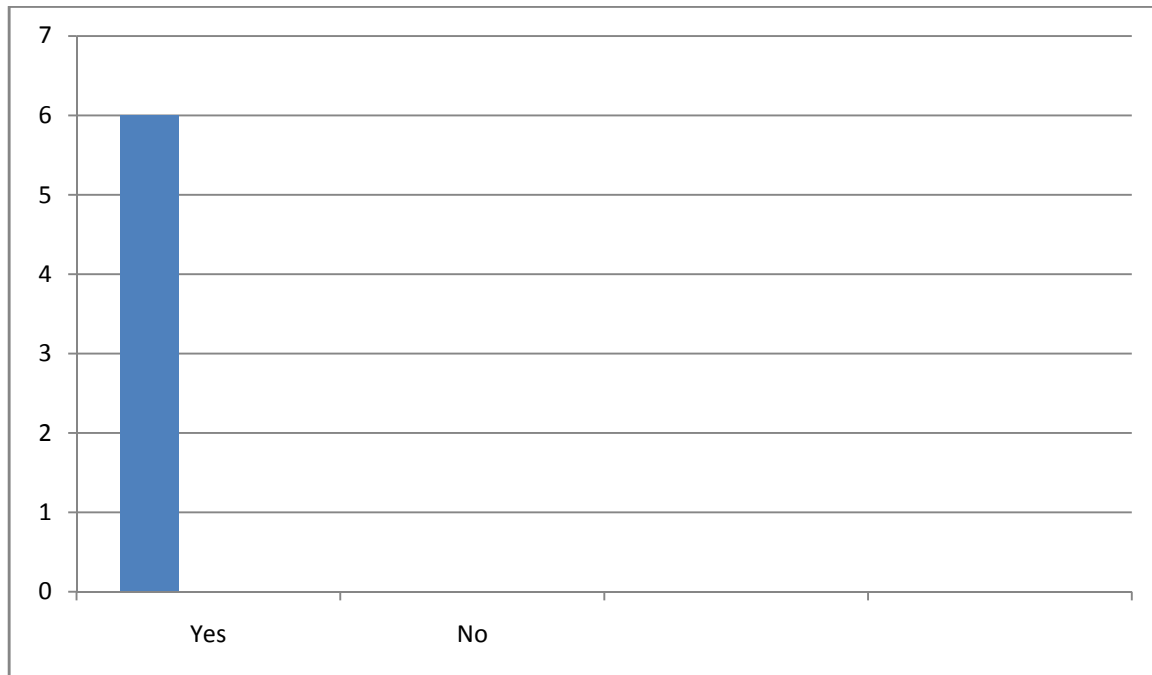
**Figure6.5.** frequency of using dictation to the students

The purpose of this question is to know how often teachers use the dictation in classroom to their students. One teacher state s/he always use dictation, two teachers say often and othe two teacher say sometime as it illustrated in the graphs3.8.5. Whereas, only one teacher say rarely and none say never.

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**Question6.** In your opinion, do you think that dictation is a useful teaching technique?



**Figure6.6. Teachers opinion on the usefulness of dictation**

The results of this question show that all six teachers said that dictation is a useful teaching technique.

**Question7.** What kind of language skills did dictation improve in your opinion?

option	frequency
grammar	0
vocabulary	0
punctuation	0
spelling	1
pronunciation	0
All of them	2
b.c.d.e.	1
b. d. e.	1
a. b. d.	1

**Table7. Language skills dictation improved in students**

The present question is intended to know the aspects of language that dictation improved in students as teachers use it. It is noticeable in the above table and graph that

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teachers choose multiple answers except for one who did choose one option. One teacher says that dictation improved spelling. Other teacher says that punctuation, pronunciation and grammar are improved by dictation. Two teachers say that dictation improve all the choice given grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and pronunciation. One teacher says that dictation improves vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and pronunciation, and lastly, one teacher indicate that grammar, vocabulary and spelling are improved by dictation. This clearly means that dictation is a useful and important technique because it improves many skills and aspects.

**Question8.**Do you give a feedback on dictation to your students?

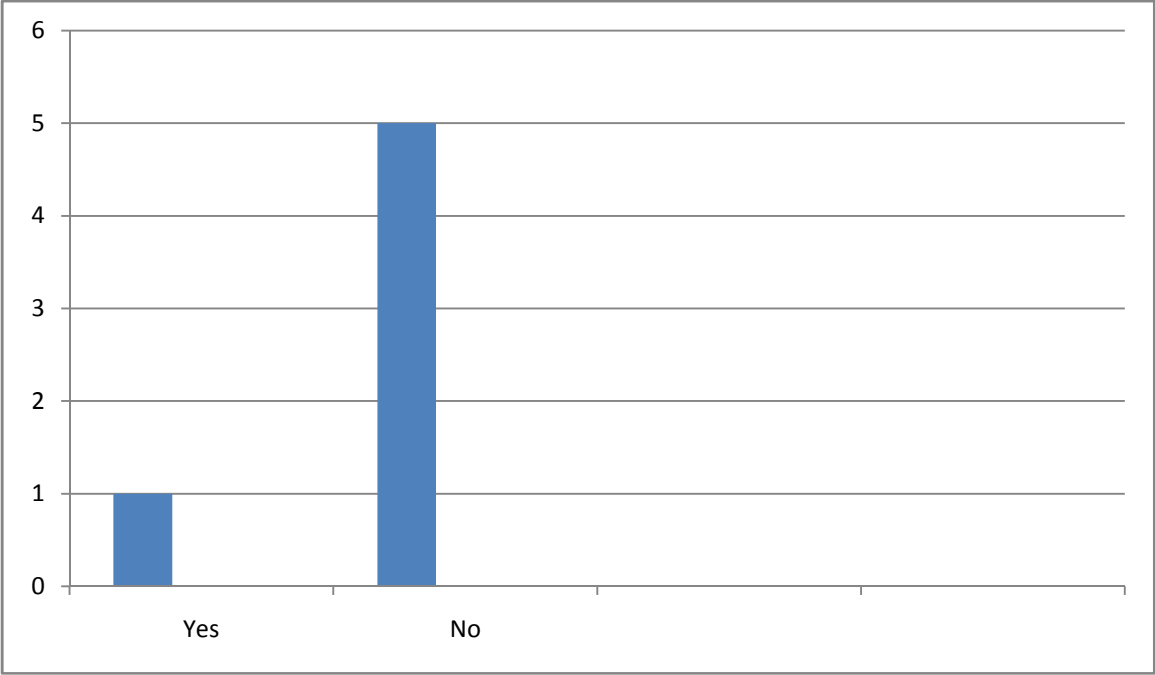
<b>option</b>	<b>frequency</b>
Yes	5
No	1

**Table8. teacher opinion on given feedback**

Concerning this question, the table above indicates that the majority of teachers (5) answers positively and gives a feedback to their student and only one teacher who answer negatively.

**Question9.** Do you use the dictation task as a test to assess your students?

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**Figure6.9. Teachers view on using dictation as assessment task**

This question aims to know the teachers view on using dictation as an assessment task. As a result, only one teacher from 6 who answer positively and the last five teachers answer in a negative way.

**Section Three: Spelling**

**Question10.** Do you think that spelling is important?

option	frequency
Yes	6
No	0

**Table 6.10. Teachers views on the importance of spelling**

This question aims to know teachers’ views regarding the importance of spelling skill. As clearly revealed above in the table, all teachers (6) agree that spelling is important.

**Question11.** How often you spell words to your students?

option	frequency
always	0

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often	5
rarely	1
never	0

**Table6.11. Frequency of spelling words to students**

The table above shows the frequency of spelling words to student. The majority of teachers (5) say that they often spell words to their student and only one teacher who say rarely.

**Question12.** Do you ask your students to bring dictionaries to check the spelling of words?

option	frequency
Yes	5
No	1

**Table6.12. Teachers views on bringing dictionaries**

In their responses to this question, as shown in Table3.8.12 and illustrated in Graph3.8.12. which seeks to find out whether the teacher ask their students to bring dictionaries to check spelling or not. Most of teachers (5) say yes and only one teacher say no.

**Question13.** Do you give much more attention to the spelling?

option	frequency
Yes	5
No	1

**Table6.13. Frequency of teachers' attention on spelling**

As shown in the table above, five teachers say that they pay much more attention to the spelling. While only one teacher who ignores it. The obtained results show clearly the importance of spelling.

**Question14.** Do you give feedback to your students?



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option	frequency
Yes	5
No	1

**Table6.14. frequency of teachers views on giving feedback**

In this question, teachers are invited to state whether they provide their students with feedback or not. According to the results reveal in Table 6.14 and illustrated in the graph 3.8.14 five teachers respond “yes”, they do provide their students with feedback and only one respond “No”.

### **II.7. Discussion of document analysis and teachers questionnaire findings**

This study assures that dictation feedback is significant to develop and improve students’ spelling and other skills. This is based on the data collected from document analysis and teachers’ questionnaire. Now, we are going to discuss these findings.

#### **7.1 Discussion of document analysis**

On the basis of the document analysis of dictated passage on students, we have noted some important results about dictation feedback and student spelling. After dictating the same short passage on student in three stages (before, after and without) of giving feedback and starting the analysis of document we see that the students commit many spelling errors when they do not receive a feedback. However the results improved and the spelling errors reduce while student receive a feedback. The aim of document analysis in this study is to know the importance of feedback on enhancing the students’ level in spelling. Even though the sample is small but it confirm the hypothesis and its results shows clearly the importance of the feedback on students spelling.

#### **7.2 Discussion of teachers’ questionnaire**

The data obtained from teachers’ questionnaire revealed some substantial results concerning the relationship between our variables, dictation and spelling. First, all teachers have a very long experience in teaching the English language, language, which allows them to judge, evaluate and provide answers thoroughly. Accordingly, half of the teachers have the Doctorate degree and the other half have a magistere degree, which once more reflects their

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large experience. Second, the teachers stated that they often and sometime use dictation in the classroom, and they believe that it is a useful technique. Third, teachers were asked about the material used in dictation task, most of teachers declare that they rely on handouts and books.

Furthermore, what is noticeable is that dictation, according the teachers, developed several language skills in their students, this signifies the importance of this effective teaching technique to teachers. Moreover, concerning the spelling, all teachers declare that it is important aspect and they give much more attention to it. Accordingly, teachers stated that they give a feedback to their student to enhance their spelling, so, that the teachers say that they used the dictation task to assess the students in spelling. Finally, when teachers asked about the importance of spelling, all teachers confirm that and spot the light on its importance.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion to this chapter, the document analysis and teachers questionnaire results have revealed the effectiveness of dictation technique and how it can improve the student spelling. On the whole, the findings have shown some significant, the students still face difficulties in spelling. Also giving feedback to student is important for them to improve their spelling. Additionally, the findings display the effectiveness of dictation to support the impact of this teaching technique in enhancing the spelling level of first year students at the department of foreign languages at Biskra University. In short, dictation is a useful teaching technique through which various skills can be promoted, particularly spelling.

### **Pedagogical Recommendations**

After obtaining data and analyzing them, we suggest the following recommendations:

- Teachers need to provide their students with dictation task in order to meet their weaknesses in spelling.
- Teachers need to give much more attention to spelling by giving time to practice it.
- Teachers need to choose a suitable passage in dictation task that suits students' level.
- Students need to practice spelling outside classroom by using dictionaries. i.e. when they came back home they try to use dictionary to spell and transcribe the new words used during the session.
- Using dictation help student to master spelling.
- Teachers need to use dictation task as a test to assess students' level.

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### **Pedagogical Implications**

English students struggle with many language problems. These problems can be addressed by teachers by adopting the suitable teaching technique. Dictation can help students to develop many skills and overcome many difficulties. It also helps them to improve their spelling. In addition, dictation feedback increase the students' ability in recognize the written form of word and differentiate between similar ones.

In sum, dictation is closely related to spelling. They are two inseparable activities. Dictation can be used as a teaching technique as well as a testing device to check students' Develops in language proficiency and spelling as well. This research can provide new insight into the importance and the effectiveness of dictation feedback in developing spelling. So, teachers should be aware of how to use dictation because its success is ensured by selecting the appropriate type of dictation.

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## **General conclusion**

Spelling is an important aspect of writing in English language. However, most of the students at the Department of Foreign Languages at Biskra University still have problems with spelling. In other words, they cannot spell words correctly. For that reason, the present study aimed to investigate the role of dictation feedback as a technique to enhance students spelling as well as confirm the hypothesis that the use of dictation feedback by teachers in classroom may improve the first year student level in spelling.

This research consists of two chapters; the first chapter is devoted to present a related literature review about the two variables. Within the first chapter we have first part is about dictation, we presented its definition and its types also its benefits, steps in giving dictation and the choice of the passage. Besides, we showed potential problems while giving dictation, feedback conception and its importance. The second part present different definitions of spelling, its history. We have also seen the spelling error definition, its types. In addition, its causes and the most effective learning/ teaching techniques. Finally, intend up with the developmental stages in spelling acquisition. This chapter provides better understanding about this technique and its effectiveness in enhancing students spelling.

The theoretical parts helped us to foreground the practical chapter which encompasses the documents analysis and teachers questionnaire. These two research tools were utilized to gather relevant data on the subject. The obtained results reveal that both teachers and students demonstrate positive attitudes towards the use of dictation feedback dictation because it improves students spelling. Additionally, the findings indicate that teachers should give more attention to spelling aspecthence, it is the basis of the English language. Besides, they should provide their student with feedback in order to enhance their spelling. The most important thing is that the findings also reveal that dictation is beneficial and useful technique in improving students' spelling. Thus, the results confirm our hypothesis.

To conclude, the current research attempt to spot the light on the importance and the effectiveness of dictation feedback in developing students spelling. So, teachers should be aware in selecting the dictation type in order to ensure the success of this task. Finally, future research should be done with a larger population to test the applicability of the findings.

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## APPENDIX

### Teachers Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire aims to collect data about **the role of dictation feedback in enhancing EFL learners spelling**. We would be very grateful if you could take some time to provide us with some answers. Your answers are very important for the success of this work. Please, tick (√) the answer(s) that work best for you.

**Your collaboration is indeed appreciated.**

### Section One: Background Information

1. How long have you been teaching English at the university level?

.....years

2. Degree(s) you have achieved:

a. Licence

b. Magister/Master

c. Doctorate

### Section Two: Dictation

1. Do you use dictation in the classroom during the course?

a. Yes

b. No

2. If yes, what type of material you prefer to use from:

a. handouts

b. books

3. How often do you give dictation to your student?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Sometimes

d. Rarely

e. Never

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4. In your opinion, do you think that dictation is a useful teaching technique?

a. Yes

b. No

5. What kind of language skills did dictation improve in your opinion?

a. Grammar

b. Vocabulary

c. Punctuation

d. Spelling

e. Pronunciation

6. Do you give a feedback on dictation to your student?

a. Yes

b. No

7. Do you use the dictation task as a test to assess your students?

a. Yes

b. No

### **Section three: spelling**

7. Do you think that spelling is important?

a. Yes

b. No

8. How often you spell words to your students?

a. Always

b. Often

c. Rarely

d. Never

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9. Do you asked your students to bring dictionaries to check the spelling of words?

a. Yes

b. No

10. Do you give much more attention to the spelling?

a. Yes

b. No

11. Do you give feedback on spelling to your students?

a. Yes

b. No

**Thank You!**

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### المخلص

الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو استكشاف تأثير ملاحظات الإملاء على تهجئة الطلاب. حيث يعتبر الإملاء جانب مهم في الكتابة إذ يحتاج إلى مزيد من الاهتمام والممارسة. فافتراضنا أن استخدام ملاحظات الإملاء يمكن أن تحسن من مستوى الطلاب. و للتأكد من صحة فرضيتنا اعتمدنا طريقة مختلطة. تهدف إلى وصف المتغيرات: التهجئة كمتغير مستقل والإملاء كمتغير تابع ورؤية تأثير المتغير التابع على المتغير المستقل. استخدمنا لجمع البيانات أدوات بحثية تمثلت في تحليل المستندات واستبيانات للأساتذة. قمنا باختيار عينة من الأساتذة و الطلاب تمثلت في 16 وثيقة لطالب السنة الأولى و 6 أساتذة ، في قسم اللغات الأجنبية ، مجال اللغة الإنجليزية ، جامعة بسكرة. بعد تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها خلصنا على أن الإملاء هو أسلوب التدريس الفعال. إضافة للملاحظات يمكن أن يحسن من الطلاب بشكل إيجابي . و في الأخير و استناداً إلى نتائجنا ، اقترحنا بعض التوصيات والآثار التربوية التي نأمل أن تكون مفيدة للأساتذة في استخدام ملاحظات الإملاء لتدريس أفضل .