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Exploring EFL Students' Awareness about the Use of British or American Varieties of English in Writing.

The Case of Third-year Students of English Language at Biskra University.

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Master Degree in Applied Linguistics (Science of Language)

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Dedication:

To my family.

Acknowledgement:

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Youcef LAALA for providing me with continuous and notable guidance. I thank him for his valuable advice and insightful instructions.

I would like also to thank and give acknowledgements to the members of the jury for spending their time and efforts to read and evaluate this work.

ABSTRACT

This research study sought to find out some causes related to EFL students' deficiencies when producing (English) language in the English language department at Biskra University. One deficiency, most students have, is the inability to realize the differences existing between the two British and American varieties of English. In order to gather information as raw data of this study. The questionnaire was administered first; then, the (diagnostic) test was held, after being designed for third-year License students at the same departement. The former data collection tool aims to gather students' opinions by asking simple questions. However, the latter (data collection tool) aims to diagnose the students' real abilities of differentiating between the two varieties, by exposing them to three different tasks, where mental effort is needed. The present study is limited to the Algerian context, with specific reference to Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, and third-year EFL students as the main target and research group. It is also limited to exploring their level of awareness towards British English and American English during the second semester of 2019-2020 academic scholastic year.

Keywords: British and American varieties of English, EFL, awareness, British English, American English.

List of Abbreviations, Contractions, and Acronyms

AmE: American English.

BrE: British English.

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

ESL: English as a Second Language.

GAE: General American English.

L1: First language, mother tongue.

L2: Second language.

LA: Language awareness.

RH: research hypothesis.

RP: Received Pronunciation.

RQ: research question.

TLA: Teacher language awareness.

UK: the United Kingdom.

USA: the United States of America.

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Appendix A: EFL students' questionnaire.

Appendix B: EFL students' diagnostic test.

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الملخص

General Introduction

1. Study Background

When reviewing the English literature, it is quite easy for almost everyone to notice that many previous works highlighted the differences found in its two main varieties, I e: British and American, in either grammar, vocabulary, semantics, or phonetics and phonology. Some of the books to be mentioned here, as an example, are; Glenn Darragh's book entitled "*A to Zed, A to Zee. A guide to the differences between British and American English*", Christopher Davies' book which is entitled "*Divided by a common language*", and the book of "*One Language, Two Grammars? Differences between British and American English*" edited by Gu`nter Rohdenburg and Julia Schlu`ter. However, the aspect of how students see, perceive, and understand those differences is not discussed enough.

EFL learners might learn the standard English language or opt for one of its varieties according to their preferences and needs, the most common two varieties are the American variety, called General American English (GAE or GA), and the British one called Standard British English. These two varieties share a relatively big number of similarities since they both belong to the English language. Yet, the differences do exist, and they are easily observed by advanced EFL learners of English language at the levels of pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling, and grammar.

2. Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, a widely spread and frequent phenomenon among the students of EFL classes is the tendency of having a certain inclination towards a specific variation of English. Majorly, it is either British English or American English. However, those students themselves may not have the required background, which allows them to know the differences between the two, be aware of its importance, and stick to the one they prefer.

Such a phenomenon surely affects students' written and spoken performance. The reason why it should be studied carefully as soon as possible; to explore the extent to which

students of third-year classes are able to distinguish between the English varieties, especially American and British English. It is predicted that the results might be unpleasant; however, it is highly recommended to face the real world, diagnose the situation, and find the most suitable and practical solutions.

3. Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: Are third-year students of the English language able to draw a clear distinction between the two varieties?

RQ2: What are the causes behind students' confusion about the use of American or British varieties of English in the writing skill?

RQ3: How can students' awareness be interpreted and/or reflected through the students' writings?

RQ4: How could we qualify the importance of choosing one specific variation and being consistent when writing academic papers for students of English at Biskra University?

4. Research Hypotheses

Based on the above research questions, we propose the following research hypotheses:

RH1: Students might be able to detect some differences that are exclusively related to speaking and pronunciation; however, differences related to writing, lexis, and semantics might be totally neglected.

RH2: Some causes could be: lack of knowledge, unawareness of its importance, inability to memorise the differences, or being careless.

RH3: Since the difference between the two varieties is not a subtle one, it might be logical and acceptable that students with a higher level of awareness will outperform their mates whether in academic writing or oral speech.

RH4: Up till now, there might be no official rule which obliges students to have only one variation; however, it is important and highly recommended to stick to one variety to produce a coherent speech (written or spoken), which could be easily understood.

5. Aims of the Study

General Aim:

The present study is designed to determine the extent to which the student is aware of the use of different varieties (accents or dialects) that exist in the English language in general, and the differences existing between the American and British variations of English in particular. Because of some constraints such as; Time limitation, lack of financial support...etc, the study will focus on the writing aspect of the students' use of the two varieties. Nevertheless, some hints will be made about the spoken/ phonological difference.

Specific Aims: This study aims to:

- a. Discover if third-year students of English language are able to draw a clear distinction between the two varieties, or not.
- b. Discover the causes leading to students' confusion about the use of American or British varieties of English.
- c. Discover students' awareness of the use of the two varieties

6. Research Methodology

- Research Approach

Since the study between hands tends to explore a phenomenon and deeply understand its unknown aspects and peculiarities, the chosen approach is the qualitative. Qualitative research works with a wide range of data. As for the study between hands, data are collected differently. The researcher collected data through a questionnaire, a test, online research, and literature research.

- Research Design:

The research design is a plan of action to guide a researcher to conduct their study. This dissertation will be divided into three chapters. Chapter one will be about introducing “the difference between American and British varieties of English, (in writing)”. On the other hand, chapter two will be concerned with introducing “Introducing Students’ Awareness of the Use of the Two Varieties”. The third chapter was supposed to be wholly dedicated to the fieldwork. However, it is the ‘methodology chapter’.

- Data Collection Methods / Tools

The study relies on two (02) complementary techniques:

- First, Questionnaire.
- Second, a diagnostic test.

From a general perspective, this testing is used to "diagnose" what skills a student has demonstrated proficiency on. Diagnostic testing often measures for student misconceptions or where students are in stages along a progression, such as by grade level, of concepts, or skills. In this study specifically, the test is used to diagnose/ discover students' awareness real ability in differentiating between the two varieties/ detecting the differences in writing. It will be composed of three tasks; each represents one aspect of the language (grammar, vocabulary/word choice, spelling/word building).

7. Population & Sample

The population is the group of people whom the study is about. The target population consists of all the people to whom the survey's findings are to be applied. The chosen population for this study would be third-year students of English at Biskra University (Around 372 students). The choice is based on the students' learning background; since they have been learning the target language for three years at university, they took phonetics course for two years (first and second year), where they normally have been exposed to different accents of the target language, as well as the grammar course, they also studied and

still studying the oral expression and written expression courses. Students with such features are supposed to have a considerable amount of knowledge about the language's varieties, and that what makes them quite suitable for the current study.

The sample is the group of participants whom the researcher actually examines in an empirical investigation. Since, it is not possible to deal with all third-year students (because of time constraints, financial support, and methodology standards), a representative sample will be taken. The main characteristics of the students who are included in the current sample are:

- All students are studying at the University of Biskra.
- All students belong to the English language division.
- Both genders are included.
- All students are carrying out their third-year licence level during the 2019/2020 academic year.

After taking all the aforementioned characteristics into account, it should be noted that the students whom the sample is composed of are chosen haphazardly. In other words, one of the non-probability samplings was opted for in this study, which is the 'convenience sampling'. Since, qualitative research typically relies on the necessity to use smaller samples of participants, any number of participants was, to a certain extent, acceptable.

8. Significance of the Study

This research (dissertation) is meant to explore students', as well as teachers', awareness of the differences existing between British and American English, and how they use the two varieties in academia, especially when it comes to writing. Since the written aspect is more focused on in academic settings, this study will help third-year students of English to know their real situation/attitudes towards English language varieties, so that they can set clear and specific plans. The latter can help them to recover the deficiency. The topic

was chosen based on the researcher's own observation over four years at the University of Biskra, where the issue is widely spread among students, and almost totally neglected by teachers and administrators. This research is quite suitable and beneficial to the department of English language at Biskra University.

CHAPTER ONE

**Introducing the Written Differences between American and British
Varieties of English
(spelling/word building, vocabulary/word choice, and grammar)**

Introduction

It was once said that “A language is a dialect with an army and a navy.” The latter quotation had a great impact on the linguistics field. Since, it hinted to some complexities regarding language, such as the difference between language and dialect, the social effect on languages and dialects, the strength of some varieties and their effect on others, and language development through years and decades. Yaman (2015) stated: “Languages are living things and just like human beings they go through the processes of birth, growth, change, and death. These natural processes occur with the passage of years, decades, and centuries.”It can be said that Language is a human system of communication that uses arbitrary signals, such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols. Sapir (1921,p.12) considers language as “ ... a purely human and non instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols”. However, the term ‘language’ cannot be defined linguistically but is a wholly social and political term.

The first chapter of this dissertation is entitled “Introducing the Written Differences between American and British Varieties of English (spelling/word building, vocabulary/word choice, and grammar). It paves the way for readers to understand the topic of research from a broader sense; for instance, by explaining the will-be-used in dissertation words.

1.5. Conceptual Difficulties

Under this title of “conceptual difficulties”, the most important terms related to the study will be presented in addition to their meanings and definitions, which are extracted from reliable sources; In order to ensure the absence of the reader's confusion or misunderstanding, when it comes to those specifically critical terms. Some of these terms might be used interchangeably in real-life situations and might be perceived equally by English language learners in academia. However, the existing subtle difference might be a

source of confusion and a cause of misunderstandings between members of academia, where everything should be clearly presented in order to be easily and quickly perceived.

In the world of linguistics, precise language is important

Terminology: variety/ accent/ dialect/ dialectology/ idiolect/ Received Pronunciation/ native language/ foreign language/ second language/ world Englishes/ American English/ General American English/ British English/ Standard English.

1.5.1. Variety

A variety is a specific form of language or language cluster. This may include languages, dialects, registers, styles, or other forms of language as well as the standard variety. (Meehan and Miller, 2001) as cited in (Watt, 2017). Richards and Schmidt (2010) indicate that “variety or speech variety is “a term sometimes used instead of language, dialect, sociolect, pidgin, Creole, etc. because it is considered more neutral than such terms. It may also be used for different varieties of one language, e.g. American English, Australian English, and Indian English. The latter statement justifies the researcher's use of the term "variety" in the current dissertation; it is to be neutral as much as possible and to avoid entering the dilemma of whether American and British English are accents, dialects, or even two separate languages. In summation, variety is less socio-politically charged, and it is used usually to avoid having to make a language/dialect distinction when talking about linguistics.

1.5.2. Accent

The accent, as defined by David Crystal (2008), is “the cumulative auditory effect of those features of pronunciation, which identify where a person is from, regionally or socially. It refers to pronunciation only and defers from dialect, which refers to grammar and vocabulary as well.” Jack C. Richards and Richard Schmidt (2010) provided a similar definition saying that it is “A particular way of speaking which tells the listener something about the speaker’s background. A person’s pronunciation may show: a- the region or

country they come from, e.g. A northern accent, An American accent; b- what social class they belong to, e.g. A lower-middle-class accent; or c- whether or not the speaker is a native speaker of the language, e.g. She speaks English with an accent/with a German accent.” According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (2010), the accent is simply “A way of pronouncing the words of a language that shows which country, area, or social class a person comes from.”

Pollard and Pollard (2004) state that “Accents are difficult to get right in any language – even your own!– It is unlikely that you could imitate many English-accented well without specialist training or extensive exposure to the accent.” The quote suggests that having a native-like accent of the target language is not an easy task and needs continuous hardwork and exposure to the same accent.

1.5.3. Dialect

“It is a regionally or socially distinctive variety of a language, identified by a particular set of words and grammatical structures. Spoken dialects are usually also associated with a distinctive pronunciation, or accent.” (Crystal, 2008) Crystal pointed out that the distinction between dialect and language seems obvious when it is actually so difficult and complex. (ibid) In other words, the dialect is a variety of a language, spoken in one part of a country (regional dialect), or by people belonging to a particular social class (social dialect or sociolect), which is different in some words, grammar, and/or pronunciation from other forms of the same language. A dialect is often associated with a particular accent. Sometimes a dialect gains status and becomes the standard variety of a country.” (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (2010), “the dialect is the form of a language that is spoken in one area with grammar, words, and pronunciation that may be different from other forms of the same language.” Both accents and dialects can give hints about the speaker's social class, region of origin, and

mother tongue. Dialects are different from each other because they have some different words and structures, in addition to the difference in pronunciation. However, accents have different ways of pronunciation only. This is the fact that makes it possible to say that the accent is one part/ side of the dialect.

1.5.4. Dialectology

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2010), it is "the study of dialects". The specialist in that field of study is called "dialectologist". "Dialectology is the study of the regional variations of a language. Usually, studies in dialectology have concentrated on different words used in various dialects for the same object or on different pronunciations of the same word in different dialects." (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) Furthermore, "Dialectology is the systematic study of all forms of dialects, especially regional dialect". (Crystal, 2008)

1.5.5. Idiolect

Idiolect is the person's own personal variety, i.e. the way of talking specific to one person. According to David Crystal (2008), the linguistic system underlying an individual's use of language in a given time and place is identified by the term idiolect. (pp. 234-235) Thus, the results to be deduced from the definition of 'idiolect' and the aforementioned definition of 'dialect' is that the sum of several interrelated idiolects gives one dialect.

Another definition of 'idiolect' to be introduced is:

The language system of an individual as expressed by the way he or she speaks or writes within the overall system of a particular language. In its widest sense, someone's idiolect includes their way of communicating; for example, their choice of utterances and the way they interpret the utterances made by others. In a narrower sense, an idiolect may include those features, either in speech or writing, which distinguish one individual from others, such as voice quality, pitch, and speech rhythm." (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 269)

1.5.6. Received Pronunciation

It is “the name given to the regionally neutral accent in British English, historically deriving from the prestige speech of the Court and the public schools. The term indicates that its prestige is the result of social factors, not linguistic ones.”(Crystal, 2008) Received Pronunciation, also RP, is the type of British Standard English pronunciation that has been traditionally considered the prestige variety and which shows little or no regional variation. It has often been popularly referred to as "BBC English" because it was until recently the standard pronunciation used by most British Broadcasting Corporation newsreaders. Like all other varieties of language, it has been subject to change over time. (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English, “RP is the abbreviation for “received pronunciation”, which is the standard form of British pronunciation, based on educated speech in southern England. It is the accent most commonly taught in language schools.”Received Pronunciation, which is also called "the Queen's English", "Oxford English" and "BBC English" is frequently used as a model for teaching English to foreign learners. Some of its characteristics are Glottal stop, R-dropping, Diphthongisation, Negative concord, Loss of grammatical number in collective nouns...etc.

1.5.7. Native Language

It is, usually, the language that a person acquires in early childhood because it is spoken in the family and/or it is the language of the country where he or she is living. The native language is often the first language a child acquires but there are exceptions. Children may, for instance, first acquire some knowledge of another language from a nurse or an older relative and only later on acquire a second one which they consider their native language. Sometimes, this term is used synonymously with 'first language'. (Richards & Schmidt, 2010)

1.5.8. Native speaker

The term 'Native Speaker' (NS) is widely used in linguistics, and it is generally related to the place of birth or the place of living of the person. As a result, "it is used to refer to someone for whom a particular language is a first language or mother-tongue." (Crystal, 2008) Being a native speaker of a certain language requires learning or acquiring it at an early age, the thing which allows the native speaker to master their language and gain others' (foreigners') trust and reliability. "The implication is that this native language, having been acquired naturally during childhood, is the one about which a speaker will have the most reliable intuitions, and whose judgements about the way the language is used can therefore be trusted." (ibid) It is usually argued that foreigners will never reach a native-like proficiency, David Crystal hinted to the issue saying:

In investigating a language, accordingly, one is wise to try to obtain information from native-speaking informants, rather than from those who may have learned it as a second or foreign language (even if they are highly proficient). Many people do, however, develop a 'native-like' command of a foreign language. (ibid)

It might be noticed that all what have been talked about concerning 'native speaker' term is exclusively related to the case when a person is exposed to one language only. However, there are cases where the person is exposed to more than one language during their childhood. As a result, the target person will grow up speaking two languages (which is called bilingualism) at least, or three or more languages (which is called multilingualism). "In bilingualism, one has the case of someone who has a native command of two languages." (ibid) In summation, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (2010) defined the term simply and clearly saying that "a person who speaks a language as their first language and has not learned it as a foreign language is a native speaker."

1.5.9. Foreign Language/ non-native language

After presenting the term ‘native language’, it is needed to define its opposite term ‘non-native language’. The latter can be a foreign language or a second language. “The foreign language is the language which is not the native language of large numbers of people in a particular country or region, is not used as a medium of instruction in schools, and is not widely used as a medium of communication in government, media, etc.”(Richards & Schmidt, 2010) Unlike second language, “Foreign languages are typically taught as school subjects for the purpose of communicating with foreigners or for reading printed materials in the language.”(ibid)

1.5.10. Second language

In a broad sense, any language learned after one has learnt one’s native language. However, when contrasted with the foreign language, the term refers more narrowly to a language that plays a major role in a particular country or region though it may not be the first language of many people who use it. For example, the learning of English by immigrants in the US or the learning of Catalan by speakers of Spanish in Catalonia (an autonomous region of Spain) are cases of second (not foreign) language learning, because those languages are necessary for survival in those societies. English is also a second language for many people in countries like Nigeria, India, Singapore, and the Philippines; because English fulfils many important functions in those countries (including the business of education and government), and learning English is necessary to be successful within that context. (Some people in these countries however may acquire English as a first language, if it is the main language used at home.) (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) According to Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English, “it is the language that somebody learns to speak well and that they use for work or at school, but that is not the language they learned first.”

1.5.11. World Englishes

A term proposed by Kachru in 1985, when he proposed the three-circle model to refer to the fact that there are multiple and varied models of English across cultures and that English is not limited to countries where it has traditionally been regarded as a mother tongue. World Englishes thus includes British, American, and Australian as well as other mother tongue Englishes but also newer varieties of English that have emerged in countries that were once colonies and dependencies of the United Kingdom or the USA. These new Englishes are seen to take their place as legitimate varieties of English fulfilling distinctive functions in pluralistic societies such as Singapore, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, Nigeria, and Fiji. (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) World Englishes is a term that is recently invented to reflect the reality of what happens when English becomes a global language. When the English language is adopted by a certain country, it will be adapted to suit the country's circumstances; because, the purpose of language existence is to help us talk about what we want to talk about.

1.5.12. American English/ General American (GA)

GAE is a term used for the majority accent of American English, which conveys little or no information about the speaker's regional background. The accent is used, for example, by most radio and television presenters, and is not without some internal variation, but it is thought of as chiefly excluding speakers with eastern (New England) or southern backgrounds. (Crystal, 2008)

American English, General American English, Network English, and Network standard are all names of the same form of English language that is used in the United States of America. It encompasses all the dialects and accents found in the country, neglecting each one's noticeable and unique characteristics. "General American English/ Standard American English is an accent of American English that is perceived by most Americans to be both standard and neutral (free of regional characteristics). As represented in textbooks for learners of American English and the pronunciations most often given in American English

dictionaries, “General American” was originally modelled after Midwestern dialects, but the concept is not rigidly defined, and speakers from many other parts of the US also claim to speak general or standard American English.” (Richards & Schmidt, 2010) General American English is also known as Network American and it is a non-regional (accent) variety of English that is spoken in the United States especially by newscasters, TV actors, and the middle class of the United States and almost the majority of Americans. Hickey (2014)

1.5.13. British English

According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (2010), “British English is the English language as spoken in Britain and other countries.” Therefore, BrE is the form of English used in the United Kingdom, which includes all the English dialects used there. It is also called UK English, English English, and Anglo-English. According to Merriam Webster Online Dictionary (n. d), “British English is the native language of most inhabitants of England; especially: English characteristic of England and clearly distinguishable from that used elsewhere (as in the U.S. or Australia).” Standard British English is a clear and crisp accent which is a modern evolution of upper-class speech. Famous actors who speak Standard British English include Daniel Craig (James Bond in *Casino Royale*, *Skyfall*, etc.), Robert Pattinson (*Twilight*), Keira Knightly (*Pirates of the Caribbean*), Tom Hardy (*The Dark Knight Rises*), Dame Helen Mirren (*The Queen*).

1.5.14. Standard Variety/ Standard English

“Standard variety is the variety of a language which has the highest status in a community or nation and which is usually based on the speech and writing of educated native speakers of the language. A standard variety is generally: *a*) used in the news media and in literature, *b*) described in dictionaries and grammars *c*) taught in schools and taught to non-native speakers when they learn the language as a foreign language. Sometimes it is the educated variety spoken in the political or cultural centre of a country, e.g. the standard

variety of French is based on educated Parisian French. The standard variety of American English is known as Standard American English and the standard variety of British English is Standard British English. A standard variety may show some variation in pronunciation according to the part of the country where it is spoken, e.g. Standard British English in Scotland, Wales, and Southern England. "Standard English is sometimes used as a cover term for all the national standard varieties of English. These national standard varieties have differences in spelling, vocabulary, grammar, and, particularly, pronunciation, but there is a common core of the language. This makes it possible for educated native speakers of the various national standard varieties of English to communicate with one another." (Richards & Schmidt, 2010)

1.5.15. Academic language

The special registers and genres of language used in the learning of academic subject matter in formal schooling contexts. Learning academic language is essential for mainstreaming second language learners and for students studying English for Academic Purposes. (Richards & Schmidt, 2010)

1.6. Studies dealing with the difference between American and British English

1.6.1. The origins

"In 1789, not long after the American Declaration of Independence, Noah Webster still had reason to believe that British and American English (BrE and AmE) would in the long run drift apart, just like other Germanic dialects that have evolved into the modern languages Dutch, Danish, Swedish, German, etc." (Günter & Julia, 2009)

The differences between the two varieties have been studied over and over since they appeared to cause problems to native speakers, in the first place, and to EFL and ESL speakers, in the second place. When learning English, it is as crucial and necessary to know the differences between American and British English as the understanding of the target

language and its culture are. The most palatable evidence could be the case of misunderstanding during the Second World War; when, according to Winston Churchill, a simple word, 'to table', caused a long and even acrimonious argument between the British and the American. To the former, the word means "to suggest formally in meeting something that you would like everyone to discuss", while for the latter, it has exactly the opposite meaning, that is, "to delay dealing with something such as a proposal until a future time". It is even believed that the representatives of the two nations resorted to an "interpreter" during the war, to avoid further misunderstandings of this kind.

1.7.American English vs. British English (Spelling, Word choice, Grammar)

As opposed to Queen Elizabeth 12, who denied the existence of different varieties of English, saying: "there is no such thing as American English, there is English, and there are mistakes.", David Crystal, the scholar linguist, admits that there do exist various types of English around the globe, since the English language is used everywhere, by different speakers, to perform numerous tasks. The English language, in this case, adapts itself to the situation it is used in. There are several ways in which British English and American English are different. This part of the study will shed light on the three most important aspects of writing English specifically and learning English in general.

1.7.1. Spelling/ word Building

There are a few major spelling differences between British and American English. This is because British English has generally kept the spelling of words that it has taken from other languages; however, American English has changed the spelling to look more like how the word actually sounds when you say it. These changes in the spelling of American English are due to the efforts made by Noah Webster, whom the Webster dictionary named after, in the 1700s, in order to make the words spelled the way they sounded. The absence of awareness of the differences existing between the two varieties of English may lead students

and even teachers to serious problems which may happen repeatedly. Students, as well as teachers, should know which words are spelled differently, which spelling form is American, and which is British.

1.7.2. Vocabulary/ word choice

Word choice is probably the most complicated aspect to English language learners. Some words are used differently and have a completely different meaning in the second country from that used in the first one. For example, the verb "to table" as mentioned above. Second, "the phrase "wash up" means that washing the plates, knives, and forks and so on in the UK. However, when American people say "wash up", they mean washing one's body. But when British people say "I will help you to wash up" to American people, American people may be very surprised because American people think that it means "I will help you wash your body". It may cause sort of misunderstanding. Yet another, the "pavement" refers to the road itself on which vehicles drive. Whereas, the British people call the path alongside the road where pedestrians walk "pavement" and American people call the path "sidewalk"." (Ling, 2015) Another group of words is used in one country and not in the other. At the same time, the other country has its own words and expressions, which replace the former group.

1.7.3. Grammar

“It is well known that British and American English differ substantially in their pronunciation and vocabulary, but differences in their grammar have largely been underestimated.” (Günter & Julia, 2009) It is known for almost every English language speaker that American and British English differ at the phonological level since the British Received Pronunciation and General American differ markedly. However, the issue is a bit different and complicated when we come to talk about the grammatical aspect since the grammatical differences are not as easy to be noticed as the phonological ones; in addition to the fact that "most linguists would probably be inclined to reply that British and American of

course share the same grammar." In fact, if a person is aware of the phonological, lexical, and/or pragmatic differences, it would be quite easy, and more importantly "logical" to know that there are differences in grammar also. "There are many grammatical differences between American and British English. For example, if someone asks if you are hungry but you have just finished your lunch, in British English, you would need to use the present perfect tense, "No, I've eaten already", but in American English, you can use the past tense, "No, I ate already" (this would be incorrect in British English)."

1.8. Teachers' attitudes towards the differences existing between American English and British English

- Without being aware of the differences between British and American English, teachers can hardly deal with this topic in EFL classes.
- Teachers should have the required amount of language awareness, which enables them to: detect the differences when teaching, correct students' mistakes or misunderstandings, draw students' attention to the importance of learning these differences, be consistent, and stick to one variety, preferably if it is the one of the curriculum.
- Teachers are sometimes inclined towards a certain variety. In this case, they should make sure that they are not negatively affecting students or making them confused about what variety to choose.
- Teachers are idols, and most students are good imitators. If the teacher's chosen variety is well-spoken and represented, students will quickly, easily, and happily learn it.
- Students' lack of awareness of the differences might cause them to mix two varieties, at least, when they produce their written or spoken discourse.

CHAPTER TWO

Introducing Students' Awareness of the Use of the Two Varieties.

Introduction:

English native speakers (NSs) who are born in the UK or the USA are supposed to acquire the local spoken variety, be it standard American English, standard British English, or one of the varieties spoken in the two countries. As a result, the issue of sticking with one variety, being aware of it, and the differences among the varieties seem to be an easy task or a skill that everyone has. However, the case is quite different for non-native speakers. Since the non-native speakers of English have learnt or are learning the language after their mother tongue (L1), probably after the critical age, they are learning it consciously. In other words, an amount of awareness should be present in the learning process. For them, it is highly important to distinguish between the spoken varieties of English as a target language to be learnt, specify the characteristics of the well-known ones, and choose what is suitable for the learner considering certain factors such as Easiness, exposure, sources, and the need.

Easiness: it might be related to the person's mother tongue and its relation to the English language, in addition to the purpose of learning the language.

Exposure: it concerns mainly the person's living place, and if it is far or near to the target variety of English language.

Sources: it is recommended to check the variety used in any course or book before the person (learner) books for it. For example, the Headway series of books was written in pure British English. Then, it was modified to include a bunch of American items besides the British ones. Finally, a new version is released in American English entitled "American Headway".

Need: "People who decide to learn English as a foreign language can decide to choose either an American English centre or a British one, basing their choice on their needs." (Di Carlo, 2013)

It should be noted that "although the topic is an interesting one and likely to attract researchers, the relevant literature, especially concerning the learners' awareness of the

differences between varieties of English, is not as vast as expected.” (Yaman, 2015) The researcher’s main focus will be on gathering a collection of information, trying to make links among them, and extract meaningful explanations serving the study in hand.

2.1. Definitions of some significant terms related to Students’ awareness

2.1.1. Definition of Awareness

Awareness is the state or condition of having knowledge of consciousness. The Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary (2010) defines awareness as “knowledge or perception of a situation or fact.” Merriam Webster Online Dictionary (n. d) defines awareness as “knowledge and understanding that something is happening or exists”. According to these definitions, awareness can be focused on an internal state such as a feeling or emotion, or external events by way of sensory perception. Awareness can also refer to common knowledge or understanding about a social, scientific, or political issue. For example, programs such as autism awareness and breast cancer awareness aim to improve the general knowledge of people about these conditions.

Examples:

- 1) We need to raise public awareness of the issue.
- 2) The therapist helped her to develop self-awareness.
- 3) I hope the lawmakers have some awareness about this issue.
- 4) Rural people’s awareness of AIDs is very low.

These examples are too general to the extent that they can be used by laymen in their everyday speech.

2.1.2. Definition of Consciousness

Consciousness is defined by Merriam Webster Online Dictionary (n. d) as “the quality or state of being aware especially of something within oneself”. It can be defined also as “the state or fact of being conscious of an external object, state, or fact.” The author Andrzej

Kokoszka (2007,p.4)defines consciousness saying that “consciousness is understood as a fundamental experience, which is a ‘feeling’ or an ‘intuition’ that accompanies the experiencing psychic phenomena”, and this is referred to by the same author as “awareness of experience.”

2.1.3. Awareness vs. Consciousness

The concept of awareness is often synonymous with consciousness and is also understood as being consciousness itself. As a result, Awareness and consciousness are usually used interchangeably. However, the differences between the two terms are made clear in the aforementioned elements.

2.1.4. Definition of Knowledge

“Knowledge refers to familiarity and understanding of someone or something such as information, facts, skills, which are acquired through experience or education. Knowledge can refer to both practical and theoretical understanding of a subject.” (Hasa, 2016) For example, consider the knowledge of a medical doctor. He has theoretical knowledge about physiology and various diseases. This knowledge is mainly acquired through education. All the same time, a doctor also has to have very practical skills such as examining patients, making diagnoses, and making surgical interventions.

The term “knowledge” is defined by Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (2010) as “the information, understanding, and skills that you gain through education or experience.” The same term is defined by Merriam Webster Online Dictionary (n. d) as: “the fact or condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association.” From the above-mentioned definitions, it can be assumed that experience is the main source of knowledge, and that familiarity is a necessary condition for the construction of knowledge.

2.1.5. Awareness vs. Knowledge

Awareness and knowledge are two words that can be used interchangeably in certain contexts. However, there is a distinct difference between the two terms. “Awareness is perceiving, knowing, feeling, or being conscious of events, objects, thoughts, emotions, or sensory patterns. On the other hand, Knowledge is facts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education.” (Hasa, 2016) The key difference between awareness and knowledge is that knowledge is associated with deep understanding and familiarity with a subject whereas awareness does not imply a deep understanding.

Awareness= الوعي

Knowledge= المعرفة

In the field of English language learning and teaching, the word “awareness” in itself, with its broad meaning, is somehow useless. However, its association with the word “language” gives us a new term, having a new meaning, and probably more importance. The new term is ‘language awareness’.

2.2. Language Awareness

Students inside the EFL and ESL classes are required/ supposed to have certain skills which may have a great, positive effect on their learning process; skills be like: Note-taking, quoting, summarising, and paraphrasing. Besides these skills, students should be aware, to some extent, of the language they learn, its nature, and its impact on human beings and their lives. This is which is referred to as ‘language awareness’.“Language awareness is described and defined in various ways in the used sources and it is difficult to give the concept a clear definition.” (Prtic Soons, 2008)One definition which is often quoted for the term that appeared many years ago is: “Language Awareness is a person's sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life.”(Danilewicz, 2011:16, as cited in Lankiewicz, Wąsikiewicz-Firlej & Szczepaniak-Kozak, 2016).In other words, language

awareness is concerned with making learners conscious of, and able to use language patterns successfully. The Association of Language Awareness (ALA), founded in 1994, is an organisation that aims at supporting and promoting activities and research on language awareness (LA). It defines language awareness as "explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching, and language use" (ALA website). It includes the following areas:

- exploring the benefits that can be derived from developing a good knowledge about language;
- developing a conscious understanding of how languages work; and
- noticing how people learn them and use them.

Thus, for communication to be effective, it is crucial for language teachers, learners, and interlocutors (the layperson) to have certain levels of LA. (ibid)

Language awareness was previously defined as “the process where learners are able to notice and learn how a grammar feature works.” (Gavidia, 2012) however, “Developments in the perception of the nature of language and its learning have helped redefine language awareness (e.g. Carter, 1994; 2003) beyond its narrow association with grammar knowledge.” (Lankiewicz, Wąsikiewicz-Firlej & Szczepaniak-Kozak, 2016). Therefore, language awareness expanded to cover the different aspects of language learning and teaching, and even other aspects different from the latter.

2.2.1. Origins of Language Awareness

Much of what we think about when we talk about LA arose out of work done by Eric Hawkins. Eric Hawkins is regarded as the founder of the theory of language awareness. (Prtic Soons, 2008) "When language awareness emerged as a concept related to language teaching at the beginning of the 1980s it was in a context of researchers starting to question the traditional ideas and opinions of language teaching in order to improve language

education."(Prtic Soons, 2008, p.7-11). Therefore, language awareness is a movement that, like any other movement, appeared as a reaction to the dominant theory of behaviourism at the beginning of the 1980s, mainly in the United Kingdom.

2.2.2. Types of Language Awareness

Awareness is one of the essential elements that help the individual to act and behave appropriately and efficiently in given circumstances. The new cultural phenomena, initiated by the rapid change of the world, call for the need for new types of awareness. (Belay, 1993)

Language awareness, according to Garvie (1990), could be divided into seven interrelated types: Cognitive and semantic awareness, communicative awareness, discourse awareness, Linguistic awareness, psycho-linguistic awareness, socio-linguistic awareness, and strategic awareness. Garvie noted that among these seven types of language awareness, no one is more important than the others. However, in this study, three types seem to be more important and deserve to be explained more. They are: Linguistic awareness, Socio-linguistics awareness, and Communicative awareness.

According to Hamadouch (2010)

a-Linguistic awareness aims to make the language learner aware of the language basic components (phonemes, morphemes, and lexical units) and the rules that assemble them in the sentences.

b-Socio-linguistics awareness: the learner could be aware of the influence of the social context on language use.

c-Communicative awareness aims at making learners aware of the use of language in a specific context.

2.3. Teacher's and Students' Language Awareness

Language awareness plays an important role for both language teachers and students. For students, it promotes understanding between cultures, enhances their cognitive ability, and prepares them to learn other languages. For teachers, the benefits include 'cognitive

advantages of reflecting upon language' (Carter, 2003), the ability to 'notice' language, and a working knowledge of how languages are learned and used.

2.3.1. Teacher's Language Awareness

2.3.1.1. Definition of TLA

The term teacher language awareness (TLA) might be easy to be understood. Since it is composed of three words that are usually used. TLA refers to teachers' cognitions (knowledge and beliefs) about language in general and the language they teach. TLA research considers how these cognitions are developed and their impact on teaching and learning. An underlying assumption is that conscious knowledge about language facilitates language development, whether in the mother tongue or subsequent languages, and hence that language teachers need such knowledge (TLA) to facilitate their students' learning.

TLA is a comparatively new research area. Since the whole field of language awareness appeared around four decades earlier. (Andrews, & Svalberg, 2016)

2.3.1.2. Importance of TLA

Teachers should not have Knowledge of the language only (namely grammar, lexis, syntax), but also the awareness of how languages function, and how they are dealt with by the teacher him/ herself in the first place and the students. When the language teacher is aware of the language needs of his/her students, s/he can use this awareness to help reduce obstacles that learning through an additional language might present. Science teachers do not need to know the names of grammatical structures or to be able to use the appropriate linguistic labels.

2.3.1.3. Role of TLA

The role of TLA could be summarised in the idea that: In the field of foreign language teaching, language awareness may be seen as a remedy for the shortcomings of CLT

(communicative language teaching) methodologies.(Lankiewicz, Wąsikiewicz-Firlej& Szczepaniak-Kozak, 2016).

2.3.2. Student's Language Awareness

- 1) As language teachers know, there is much more to a language than simply knowing vocabulary and grammar and reproducing them in either written or oral form. Becoming aware of the nuances and meanings of a language is part of language learning. By increasing students' language awareness, the students are better able to understand, appreciate, and use the language.
- 2) A learner's awareness of their first language (L1) is linked to their ability to acquire additional languages.
- 3) Students' awareness in association with their experience of visiting an English speaking country: The states of awareness are also associated with the states of experience so that the structure represented in awareness is mirrored in the structure of experience.

2.4.Awareness about the varieties of English

This element could probably be the most important in this research study. Since, it goes hand in hand with the aim of the study, it might be the essence. Here is where language awareness will be combined with learning the varieties of English language to see how the former affects the latter. It is logical to start talking about LA in the sense that "Language awareness refers to the development in learners of an enhanced consciousness of and sensitivity to the forms and functions of language (Carter, 2003). The concept began to gain currency in the 1980s as a reaction to the then prevailing prescriptive approach which focuses on forms and atomistic analysis of a language."(Lin, 2011)

2.5.Awareness of Language Varieties as a Phenomenon of Intercultural Awareness

Intercultural awareness can be viewed as the process of becoming more aware of and developing a better understanding of one's own culture and others' cultures all over the world. It aims mainly at increasing international and cross-cultural understanding. For Byram (1997) the implicit theory of culture learning can be defined as follows;

- Exposure to documents and interaction with people from another country leads learners to notice similarities and differences between themselves and others;
- Noticing differences leads to taking up the perspective of others and beings able to understand how they experience the world;
- Experiencing the world from a different perspective leads to a new understanding of one's own experience.

Conclusion

It would be better and finer to raise students' awareness of the two varieties to the extent that each student reaches the level of being hyperaware. Hyperawareness is, as defined by Merriam Webster Online Dictionary (n. d), the quality or state of being extremely or excessively aware. thus, the following question can be asked: how can students increase their language awareness? Many activities can be done in class to help students increase their language awareness. Some of them include Open Discussion, where students are asked how many languages they speak and how well they speak each of them. This icebreaker can lead into a discussion about how many languages there are in the world. This way is quite helpful when the purpose is to explain the idea of language awareness as a whole. However, other ways, will be suggested in the next chapter, might be more helpful when it comes to the awareness of the two prominent varieties of English (American and British English).

CHAPTER THREE

The Field Work

Introduction

This chapter was supposed to represent the fieldwork of the current study that sought to explore EFL students' Awareness about the Use of British or American Varieties of English in Writing, and targeted third-year students of English at Biskra University. However, due to some obstacles linked firmly to the pandemic of Covid-19, the researcher shifted her research and opted for plan B. Plan B suggests that chapter three will be wholly dedicated to the methodology chosen by the researcher to be used in this study. The methodology is a system of methods and principles of doing something. The methodology chapter is where the researcher answers the “How”, “Why”, and “What” of his or her research study. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology for this qualitative study. The research plan, including the methodology, study participants, procedures, analysis method, and ethical concerns are also primary components of this chapter. This methodology chapter explains what the researcher did and how s/he did it, allowing readers to evaluate the reliability and validity of the research (The type of research, How the data are collected, How the data are analysed, Any tools or materials used in the research, the researcher's rationale for choosing these methods. The methodology section was supposed to be written in the past tense; however, it is not the case for this study; Since the fieldwork is not finished and the results are not present.

3.1. Research Questions

RQ1: Are third-year students of English language able to draw a clear distinction between the two varieties?

RQ2: What are the causes behind students' confusion about the use of American or British varieties of English in the writing skill?

RQ3: How can students' awareness be interpreted and/or reflected through students' writings?

RQ4: How could we qualify the importance of choosing one specific variation and being consistent when writing academic papers for students of English at Biskra University?

3.2. Methodology Selected

A qualitative study is required when the goal of research is to explain a phenomenon by relying on the perception of a person's experience in a given situation (Stake, 2010). As outlined by Creswell (2003), a quantitative approach is appropriate when a researcher seeks to understand relationships between variables. Because the purpose of this study was to explore and test students' awareness and knowledge about the English varieties (Br. Eng and Am. Eng in particular), a qualitative approach was the most convenient choice.

3.3. The Participants

Third-year students of Licence at Biskra University, who are majoring in English language stream, are the ones who were supposed to answer the questionnaire and sit for the test serving this study. The researcher suggests that they are the ones who can fit better among the five levels of both Licence and Master phases, due to a couple of criteria they have, such as:

- Learning the English language for more than three (03) years.
- Learning phonetics for two (2) years, which suggests the exposure to different varieties of English language.
- Practising speaking and writing inside the classroom for more than three (3) years, which gives us hints to the idea that they developed some necessary skills that allow them to be considered as good language users (i.e. good language speakers and writers).

3.4. Exploratory Research

Stebbins (2001) provided four (04) definitions of exploration. In the fourth one, the researcher states that: "Exploration is to examine a thing or idea for diagnostic purposes, to

search it systematically for something. This meaning suggests that because the explorer already knows what to look for. He or she needs only methodologically hunt for it." This direct quote summarises the process of research done by the researcher in the current dissertation.

3.4.1. Definition of Exploratory Research

Exploratory research is unstructured; it is the type of research that depends chiefly on the open ended questions. It is also said that:

“Qualitative research is primarily exploratory research. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research.”

Exploratory research is defined as a research used to investigate a problem which is not clearly defined. In other words, exploratory research is "the preliminary research to clarify the exact nature of the problem to be solved". It is conducted to have a better understanding of the existing problem, but will not provide conclusive results. For such research, a researcher starts with a general idea and uses this research as a medium to identify issues that can be the focus for future research. "No pre-research is conducted to support exploratory research and even there is no prior information available on the problem from past research.”

This research is primarily qualitative; since it aims to describe a phenomenon related to students' unawareness of the English varieties. This research paves the way for future researchers to conduct a quantitative study, where they measure the level of students' awareness at a certain point of time, try to raise students' awareness of the issue by choosing and applying one or multiple means/methods, and measuring once again after a period of time. In this case, researchers can/might rely on the study between hands to get some basic information. So that the future studies will be considered as complementary to this one.

3.4.2. Types and Methodologies of Exploratory Research

While it may sound a little difficult to research something that has very little information about it, there are several methods which can help a researcher figure out the best research design, data collection methods, and choice of subjects. There are two ways in which research can be conducted namely primary and secondary. Under these two types, there are multiple methods which can be used by a researcher. The data gathered from these researches can be qualitative or quantitative. Some of the most widely used research designs include the following:

3.4.2.1. Primary Research Methods

Primary research is information gathered directly from the subject. It can be through a group of people or even an individual. Such a research can be carried out directly by the researcher himself or can employ a third party to conduct it on their behalf. Primary research is specifically carried out to explore a certain problem, which requires an in-depth study.

Surveys/polls

Surveys/polls are used to gather information from a 'predefined group of respondents' (which is the sample of students the researcher previously decided to work on). It is one of the most important quantitative methods. Various types of surveys or polls can be used to explore opinions, trends, etc. With the advancement in technology, surveys can now be sent online and can be accessed easily. This information is also available to the researcher in real-time. Nowadays, most organisations offer short length surveys and rewards to respondents, in order to achieve 'higher response rates'.

The difference between survey and questionnaire is that the latter includes any written set of questions; while the former is both the set of questions and the process of collecting, aggregating, and analyzing the responses from those questions. In other words,

“questionnaire” describes content, while “survey” is a broader term that describes content, method, and analysis.

In this research study, the questionnaire was selected as a tool to gather primary data.

One of the advantages of surveys to be mentioned here is that “they can produce a large amount of data in a short time for a fairly low cost. Researchers can therefore set a finite time-span for a project, which can assist in planning and delivering end results.”(Kelley, Clark, Brown, & Sitzia, 2003)

3.4.2.2.Secondary Research Methods

Secondary research is gathering information from previously published primary research. In such research, you gather information from sources like case studies, magazines, newspapers, books, etc.

- **Online research**

In today’s world, this is one of the fastest ways to gather information on any topic. A lot of data is readily available on the internet and the researcher can download it whenever s/he needs it. An important aspect to be noted for such a research is the genuineness and authenticity of the source websites that the researcher is gathering the information from.

- **Literature research**

Literature research is one of the most inexpensive methods used for discovering a hypothesis. There is a tremendous amount of information available in libraries, online sources, or even commercial databases. Sources can include newspapers, magazines, books from the library, documents from government agencies; specific topic related articles, literature, published statistics from research organisations, and so on.

3.5.Data Collection Tools

3.5.1. Description of Questionnaire

This questionnaire is the first data collection tool in this study, and it is designed to be answered by third-year students of English at Biskra University, in less than twenty-five (25) minutes. It contains eleven (11) questions about students' general background of English varieties. The questionnaire alone can collect limited data for such a study, since, it is a tool used exclusively to collect students' opinions and views on the to-be-studied topic only. Rather, the study needs another data collection tool to back up the questionnaire and to improve the validity, credibility, and applicability of data.

3.5.2. Description of Test

The test is the second data collection tool in the current study. It is designed to be answered by exactly the same students who answered the questionnaire, in about thirty (30) minutes. This is a diagnostic test. In general, “it is the test that is designed to provide information about L2 learners’ strengths and weaknesses. For example, a diagnostic pronunciation test may be used to measure the L2 learners’ pronunciation of English sounds. It would show which sounds L2 learners are and are not able to pronounce or whether their pronunciation is intelligible or not. Diagnostic tests may be used to find out how much L2 learners know before beginning a language course to better provide an efficient and effective course of instruction. The aim of this research’s diagnostic test is to: diagnose students’ real abilities to differentiate between American and British English.

The test is composed of three (03) tasks:

Task 1 of the test provides students with twelve (12) pairs of sentences; sentence A and sentence B. Either sentence A is written following American grammar and sentence B written following British grammar, or vice versa. Students are asked to write 'Br. Eng) or (Am. Eng) where it is suitable.

Task 2 provides students with eight (08) words written either in American or British spelling and requires them to say to which spelling the provided word belongs. To avoid students' random answers, another demand was added. The latter was to ask them to write the equivalent of each word of the eight words in the opposite spelling way.

Task 3 aims chiefly to test the vocabulary/ word choice aspect. Students are asked right from the beginning to choose the variety they prefer and be consistent when answering. The instruction says to fill in the gap with the English suitable word. The student is provided with six (06) sentences written in English, with six missing words (to be found by students). As a helping and facilitating tool, the words that are supposed to be written, by students, in American or British English are written in their mother tongue.

3.6.Data Analysis

Data analysis plays a vital role in reporting the research findings. It takes two forms; quantitative and qualitative. According to the purpose of this study, the questionnaire has to be analysed qualitatively, and the test quantitatively.

3.7.Expected Results

What results can be expected from this research can be described on the basis of the problem that was identified and the proposed methodology. Since it is not possible for the researcher to predict the exact outcome of his/her research study, the expected results need to be accurate. It is expected that third-year students of English language are not able to draw a clear distinction between the two varieties due to some causes. The causes that might be behind students' confusion about the use of American or British varieties of English, especially in writing skill, are: Not knowing the differences, unawareness of their importance, not included in the curriculum, having no personal interest in the matter, and lack of exposure to authentic language. In addition, Students are not aware of the side effects of mixing varieties randomly, or of the importance of choosing one variety and being consistent while

writing academically. For instance, students prefer to sound like American speakers; however, they can't stick to it and be consistent when writing. Also students focus more on the phonological aspect (pronunciation) and think that developing speaking is easier than developing writing; that is why differences related to writing, lexis, and semantics might be totally neglected. Finally, students with a higher level of awareness of the differences will outperform their mates whether in academic writing or oral speech.

3.8.Limitations

This study, however, is not meant to;

- Give any solutions to the problem of students' unawareness of the different varieties of English.
- Develop students' skills of differentiating between varieties or mastering one variety.

3.9.Obstacles

Some of the obstacles the researcher faced during the writing and accomplishment of this dissertation are:

- The inability to conduct the fieldwork, due to the unavailability of students inside the academic setting (university). Although the application of online questionnaires and online tests is widely spread in academia, nowadays, it is not suitable for this particular study to do so; since, it is supposed that the same students, who answer the questionnaire, should sit for the test just after they are done with the questionnaire. Furthermore, the researcher should be present right beside the students. First, to explain and guarantee that they understood all the questions. Second, to make sure students are not cheating or receiving help from electronic sources or more knowledgeable people while answering the questions; because, the purpose of this test and questionnaire is to reflect what kind of information students have in mind, and

show their real knowledge and awareness regarding this study. As a result, the use of an online questionnaire and test might give biased data.

- The use of electronic materials only, since, it is impossible to get hard copies of any source, because of the shutdown of public and university libraries, as a result of the lockdown against COVID-19.

Conclusion

The third and final chapter in this research study is wholly dedicated to the methodology chosen by the researcher to be used in order to reach the goal of the study. The chapter presented various titles under which different aspects of methodology were explained. To collect data, the researcher provided learners with a questionnaire and a test to be carried out. Both data collection tools are designed for EFL students of third-year English at the department of foreign languages at Biskra University.

General Conclusion

The English language is one of the languages which are changing constantly. Besides its changes that are occurring rapidly when compared to some other languages, the English language has a number of different varieties. As for EFL contexts, it is not an easy task to get to know about these varieties.

The issue of English varieties is one of the obstacles that EFL students in the division of English language at Biskra University suffer from. The inability to differentiate between the two most prominent varieties of English, namely American and British English, impedes students' progress and achievement during their academic career. The target of his study is, therefore, to explore students' awareness about the use of British or American varieties of English in writing. The study is qualitative and exploratory in nature. However, the data collection tools yielded both qualitative and quantitative information as a raw data. According to different criteria, the suggested population that was needed to apply the study on was chosen by the researcher to be third-year Licence students of English at Biskra University. In summation, the study aimed to diagnose the situation, describe it, and discover its causes, if possible. On the other hand, it is not meant to set solutions to the problem or improve students' abilities. To better understand the implications of this research, future studies could address the issue of finding solutions to the problem of students' unawareness of the different varieties of English and/or Developing students' skills of differentiating between varieties or mastering one variety at least.

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Appendix A: Students' Diagnostic Test

Task 1: Grammar.

In each pair of sentences of the following twelve pairs, state which one corresponds with British Grammar and which corresponds with American Grammar.

1)

A: I haven't bought one yet ()

B: I didn't buy one yet. ()

2)

A: One should learn to take care of himself ()

B: One should learn to take care of oneself ()

3)

A: How many brothers do you have? ()

B: How many brothers have you got? ()

4)

A: In future, I'd like you to pay more attention to detail ()

B: In the future, I'd like you to pay more attention to detail ()

5)

A: Your daughter's name stands first in the list ()

B: Your daughter's name stands first on the list ()

6)

A: John has gotten much better during the last week ()

B: John has got much better during the last week ()

7)

A: The new term begins September 1 ()

B: The new term begins on September 1 ()

8)

A: It costs you half a pound ()

B: It costs you a half pound ()

9)

A: I have already done my homework ()

B: I already did my homework ()

10)

A: She is absent, is she? ()

B: She is absent, isn't she? ()

11)

A: She wet her hair before washing it ()

B: She wetted her hair before washing it ()

12)

A: I suggest that the meeting should be postponed ()

B: I suggest that the meeting be postponed ()

Task 2: Spelling

Say whether the following words are written in British or American English/ spelling then write their equivalent words in the other spelling.

The word	Br. Eng or Am. Eng	Equivalent
Color		
Centre		
Offence		
Skilful		
Anaesthetize		
Programme		
Catalog		
Pyjamas		

Task 3: vocabulary

Fill in the gaps with the suitable English word considering the rules of consistency, after choosing the preferred variety:

- American English
- British English

1) Since we've bought a lot of things, there was no choice except to take the.....

(المصعد)so that we reach our flat quickly and easily.

- 2)(كرة القدم)Is a collective game that is played with a round ball that the players kick.
- 3) Samantha went shopping and bought a new pair of..... (حذاء رياضي) for the aerobics session of tomorrow.
- 4)(الخريف) is one of the four seasons of the year, which is usually associated with sadness and broken relationships.
- 5) Although I am not busy tonight, I am intending to stay at home and watch the..... (التلفاز).
- 6) It is harmful to teeth and health to eat big amounts of..... (الحلوى), especially at night time.

Appendix B: Students' Questionnaire.

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to answer the present questionnaire which serves as a data collection tool for a 'Master degree' in applied linguistics. This questionnaire is designed to inspect your awareness about the use of British or American varieties of English. Your answers will be very helpful for our research entitled *“Exploring EFL Students' Awareness about the Use of British or American Varieties of English in Writing.”*

Thank you for your cooperation.

- Fatima DASSA.
- Email: fatimadassa7@gmail.com
- Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra/ Faculty of Foreign Languages/ Section of English.

1. students' general background of English varieties:

1) Do you know that English is no longer one unified language?

- Yes
- No

2) How many varieties of the English language did you know so far? Name them!

.....

3) What is the variety you do prefer to use in your writing?

- General American English
- British English (Received Pronunciation)
- A mix of the two
- Other

If your answer is “other”, what is it?

.....

4) Do you know that the British variety called ‘Standard British English’ is the one taught in Algeria?

- Yes
- No

If your answer is “yes”, what do you know about it?

.....

5) As a third-year student of English, are you able to draw a clear distinction between the two aforementioned varieties?

- Yes
- No
- In some aspects.

If you’ve chosen the third answer “in some aspects”, would you please identify which aspects you are referring to (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, pronunciation...):

.....

6) If not, what do you think impedes you to do so?

- a) Not knowing the differences.
- b) Unawareness of their importance.
- c) Not included in the curriculum.
- d) Having no personal interest in the matter.
- e) Lack of exposure to authentic language.
- f) other

Comments, if any!

.....

7) When trying to detect the differences between American English and British English, is it easier to detect/ notice them while listening to spoken speech or while reading written speech?

- Spoken speech is easier
- Written speech is easier

Justify your choice, please!

.....

8) Do you think it is important for you as a university student to choose one specific variation and be consistent when writing academic papers?

• Yes

• No

Justify your answer

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

9) If yes, what variety do you usually try to adopt and stick to?

.....
.....

10) Do you talk about the differences between American and British English in class?

• Yes

• No

11) Have ever enrolled in a class where the difference between English varieties is taught?

• Yes

• No

Thank you!

الملخص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة البحثية لإكتشاف مدى وعي طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حول إستعمال الإنجليزية البريطانية و الإنجليزية الأمريكية. ركزت هذه الدراسة على الجانب الكتابي أكثر منه على جانب النطق و أجريت في جامعة محمد خيضر (بسكرة)، كلية الآداب و اللغات، قسم اللغة الانجليزية. تم إختيار طلبة السنة الثالثة ليسانس للسنة الدراسية 2020/2019 كعينة لإمتلاكهم عدة خصائص قد سبق ذكرها. إعتمدت الباحثة في هذه الدراسة على أداتين بحثيتين لجمع المعطيات الأولية. أولاً، الإستبيان الذي تم تصميمه أساساً من أجل الحصول على آراء التلاميذ بخصوص إستعمال الإنجليزيتين الأمريكية و البريطانية. ثانياً، الإختبار التشخيصي الذي يهدف لمعرفة قدرات التلاميذ على التمييز بين الإنجليزيتين من خلال أجزاءه الثلاثة، التي ركز كل منها على جانب معين من اللغة ألا وهي: قواعد اللغة، المفردات، و التهجئة. تتكون هذه المذكرة من ثلاثة فصول؛ يشكل الفصلين الأولين الجانب النظري منها، والذي قام فيه الباحث بتقديم معلومات و نظريات تتعلق بالفرق بين الإنجليزيتين و الوعي لدى الطلبة على التوالي. أما الفصل الثالث، فهو عبارة عن الجانب التطبيقي للمذكرة، و الذي يتضمن كل ما يتعلق بمنهجية البحث المتبعة أثناء إنشاء هاته الدراسة.