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Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages



## MASTER THESIS

Letters and Foreign Languages

English Language

Sciences of the language

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Submitted by:

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### **Investigating the Influence of French as a First Foreign Language in Algeria on the English Pronunciation of EFL Learners**

**Case Study:** First Year Pupils of Madani Rahmoune Middle School in Biskra

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## **Declaration**

I, M'SELLEM Soumia, do hereby declare solemnly that this submitted work is solely my own effort, and has not previously been submitted for any institution or university for a degree.

Certified.

Miss. M'sellem Soumia

## **Dedication**

*In the Name of Allah, the Almighty, the Most Merciful. All Praise is due to Allah Alone.*

*This work is delightedly dedicated to:*

*The memory of my grandfather Rouag,*

*My beloved parents who have always supported me Nouredine and Ouarda,*

*My adorable sisters Wafa, Chaima, Sabrine, and Farah,*

*My lovely brothers Mohamed, Mamoune, and Abdelbari,*

*My supportive Friends Nour, Asma, Besma and Ferial,*

*My dear colleagues at Madani Rahmoune middle school Abla and Lylia,*

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## Abstract

The increasing need to cope with the scientific developments in the world has urged many countries to involve foreign language teaching in their educational systems, and Algeria is not an exception. In Algeria, students learn several foreign languages at school, French as a first foreign language and English as a second foreign language respectively. This multilingual context in the Algerian schools makes the cross-linguistic influence inevitable. Accordingly, the main objective of the current study is to investigate the influence between French and English, and its impact on pronunciation. More specifically, the study hypothesizes that French as a first foreign language may affect the English Pronunciation of EFL learners. Thus, in order to test the validity of the hypothesis, a mixed method with a case study design was adopted. The study was conducted in Madani Rahmoune middle school of Biskra, from which the sample of the study was randomly selected. The participants were forty pupils of first year, two teachers from the same school, in addition to three teachers from other schools. As for data collection and analysis, both quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted. To collect the needed information, a classroom observation were designed in which the pupils' pronunciation were recorded, in addition to a questionnaire for the pupils and an interview for teachers in order to examine their views about the early stated issue. The findings of the study fiercely confirm the validity of the previously stated hypothesis. It has been concluded that the French language has a negative influence on EFL learners' pronunciation of English, which is linguistically referred to as the interference or transfer. Moreover, the results deduce that the main cause of the transfer is attributed to the typological distance between French and English.

**Key words:** Multilingual context, Interference, Foreign Language, Pronunciation, EFL learners, English language, French Language, typological distance

## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>L1</b>	First language
<b>L2</b>	Second language
<b>L3</b>	Third language
<b>FL1</b>	First foreign language
<b>FL2</b>	Second foreign language
<b>MS</b>	Middle School
<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>TEFL</b>	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
<b>TESL</b>	Teaching English as Second Language
<b>ESP</b>	English for Specific Purposes
<b>SLA</b>	Second Language Acquisition
<b>TLA</b>	Third Language Acquisition
<b>CLI</b>	Cross linguistic Influence
<b>EA</b>	Error Analysis
<b>CA</b>	Contrastive Analysis
<b>IPA</b>	International Phonetic Alphabet

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# **General Introduction**

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## **General Introduction**

### **Introduction**

Learning a foreign language is heavily promoted in modern societies for it enables people to open up to new cultures and gain access to the world's scientific research and technologies, and it also provides learners with more professional and study opportunities. Consequently, many countries around the world include teaching foreign languages in their educational systems. Due to their status in the world, some languages are more important than others. English is undoubtedly the most commonly spoken language in the world.

The main reason behind learning any language is communication, and the most common and easiest way to communicate is through speech. Any communication process requires that the speaker and the listener understand each other; otherwise, it breaks down. Hence, the message to convey needs to be clear of any ambiguity that could hamper the intelligibility between interlocutors. One of the most important factors to ensure effective communication is good pronunciation without which communication is hard or even impossible because mispronunciation may cause a misunderstanding.

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

As observing first year middle school Algerian pupils in an EFL class, it was noticed that learners face difficulties when pronouncing English letters and words, and they confuse the English pronunciation with that of French. Algerian pupils study French (FL1) for four years at primary schools. After that, they graduate to middle schools where they learn English for the first time as a second foreign language (FL2). This research deals with the transfer from FL1 to FL2; it assumes that the main problem in EFL learners' pronunciation refers to the delay of learning English in comparison to French language, the status of the French language in Algeria, and the similarities between the languages



## **General Introduction**

Moreover, earlier research has been conducted to investigate the influence of French in Algeria on learning English as L3. However, these previous works focused more on the cross-linguistic influence on vocabulary and writing, and did not tackle in details the aspects of pronunciation and phonology. For that, we have decided to put more endeavour on examining the influence of French as L2 in Algeria on EFL learners' pronunciation of English.

## **2. Research Questions**

This study intends to answer the following questions:

**RQ1.** Does the prior knowledge about French have an impact on the English pronunciation of EFL learners?

**RQ2.** Does the French language influence learners' English pronunciation positively or negatively?

**RQ3.** To what extent does French interference influence EFL learners' pronunciation?

**RQ4.** What are the main causes of this interference?

## **3. Research Hypothesis**

From the questions above, it is hypothesized that:

**RH.** French as a first foreign language in Algeria may affect EFL learners' pronunciation.

## **4. Research Aims**

### **4.1. Main Aims**

The Main aim of this study is to shed light on the influence of French language on the pronunciation of EFL learners.

## **General Introduction**

### **4.2. Specific Aims**

- To investigate the influence of French on learners' pronunciation of English.
- To determine the nature of transfer from L2 resulting in errors in learners' pronunciation of L3.
- To analyse the errors and investigate the causes of L2 interference during the process of English pronunciation learning.

### **5. Significance of the Study**

The ultimate objective of this study is to highlight some of the causes behind Algerian EFL learners' pronunciation errors that occur mainly due to French Language interference during English Language acquisition. Thus, it provides feedback for teachers and instructors to enable them recognize the source of errors, and try to treat it. Furthermore, it presents recommendations and suggestions to reduce the emergence of pronunciation errors and to ensure a better English language acquisition.

### **6. Research Methodology**

#### **6.1. Research Approach**

Since the main objective of this research is to investigate and analyse the influence of French language on English pronunciation, it seems more suitable to opt for a mixed method. The qualitative method is to be reinforced and proved with reference to quantitative tools.

#### **6.2. Research Design**

Since this study aims at investigating the problem in its natural setting i.e. in the EFL classroom, a case study design is seen to be the most appropriate technique to offer a detailed description of the issue under examination.

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### **6.3. Population and Sample**

The population addressed in this research is first year pupils of Madani Rahmoune middle school in Biskra. A probability sampling was opted for selecting the participants. Two groups of 1MS pupils were randomly selected among 12 groups. In addition to the English teachers of Madani Rahmoune (02 teachers), three other teachers from different middle schools took part in the study.

### **6.4. Data Gathering Tools**

In the current research, triangulation was applied in data collection in order to reinforce the results. The instruments are a classroom observation with use of checklist and audio records, a questionnaire for the pupils, and an interview addressed to teachers.

### **6.5. Data Analysis Methods**

The researcher used the descriptive method in order to analyse the teachers' interview, and the exploratory method to analyse both learners' questionnaire and classroom observation.

## **8. Limitation of the Study**

The present study aims to investigate the influence of French as L2 on EFL learners' pronunciation. Even though the study achieved its intended aim, some difficulties and setbacks were encountered. The study was undertaken in a critical period (COVID19); most of the pupils and teachers were using masks. Because it is impossible to get audio records with pupils' putting masks on, it was to some extent risky to ask them to take them off in order to read the words. Furthermore, the sample was not large enough. Consequently, standardizing the findings on the whole population may look impractical. Moreover, the study did not cover all pronunciation aspects in details due to time constraints. Additionally it would have been better if the study results of 1MS pupils were compared to those of 4MS pupils to confirm whether proficiency in the target language is a factor of interference.

## **9. Structure of the Dissertation**

The present dissertation is organized into three main chapters. The first and second chapters will review the related literature. The third chapter will be concerned with the practical part of the study.

**Chapter One** provides an in-depth discussion of foreign language teaching in Algeria. It tackles the situation of foreign languages in Algeria (French and English); then, it provides information about their position in the Algerian educational system. In addition to highlighting the relationship between French and English as two historically related languages.

**Chapter Two** is devoted to the acquisition of pronunciation in a multilingual context, which is the case of Algeria. It provides theories about third language acquisition since English is seen as an L3 in Algeria. It also tackles English pronunciation features in addition to the main similarities and differences between French and English phonological systems.

**Chapter Three** discusses the fieldwork, which includes data collection methods, data analysis, and discussion of the findings.

**Chapter One:**  
**Foreign Language Teaching in Algeria**

## Chapter One: Foreign Language Teaching in Algeria

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## **Introduction**

Due to globalization and the tremendous increase in technological developments, learning a foreign language is nowadays a necessity. Thus, the majority of countries opted for introducing foreign languages in their educational systems in order to keep abreast with the needs of modernization. The present chapter focuses on the status of foreign languages in Algeria (French, English) besides their position in the Algerian educational system. In addition to discussing the impact of French on the English language and the major similarities and differences between the two languages.

## **Section one: Foreign Languages in Algeria**

### **1. Differentiating between Foreign language and Second language**

Despite the fact that major distinctions between the definitions of second language and foreign language are difficult to identify, since the two categories are frequently used interchangeably, research has been conducted to shed light on the distinguishing characteristics of the two. The variation between the acronyms TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) and TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) reflects the amount of emphasis given by various academics to the concepts of foreign language and second language.

#### **1.1. Second language**

Merriam-Webster Dictionary of the English Language defines second language (L2) as a language that is learned in addition to the native language. For example, many French speakers in Algeria consider French as their second language (L2) because they learned it at young age, and they use it regularly even though it is not the official language of the country. In Algeria, French is frequently used in a number of contexts, and signs are typically written

in both Arabic (mother tongue) and French. Sturn (1983) defines the second language as follows:

The term 'second language' has two meanings. First, it refers to the chronology of language learning. A second language is any language acquired (or to be acquired) later than the native language.... Second, the term 'second language' is used to refer to the level of language command in comparison with a primary or dominant language. In this second sense, 'second language' indicates a lower level of actual or believed proficiency. Hence 'second' means also 'weaker' or 'secondary'. (pp. 12-13)

L2 is frequently the official language or one of two or more recognized languages. Hence, it is required for full involvement in the political and economic life of the country, and it may be the language needed for instruction in education. For that, L2 is crucial for getting along in the community, which increases motivation to learn it. When learning a second language, one might obtain input for learning both within and outside the classroom. They may put what they have learned straightaway to good use, as young learners acquiring their first language, which allows for a lot of naturalistic practice.

## **1.2. Foreign language**

According to Richards and Schmidt (2002), a foreign language is one that is not the native language of a large number of people in a given nation or area, and it is not commonly utilized in government, media, and other forms of communication. They point out that foreign languages are often taught in order to communicate with foreigners or for reading printed material in the target language. (Richards and Schmidt, 2002, p. 206). Similarly, Rivers (1981) points: "the learning of foreign language contributes to the education of the individual by giving him access to the culture of group of people with whom he does not have daily contact." (p. 09).

In the same vein, Wilkins (1972) notes that "A foreign language situation is one in which the target language is not the mother tongue of any group within the country where it is



being learned and has no internal communication either” (p. 122). FL is usually taught in a context where the community members do not regularly speak it.

According to Harmer (2007), several scholars have distinguished between English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL). He notes that EFL refers to the context in which students learn English to communicate with other English speakers in the world, generally as tourists or business people. Students often learn EFL in their home country, or sometimes on short courses in Britain, USA, and other English speaking countries. ESL students, however, are often residents of a foreign language country (Britain, USA), and who are in need to learn the target language (English) in order to survive and thrive in that community, doing things like renting apartments, utilizing the local health care system, and so on. (Harmer, 2007, p. 19)

## **2. The status of foreign languages in Algeria**

### **2.1 The status of French language**

During the French colonisation of Algeria (1830-1962), cultural and linguistic aspects of the country have witnessed major changes. French has replaced Arabic as the first language of the country. Due to the co-existence of Arabic and French for 132 years of colonization, the linguistic phenomenon called bilingualism has emerged in Algeria. According to (Djete, 1992), People become multilingual for a variety of causes, one of which is the imposition of a second language via colonialism. Many Algerians, specifically in large cities, speak French in association with Algerian Arabic. As a result, some of them consider French as their mother tongue, since they acquired it in their early childhood before entering school. Calvet (1974) mentioned that: “Statically, Algeria is the most francophone country among the old colonies” (p. 119). It is considered the second largest Francophone country in regards to speakers.

After the independence in 1962, Arabic regained its original status as the official and national language of the country, while French was considered as the first foreign language (FL1). Linguistically speaking, it is also considered as a powerful and prestigious second language (L2) that is still used by the administration and many educated people within the Algerian society.

## **2.2 The status of English language**

According to Hayenne (as cited in Slimani, 2016), English is considered by some Algerians as “a language of an ex-colonial and imperialist country” However, in the last decade, there appears to be a shift in attitude and aptitude for English in Algeria. English is becoming increasingly appealing to new Algerian generations, as seen by clothing, marketing, store names, and popular culture choices. For some, English may be associated with music, movies, modernism and science. For others, it is the language of achievement, career chances, and the way to explore new horizons.

Unlike French, English has neither connection to Algerian history, nor it is used as medium of instruction or communication; it is only learned in the classroom as a second foreign (FL2) after French as the first foreign language (FL1). Therefore, from a linguistic perspective, it qualifies as a ‘real’ foreign language (FL) in Algeria. Ellis (2008) clarifies “in the case of second language acquisition, the language plays an institutional and social role in the community” (p. 6), which is the case of French language in Algeria. However, foreign language learning “takes place in settings where language plays no major role in the community and is primarily learnt in the classroom” (Ellis, 2008, p. 6), which is the case of English in Algeria because students have limited, if any, opportunities to use the language outside of the classroom.

### **3. A promising English Status**

The growing needs for English in the world has lead the Algerian government to think about reconsidering the status of English in the country. English in Algeria has a second foreign language status. Teaching English has been in rivalry with the French language since 2000, in the first grade level of middle school. According to Miliani (2000), in Universities, 95% of undergraduate and post-graduate courses in sciences or in medicine maintains the French language as a mean of instruction. However, Algerian decision-makers try to implement the use of English at all levels of education due to its significant importance in most of the fields. Accordingly, Zughoul (2003) states:

In Arab North Africa, and despite the fact that French has had a strong foothold in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, it has been retreating and losing a lot of ground to English. In fact, the tendency of what can be termed a shift from French to English in thus countries cannot be cancelled. (p. 122)

The implementation of this reform and giving the English language such a higher status was due to many reasons. One reason is to cover the increasing demand in most important fields, as working in foreign companies in Algeria. Benrabah (2007) claims that “the early 2000 were characterized by the transition to globalized pedagogy or the free market economy. In the same vein, Slimani (2016) states:

In spite of all these challenges encountered by the English language, the Algerian political and educational authorities have managed to undertake the rehabilitation of the status of this language. Because of the technical and economic exchanges all over the world, English is now occupying a better position in the Algerian educational system. Hence, most of the Algerian students and even their parents are becoming more conscious of its importance as an international language ‘par excellence.’(p. 34)

Furthermore, Chemami (2011) mentioned that the urge to promote English in Algeria refers to the state’s collaboration with the United States and Canada to support this

educational reform policy in Algeria. The reforms are concerned with textbooks, teachers' training, and introducing new technologies.

#### **4. French and English in the Algerian educational system**

##### **4.1 French**

After the independence (1962), the Algerian government has adopted a linguistic Arabization strategy. In fact, they were to some extent able to achieve their purpose, as Arabic dominated the educational system. In 1990, the main subjects in the baccalaureate exam were in Arabic, and at the university level, very few subjects were still taught in French, such as biology due to the lack of teachers trained in Arabic.

However, French was still widely used in the community by a large number of bilinguals, and in many professional and educational domains. Benrabah (2007) notes: "From a quantitative point of view, today's Algeria is the second largest French-speaking community in the world" and "Arabization, or the language policy implemented to displace French altogether, failed." (p. 194). In the same vein, Rebai Mammri (2009) notes:

French continues to be the dominant language in business and professional circles.... Also over the years, the Algerian government has pushed back, reintroducing French. It is staggering that certain aspects of formal education and research are still carried in the French language and a great part of the economic and industrial sectors and press still use French extensively. (p. 10)

Years after the Algerian independence, French was introduced in all school levels, and it was considered as a first foreign language (FL1) in the Algerian educational system. In the 90's, French was taught as a first foreign language from the fourth year of primary school to the final year of secondary school.

In primary school French is taught from the third to the fifth (last) year; the time allocated for French in that stage is 3 hours per week for third year pupils, and 5 hours for

fourth and fifth year pupils. The following table illustrates the time allocated for French in primary school, according to the curriculum.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Hours per year</b>
Third grade	3	96
Fourth grade	4.5	144
Fifth grade	4.5	144

**Table 1 Time allotted for French in Primary school**

At middle school, it is considered as one of the principal subjects with a high coefficient along with Mathematics and Arabic, and it is taught 4 hours and half per week during the four middle school years. The following tables illustrates the time allotted for French in middle school.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Hours per year</b>
First Grade	4.5	144
Second grade	4.5	144
Third grade	4.5	144
Fourth grade	4.5	144

**Table 2 Time allotted for French in middle school**

As for secondary school, first year students are asked to choose either a literary or a scientific stream. The Students' choice determines the time devoted for French. The table below shows the time devoted to French in for each stream.

<b>Streams</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Hours per year</b>
literary	3	96
scientific	2	64

**Table 3 time allotted for French in the First year of secondary school**

<b>Streams</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Hours per year</b>
Experimental Sciences	3	96
Economy and Management	3	96
Mathematics	3	96
Mechanical Engineering	3	96
Electrical Engineering	3	96
Civil Engineering	3	96
Literature and philosophy	4	128
Literature and Foreign Languages	4	128

**Table 4 time allotted for French in the 2nd/3rd years of secondary school**

At university level, French is used as a medium of instruction in most of streams such in Medicine, Computer sciences, Biology. For other streams, such as Sociology and Economy, French is dealt with as a separate module (ESP, English for Specific Purposes).

## **4.2 English**

Crystal (1997) claims that “There has never been a language so widely spread or spoken by so many people as English.” (p. 127). Because of its worldwide spread and the increasing number of its speakers, English became recognized as a 'Lingua Franca', which means the world' language. Moreover, English is required in order to cope with the economic, political, and technological advancement over the world. According to Graddol (2000), about 1.5 billion people around the world have English as a first or second language or are currently studying English as a foreign language. For that, the Algerian authorities sought to make English a part of the curriculum as a second foreign language (FL2) along with French (FL1). English language inclusion in the curriculum has contributed in increasing the number of its

users who are aware of the significance of learning this language in order to keep up with the changes that are occurring in the world. In this regard, Hamdi (1990) claims:

The Algerian authorities are aware of that fundamental need for English, at a time when Algeria may be called upon to play a leading role in international affairs; we have only to examine the shift from French to English as a subject in the educational curriculum, or the ever-increasing number of students registering in the English departments of universities. (p. 13)

English is regarded as a compulsory course in Algerian schools. It is taught for seven years from the first year of middle school (4 years) until the last year of secondary school (3 years). At middle school, two hours and half per week are allocated to study English for first and second year pupils, and three hours and half for third and fourth year pupils.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Hours per year</b>
First grade	2.5	80
Second grade	2.5	80
Third grade	3.5	112
Fourth grade	3.5	112

**Table 5**time allotted for English in the First year of secondary school

The number of hours allocated for English at secondary school depends on which stream the student is studying. It is worth to mention that previously, the time allotted for French were higher than that of English. However, after the recent reforms in educational system, equal time is allotted for both languages, which demonstrates the increasing significance of English in the Algerian educational system.

<b>Streams</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Hours per year</b>
literary	3	96
scientific	2	64

**Table 6 time allotted for English in the First year of secondary school**

<b>Streams</b>	<b>Hours per week</b>	<b>Hours per year</b>
Experimental Sciences	3	96
Economy and Management	3	96
Mathematics	3	96
Mechanical Engineering	3	96
Electrical Engineering	3	96
Civil Engineering	3	96
Literature and philosophy	4	128
Literature and Foreign Languages	4	128

**Table 7 time allotted for French in the 2nd/3rd years of secondary school**

At university, English is taught as a separate module in most streams such as, biology, computer sciences, engineering and other technological streams. Its purpose is to help students gain a knowledge about the terminology, and vocabulary that are related to their field of study, i.e. ESP (English for specific purposes). However, things differ when having English as a major. English students at university have a full course where they learn all skills, and aspects of the English language. In addition to its history, and culture.

Due to the fact that English in the Algerian society is neither used for communication, not as a medium of instruction. English remains used only inside the classroom environment. Besides that, English status as a second foreign language in the Algerian educational system makes passing tests and exams in schools, the major motivation to learn it.

Both French and English are important in the Algerian educational system since they are beneficial for accomplishing various goals, mainly coping with modernization, and



fulfilling job requirements. However, French is the first foreign language in the educational system since it is introduced to pupils five years before English at school; Moreover, it is considered as a second language in Algeria. As a result, it is likely to be more dominant and may affect English learners' performance.

## **Section Two: English and French Relation**

### **1. The French language influence on English language**

During the development of the English language, a lot of French made its way into English. "Because French is an Indo-European language and the Norman contribution to English was so significant, there are certain syntactic and lexical parallels between French and English." (Walter, 2001, p. 52). French language has a considerable effect on several aspects of the English language such as spelling, vocabulary, word formation, and grammar.

#### **1.1. Vocabulary Borrowing**

Borrowing is defined by McArthur (1992) as "Taking a word or phrase from one language into another, or from one variety of a language into another." (p. 141). According to Katamba (2005), "Over the centuries, English has expanded its vocabulary by extensively borrowing lexical items from other languages. Of all sources of loanwords French is by far the most important" (p. 164). Through its turbulent history, English has borrowed from several language, which had a significant impact on its linguistics aspects; French and Latin have had the greatest impact. According to recent research by Salzberg (2021), French and Latin terms constitute 58% of the current English lexicon, and there are about 29% genuine French terms in English. Statistics by Staff (2021) shows that around 10,000 terms are estimated to have been taken from French and used in English, and there are approximately 1,700 'true cognates' i.e. words that have the same spelling and meaning in both languages.

After William's ascension to the throne, the royal court was composed of Norman nobles who spoke French. Thus, Old English and French coexisted quite apart since most people in Britain never had contact with nobility. However, French terms began to seep into English throughout time. These were mainly in areas of social life that have relation with law, government, administration, and, unsurprisingly, food. Baugh and Cable (2012) demonstrates that impact by involving examples from different areas:

Government and social class	revenue, authority, realm, duke, count, marquis, servant, peasant
Law	justice, crime, jury, pardon, indict, arrest, felon, pardon, evidence
War	army, navy, battle, garrison, captain, sergeant, combat, defense
Food	feast, taste, mackerel, salmon, bacon, fry, mince, plate, goblet
Church	religion, sermon, prayer, abbey, saint, faith, pray, convent, cloister
Learning and Medicine	paper, preface, study, logic, surgeon, anatomy, stomach, remedy, poison
Fashion	gown, robe, frock, collar, satin, crystal, diamond, coat, embroidery

**Table 8 Some French borrowed words (Baugh and Cable, 2012, p. 164)**

The effect of the French language on the English language is not limited to the two or three centuries after the Norman Conquest. Although English has always borrowed from French, the number of loan words has not been as high as it was in Middle English. A century ago, French was still generally regarded as a prestigious language; it was the world's diplomatic language and had widespread appeal in literary and scientific circles. Although its status remained high in the late nineteenth century, it progressively dwindled. As a result, in the twentieth century, the number of loans was lower. Some examples of newly borrowed words are revue, garage, limousine, camouflage, enfant, and terrible.

## 1.2. Spelling System and pronunciation

According to Tabari (2011), in the middle of the thirteenth century, more English emerged as a written language. The churchly writers started to copy texts in English from French. They gradually changed the Anglo Saxon forms of Latin letters and replaced them with French ones. However, the change was not great, as most of the French letters were nearly the same. Tabari (2011) gives an example of the French influence on English spelling:

The Old English letter <æ> was first dropped from the English alphabet. *Æfter'*, *æsc*, *græs* are examples of the Old English words...In Old English, the letters <þ> and <ð> were used to denote the sounds /θ/ and /ð/ indiscriminately. The letter <ð> had almost disappeared before 1300; and <þ> denoting either sounds, was used much longer. Towards the end of the Middle English period, around 1400, <th> was gradually introduced. (p. 8).

In her research, Tabari (2011) also illustrates the influence of French language on English pronunciation. The pronunciation of late borrowings is not set, as a result of the English tendency to pronounce words in a French-like manner. Some like *garage* is pronounced in several ways, as [ˈgæra:dʒ], [ˈgæra:ʒ], [gəˈra:dʒ] and [gəˈra:ʒ] which retain the aspects of French pronunciation with variant syllable stress, and [ˈgæridʒ] the anglicised form, which has followed the pattern of *village* [ˈvɪlɪdʒ].

This trend also had a significant influence on the pronunciation and spelling of a number of well-known and naturalized terms. Thus, *biscuit*, which used to be "*bisket*" in old English, has **recently** changed to French spellings, although its pronunciation has remained the same. The accent of certain archaic words has also been altered for the same purpose. *Police* and *marine* are both old English terms that have altered pronunciation due to French influence.

## 1.3. Morphology and syntax

Numerous French affixes enter English as a result of French loan words, resulting in

the emergence of many hybrid terms, terms made up of components from several distinct languages; these words consist of two parts: native system followed by foreign ending such as trustee, murderer and slavery. Some of the French affixes that have been integrated in English are:

- **Prefixes:** con, de, dis, ex, pre, en, pro.... Eg. discomfort, entitle.
- **Suffixes:** ure, ance, ant, tion, ment, able, ive....Eg. important, affordable.

Furthermore, French had a significant influence on English grammar and syntax. An example of that influence is the adoption of French syntactic patterns such as sentences consisting of nouns followed by adjectives. Examples are attorney general, court martial, fee simple, heir male, letters patent, and proof positive.

## **2. Similarities and differences between French and English**

French and English are classified as Romance and lower Germanic, respectively, in the Indo-European language family. Moreover, English as a Germanic language had been through significant Latin and French influences. Despite the fact that French and English are both Indo-European languages, there are notable distinctions alongside with similarities between them. According to Walter (2001), there are some similarities between French and English, both in syntax and vocabulary. However, there are also significant variations in the phonological systems, which can cause difficulties for French speakers in understanding and producing spoken English, as well as linking spelling and pronunciation.

## 2.1.Pronunciation and Phonology

French and English share many phonological characteristics; the majority of English consonants are not difficult for French speakers to perceive or pronounce, although some vowel sounds can be problematic.

Koutsoudas and Koutsoudas (1962) point out that: “the more closely associated a foreign sound is with a students’ native phoneme, the harder it will be for the student not to substitute the native phoneme for the foreign sound.”(p. 54). For instance, when confronting a word with the phoneme “r”, some French speakers tend to substitute the English sound /r/ with their French sound /ʀ/. The French “r” is uvular, it means that only the back of the tongue goes up, meanwhile, in English it is palatal-alveolar approximant i.e. the whole tongue up to the roof of the mouth.

Another characteristic of French that causes a “French accent” in English is that French speakers are unable to articulate English vowel sounds, and some consonant sounds because they are not familiar with the use of the tip of the tongue in the speech. For instance, the consonant sounds /ð/ and /θ/ are hard to learn because they do not exist in French. So, French speakers tend to substitute those sounds with /s/, /z/, /f/, /v/, /t/ and /d/. Three may be pronounced as “sree”, “free” or “tree”; and with as “wiz”, “wiv” or “wid”. Additionally, French speakers find difficulties in pronouncing vowel sounds such as /u/, /u:/, /i/, /i:/ because they have only one vowel sound in the area of /i:/, and one sound in the area of /u:/, which results in confusing pronunciation of pairs like “live, leave”, “pull, pool”. French speakers may also face problems with English words that begin with the sound /h/, and they tend to drop it as in “ospital” because the letter “h” is always silent in French. Furthermore, the French and English systems of word stress and rhythm are vastly different, which can make understanding and producing spoken English extremely challenging. The unpredictability of stress patterns in English words, particularly cognates, is a common source of frustration for

French learners (Word stress in French is regular). Learners may also be hesitant to partake in the common practice of vowel reduction in English unstressed syllables, which results in the stereotypical French accent of EFL learners. (Walter, 2001, pp. 35-55)

## 2.2 Grammar and spelling

English and French share some grammatical features due to their historical relation. For instance, both languages share the same ‘parts of speech’ categories (nouns, verbs, and prepositions). Moreover, English and French share the same basic sentence order (Subject + Verb + Object). However, there are certain distinctions that might cause interference problems when producing English.

For spelling, both French and English alphabets contain the same 26 letters, yet French has more letters with diacritics (é, è, à, ù, ç, â, ê, î, ô, û, ë, ï, ü). French EFL learners may experience interference problems in class. For example, when the teacher spells out words containing “e” or “g”, beginners frequently write “i” or “j”.

According to Walter (2001), these are some of the differences between English and French Grammar:

- The negative form: In French, it is formed as ‘ne dors pas’. EFL learners may incorrectly place “not” in a sentence, for example, “He lives not in London”.
- Noun Gender: In English objects and animals are gender-free. In French, however, all nouns are either feminine or masculine.
- Articles: the articles “la/une” and “le/un” are used in French to denote gender on all words while English articles (a, an, the) do not have any gender specification.
- The auxiliary “do”: In French, it has no equivalent. Thus, forming interrogative is difficult for EFL learners. For example, “He is your son?” They could also flip the

subject and verb, as in “How often see you him?”

- Adjective noun order: In English, adjectives come before the nouns they describe.

However, in French it is the opposite. For example:

-English: “It is a smart cat”

-French : “Il est un chat intelligent.”

### 2.3 Semantics and vocabulary

According to Lawless (2006), English Adopted about 10.000 French words, As a result of the Norman occupation of England. Around 75%of these words are still used today. An English speaker who has never studied French already knows around 15.000 French words. Although they belong to different sub groups (Germanic, Romance), French and English share a set of true and false cognates. That resemblance in vocabulary between the two languages originates from English borrowings of French and Latin words.

Richards, Platt and Platt (1992) define cognate as “a word in one language which is very similar in form and the meaning to a word in another language because both language are related.” (p. 59). This implies that these cognates exist because the two languages belong to the same Indo-European family.

French language has many true cognates (les vrais amis). Lawless (2006) claims that, there are hundreds of true cognates (words similar in spelling and meaning in two languages), which to some extent facilitates learning French for English speakers. The following table illustrates some of the true cognates between English and French:

<b>French</b>	<b>English</b>
Famille	Family
Different	Different
Animal	Animal
Absolument	Absolutely
Classe	Class
Revolution	Revolution

**Table 9 Some French and English true cognates**

As stated previously, French and English have a large number of similar words referred to as “cognates”. However, not all words with similar spelling have the same meaning. For instance, the French word for “attend” looks just like "assist," while the French word for "excellent" looks precisely like "formidable." These are known as “false cognates” or “faux amis”. In this regard, Richards, Platt & Platt (1992) define false cognates as “a word which has the same or very similar forms in two languages, but which has a different meaning in each.”(p. 22). The following is a list of some false cognates that French and English share.

<b>English words with French synonyms</b>	<b>French words with English synonyms</b>
Rest = se reposer	Rester = Stay
Attend = Assister	Attendre = wait
Finally = Enfin	Finalement = Eventually
Chance = Occasion	Chance = Luck
Assist = Help	Assister = Attend
Actually = en effet	Actuellement = at the moment

**Table 10 Some French and English false cognates**

## **Conclusion**

This chapter was an attempt to discuss the importance of learning a foreign language in such a modernized world, in addition to the position of foreign languages in the Algerian educational system. It was concluded that French language in Algeria has a powerful status than English, which is due to historical and political factors. Because of these factors, French were introduced in the Algerian educational system as a first foreign language three years before English. Hence, it is deduced that the early exposure to French before English may have a significant influence on teaching and learning English as a second foreign language.



**Chapter Two:**  
**Pronunciation and Third Language**  
**Acquisition**

## Chapter Two: Pronunciation and Third Language Acquisition

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## **Introduction**

Learning a second foreign language (FL2) or a third language L3 is becoming more complex process than learning a first foreign one (FL1) or a second language L2, the former can create more opportunities of linguistic interference. This chapter is devoted to highlight the process of acquisition of the phonological system of a third language (L3) or a second foreign language (FL2). It is divided into two sections; the first section is devoted to Third language acquisition. The second tackles the acquisition of English as L3 pronunciation.

## **Section One: English phonological system and French influence**

### **1. Definition of Pronunciation**

The main function of language is communication; thus, in order to ensure that function and fulfil the goal of communication, a clear and comprehensible output of language is crucial. Effective pronunciation is then, an essential aspect of oral speech since it reinforces mutual intelligibility between speakers, and serves in enhancing communication.

According to Frazer (2000), speakers with correct pronunciation are easily understood even though they have other flaws. Others with poor pronunciation, on the other hand, struggle to be interpreted while being accurate in other aspects of language.

Pronunciation is the sounds production of a particular language. It can also be defined as the way people utter words. Moreover, Richard et al. (2002 ) define pronunciation as follows: “pronunciation includes the role of individual sounds and sound segments, that is, features at the segmental level as well as supra-segmental features such as stress, rhythm and intonation” (p. 84). Proper pronunciation occurs naturally when all of the features, both segmental and supra segmental, participate in the process.

Phonology, according to Skandera and Burleigh (2005), is concerned with a speaker's knowledge of the language's sound system. There are two types of phonology: segmental phonology and supra segmental phonology.

The production and perception of the significant sounds of a particular language in order to achieve meaning in contexts of language use comprises the production and perception of segmental sounds, of stressed and unstressed syllables, and of "speech melody", or intonation. Knowledge about these features is termed "Phonology" while using these features in speech is "Pronunciation". As a result, phonology is associated with competence, and pronunciation is concerned with performance.

## **2. Features of English phonological system**

In order to achieve intelligibility, all segmental and supra segmental language characteristics must be fully considered since they serve for accurate pronunciation. When learners are aware of these characteristics, they are more likely to acquire a correct pronunciation.

### **1. Segmental Features**

#### **2.1.1. Phonemes**

Crystal (2008) defines a phoneme as "the minimal unit in the sound system of a language" (p. 36). It is the smallest unit of speech that makes one word different from the other. For example, the difference between "pin" and "pan" depends on the vowel, i.e. the different phonemes /ɪ/ and /æ/. The English language has 44 phonemes, including 20 vowels and 24 consonants. The following chart summarises the English phonemes.

vowels				diphthongs		
i:	ɪ	ʊ	u:	ɪə	eə	
e	ə	ɜ:	ɔ:	əʊ	aʊ	
æ	ʌ	a:	ɒ	eɪ	aɪ	ɔɪ

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

Figure 1 English Phonemes (Phonemic Chart, British council website)

## 2.1.2. Vowels

According to Roach (1991), vowels are speech sounds, which cause no obstacle to the flow of the air when they are produced. Vowels in English are of three categories. There are monophthongs are single vowel sounds within a syllable, diphthongs are two vowel sounds combined within a syllable, and triphthongs are three vowel sounds combined within a syllable.

### 2.1.2.1. Monophthongs

Crystal (1994) defined monophthongs as pure or single vowels that are articulated by both mouth and tongue in one position. There are twelve monophthongs in English /u:/ /ɜ:/ /ɔ:/ /ɑ:/ /i:/ /ʊ/ /ɪ/ /e/ /æ/ /ʌ/ /ɒ/ /ə/ (p. 237). There are seven short vowel sounds which are /ə/, /e/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɪ/, /ʊ/, /ɒ/, and five long vowel monophthongs, which are /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/, /u:/, /ɜ:/ and /i:/.

The following table illustrates the English monophthongs:

<b>Monophthong</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
/ɪ/	close, front, unrounded	Chin, happy
/e/	half close, front, unrounded	Essay, Leather
/æ/	half open, front, unrounded	Have
/ʌ/	open, central, unrounded, short	Cut, Some
/ɒ/	open, back, rounded	Top, What
/ʊ/	close, back, rounded	Book, Put, Should
/ə/	half close, central, unrounded	Never, Again
/i:/	close, front, unrounded, long	Sleep, Team
/ɜ:/	half close, central, unrounded, long	Nerd, Third, Turn
/ɑ:/	open, back, unrounded, long	Car
/ɔ:/	open, back, rounded, long	Pause, Yawn
/u:/	close, back, rounded, long	Few, Lose, Fruit

Table 11 English Monophthongs (Roach, 2009)

### 2.1.2.2. Diphthongs

Diphthongs, according to Roach (1998), are sounds that comprise the movement or glide from one vowel to another, since diphthongs are the fusion of two pure vowels. According to Ramelan in Mustikareni (2013), diphthongs are classified into two types: closing and centring diphthongs. The closing diphthong is a diphthong sound in which the second vowel is closer than the first vowel when the tongue moves from the open vowel to the closer vowel, while the centring diphthong is a diphthong sound in which the second vowel is closer than the first vowels because the tongue moves towards the central vowel. English closing diphthongs, for example, are (/eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /aʊ/, /əʊ/) and centring diphthongs are (/ɪə/, /eə/, /ʊə/) (Roach, 1998). The following table illustrates the English diphthongs.

<b>Diphthong</b>	<b>Example</b>
/ɪə/	Theory
/eə/	Wear
/ʊə/	Pure
/eɪ/	Pray
/aɪ/	Night
/əʊ/	Home
/ɔɪ/	Boy
/aʊ/	How

Table 12 English Diphthongs (Roach, 1991)

### 2.1.2.3. Triphthongs

Triphthongs are the most complex vowel sounds in English. They can be challenging to pronounce and much more difficult to identify. A triphthong is “a glide from one vowel to another and then to a third” (Roach, 1991, p. 22). Triphthongs are composed of the five diphthongs /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /əʊ/, and /aʊ/ with the addition of schwa at the end. The following table illustrates the English triphthongs according to (Roach, 1991, p. 23).

<b>Diphthong + schwa</b>	<b>Triphthong</b>	<b>Example</b>
/eɪ/ + /ə/	/eɪə/	Layer
/aɪ/ + /ə/	/aɪə/	Fire
/ɔɪ/ + /ə/	/ɔɪə/	Lawyer
/aʊ/ + /ə/	/aʊə/	Power
/əʊ/ + /ə/	/əʊə/	Lower

Table 13 English Triphthongs (Roach, 1991, p. 22)

### 2.1.3. Consonants

Consonants are described by Crystal (2008, p. 103) as sounds produced by a closing or narrowing of the vocal tract. The air is blocked partly or fully if there is an audible pressure at the edges of syllables solely or in sequences. Blake (2008, p. 133) distinguishes consonants as sounds that are usually shorter in length than vowels and appear at the margins of syllables. In English, consonants are classified into two categories: voiced and voiceless.

According to Crystal (2008), the sound is voiced when the vocal cords are stretched so tightly that they vibrate during the pronunciation of a sound such as the consonants /v/ and /d/. However, when there is no vibration in the vocal cords, a voiceless consonant is produced, such as the consonants /t/ and /d/. The table below illustrates the English consonants and their type.

<b>Consonant</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
/b/	voiced, bilabial, stop	Book, Able
/d/	voiced, alveolar, stop	Dinner, Wind
/f/	voiceless, labiodentals, fricative	Phase, Fill, Laugh
/g/	voiced, velar, stop	Game, Bag
/k/	voiceless, velar, stop	Climb, Kind, Quote
/l/	voiced, alveolar, lateral	Line, Well
/m/	voiced, bilabial, nasal	Man
/n/	voiced, alveolar, nasal	Never
/ŋ/	voiced, velar, nasal	Ring
/p/	voiceless, bilabial, stop	Place
/s/	voiceless, alveolar, fricative	Summer, Race
/t/	voiceless, alveolar, stop	Train
/v/	voiced, labiodental, fricative	Voice
/z/	voiced, alveolar, fricative	Zone
/ʃ/	voiceless, palato-alveolar,	Sheep, Sugar
/ʒ/	voiced, palato-alveolar, fricative	Pleasure, Genre
/θ/	Voiceless, interdental, fricative	Thunder
/ð/	voiced, interdental, fricative	With
/h/	voiceless, glottal, fricative	Hand
/tʃ/	voiceless, palato-alveolar,	Cheese
/dʒ/	voiced, palato-alveolar, affricate	Judge, Jump, Sausage
/r/	voiced, alveolar, retroflex, glide	Rainbow, Colour
/j/	voiced, velar, glide	Yellow
/w/	voiced, bilabial, glide	Queen, white

Table 14 English Consonants (Roach, 2009)



## **2. Supra-segmental Features**

### **2.2.1. Stress**

A huge number of scholars have discussed and investigated this subject extensively through the years. Stress, including rhythm and intonation, is a “supra segmental or prosodic feature” in phonetics (Finch & Lira, 1982, p. 87). Stress is precisely described in the Crystal dictionary (2008) as:

A term used in phonetics to refer to the degree of force used in producing a syllable. The usual distinction is between stressed and unstressed syllables, the former being more prominent than the latter (and marked in transcription with a raised vertical line, [ˈ]). The prominence is usually due to an increase in loudness of the stressed syllable, but increases in length and often pitch may contribute to the overall impression of prominence. In popular usage, ‘stress’ is usually equated with an undifferentiated notion of ‘emphasis’ or ‘strength’. (p. 454)

It should be noted that multi-syllable words might contain more than one stress .i.e. primary and secondary stress. As a result, dealing with the stress of one-syllable words would be all too straightforward. However, he/she will encounter difficulties while attempting to recognise the stress in multi-syllable words.

In certain situations, the stress positioning can be easily anticipated without some effort. For example, two-syllable words with the “schwa” sound, which is never stressed, in one of the syllables would immediately put the stress on the other syllable with no “schwa”, such as the word “again”. Since /ə/ is always unstressed, the stressed syllable is /gen/.

### **2.2.2. Intonation**

Intonation and stress are inescapably related. In fact, it is difficult to separate them. They go hand in hand. Intonation is concerned with how we say something, not about what we say, and the way our voice rises and falls as we speak. In other words, the music of the language.

The Crystal dictionary (2008) defines intonation as follows:

A term used in the study of supra segmental phonology, referring to the distinctive use of patterns of pitch, or melody. The study of intonation is sometimes called Intonology. Several ways of analysing intonation have been suggested: in some approaches, the pitch patterns are described as contours and analysed in terms of levels of pitch as pitch phonemes and morphemes; in others, the patterns are described as tone units or tone groups, analysed further as contrasts of nuclear tone, tonicity, etc. The three variables of pitch range, height and direction are generally distinguished. (p. 252)

Intonation serves a variety of linguistic functions. Its primary purpose is as a signal of grammatical structure, where it functions similarly to punctuation in writing, although with much more contrasts. Intonation may be used to label sentences, clauses, and other boundaries, as well as to distinguish between certain grammatical structures, such as questions and statements. A second role of intonation is to communicate personal attitude: sarcasm, puzzlement, anger, and so on can all be signalled by pitch contrasts, along with other prosodic and paralinguistic features. Other uses of intonation in language have been proposed, such as a way of signalling social background.

### **3. French phonological system compared to English**

Many phonological similarities exist between French and English; French speakers have no trouble hearing or pronouncing most English consonants, although some vowel sounds pose difficulties. Furthermore, the French and English systems of word stress and rhythm are very different, and this can lead to serious difficulties both in understanding and in producing spoken English.

#### **3.1. French and English vowels**

The French sound system consists of 37 sounds, 16 of them are vowels, 3 semi-vowels and 18 consonants. What characterizes this sound system is the presence of nasal vowels which makes the difference between the French sound system and other languages'

sound systems such that of English. The following table that is given by Campbell (1991) summarizes the Vowel phonemes of French and English:

Type of vowels	French vowels	English vowels
Orals	Ø, œ, i, e, ɜ, a, ə, ɔ, o, u, y	i, I, ɜ, æ, e, ʌ, u, ʊ, ɔ, ɒ, ə
Nasals	ã, ê, ã, œ	
Diphthongs	Many diphthong/triphthongs involving: j, w, ɥ	aɪ, ɔɪ, aʊ, eɪ, oʊ

**Table 15 French and English Vowels (Campbell, 1991, pp. 417,469)**

Walter (2001) describes differences between English and French vowels as follows:

- Due to non-use of the tip of the tongue, French has only one sound in the area of /i:/, /u:/, and /i/, /ʊ/, leading to confusions between pairs like ‘sheep’ and ‘ship’; ‘pull’ and ‘pool’.
- /ʌ/ is sometimes pronounced like /ə/, ‘but’ could be pronounced as ‘Bert’.
- /ɒ/ is often unrounded, for instance, not is pronounced like nut.
- Both /ɔ:/ and /əʊ/ are moved towards the French /o/, making confusion between pairs like naught and note. In addition, ‘note’ might be pronounced as ‘not’.
- /æ/ is usually the most difficult vowel. It may be produced:
  - ◇ as an English /ʌ/, so that words like bat and but are confused;
  - ◇ rather like /ɑ:/, for instance, ‘Sand’ is pronounced close to ‘sound’;
  - ◇ Like /e/, which may cause confusion between pairs like pat and pet.
- /ei/ sometimes becomes /e/, for example, Fade might sound like Fed. Since /æ/ can also be pronounced as /e/, this can make confusion in pairs like mad and made.

The following chart illustrates similarities between English and French Vowel sounds:

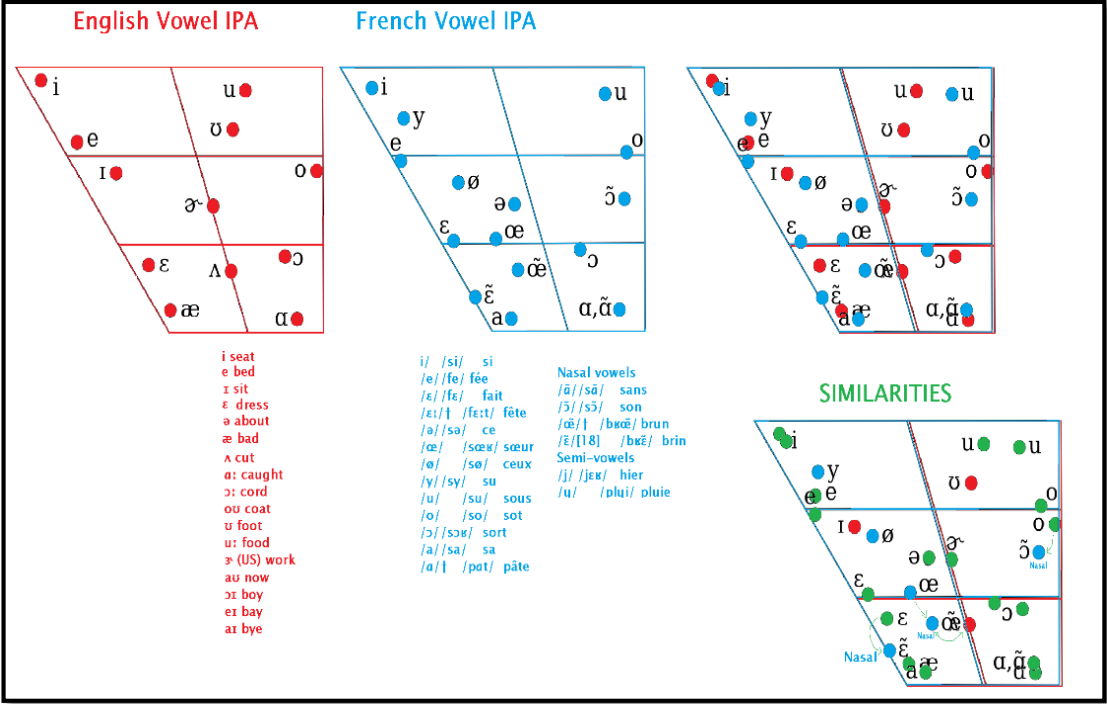


Figure 2 French/English comparative vowel sounds for pronunciation

(retrieved from <https://www.reddit.com/>, posted by Adhaj1, 2020)

### 3.2. French and English consonants

Walter (2001) describes differences between English and French consonants as follows:

- /θ/ and /ð / are not part of French consonant sounds, which makes speakers struggle while trying to articulate them. They tend to replace them with /s/, /z/, /f/, /v/, /t/ and /d/. For instance, ‘The’ as ‘ze’, ‘de’, or ‘ve’; ‘throat’ as ‘sroat’, ‘froat’, or ‘troat’.
- /tʃ/ is often pronounced as /ʃ/ and /dʒ/ as /ʒ/. ‘Chair’ pronounced like ‘share’.
- /h/ is not part of French consonants, the word ‘Hall’ could be confused with ‘all’.
- /r/ in French is pronounced with the back of the tongue, and speakers tend to use it in the same way in English.

- Dark /l/ does not exist in French, and students may replace it by clear /l/.

Additionally, English consonant cluster is also troublesome for French speakers. Walter (2001) states: “In words ending in consonant + le, the French speaker may re-interpret the dark /l/ as /əl/. Combined with the tendency to stress multisyllabic words on the last syllable, this gives pronunciations like ‘terri’bull’ ‘lit’tull’.” (p. 55)

The following table illustrates the differences and similarities between English and French consonants sounds given by Campbell (1991).

<b>Manner of Articulation</b>	<b>French Consonants</b>	<b>English Consonants</b>
Stops	p, b ,t, d , k, g	p, b, t, d, k, g
Nasals	m, n, ɲ	m, n, ŋ
Fricatives	f, v, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, ʁ	f, v, θ, ð, s, z, h, ʒ, ʃ
Central Approximants	j, w, ɥ	j, r, ɹ, W
Lateral Approximants	l	l
Affricates	/	tʃ, dʒ

Table 16 English and French Consonants (Campbell, 1991, pp. 417,469)

### 3.3. French and English stress

According to Walter (2001), the stress of English should be learnt for the pronunciation of each word, Unlike French where words of two syllables or more are stressed in a regular way. This can negatively affect intelligibility and comprehension.

In French, the stress is weaker than in English, and it is usually on the last syllable. Hence, moving from the very regular French system of word stress to English, where the stress pattern of each word must be learnt as part of its pronunciation is a very hard process.

### 3.4. French and English intonation

Walter (2001) claims that despite the similarities between English and French stress systems, some patterns in French tend to be step like and avoid glides. This can lead to misunderstanding through giving an impression of ferocity.

### 3.5. Influence of spelling on pronunciation

French spelling system and sound system are relatively related, which facilitates the pronunciation of French words. When learning English, French learners may expect to be able to do the same in English. In cases when a letter or combination of letters has a distinct value in English and French, errors might be made, especially by novices. As explained by Walter (2001):

- 'Ou' may be pronounced /u:/, and 'au' may be pronounced /o/, as in 'pronounce', 'automatic'.
- The final 'ed' is usually produced as /id/ or /ed/ after all consonants.
- The final inflectional 's' at the end is often not pronounced. Additionally, the 't' at the end of words tends to be dropped. Examples are: 'differen', 'She stay', 'four apple'.
- The stress of French words that have cognates in English is transferred to the latter.

## **Section Two: Third Language Acquisition in a Multilingual Context**

The increasing need for learning more than one foreign language lead to the spread of multilingual cultures around the world, which intrigued researchers' interest in investigating the phenomenon of third language acquisition (TLA) as a separate field from second language acquisition (SLA). “Research into L3 acquisition and use witnessed a boom towards the turn of the years” (Bardel and Falk, 2010, p. 185).

De Angelis (2007) claims that the research on multilingualism is based on the assumption that all individuals are capable of learning and speaking more than two languages, or that humans are multilingual by nature. TLA occurs in multilingual situations; hence, it has become an interesting field of research for multilingual issues.

### **1. Bilingualism and Multilingualism**

According to Sanchez (2019), Multilingualism is no longer the exception but the rule. In nowadays world, knowing more than two languages is considered habitual. Cenoz (2013) claims that it is a very complex matter to define the word multilingualism and distinguish it from other learning circumstances such as bilingualism or second language acquisition (SLA). Sharwood Smith (1994) notes that “SLA” is regarded as a “cover term” for any language other than the learner’s native language without taking into consideration the previously acquired non-native languages. Consequently, multilingualism and bilingualism are used interchangeably in literature, which makes troubles in attempts to define the two terms. For instance, some researchers defined multilingualism as “the acquisition and use of two or more languages” (Aronin & Singleton 2008, p. 2), and the term bilingualism is used to refer to the situations where learners “use two or more languages in their everyday life” (Grosjean 2010, p. xiii). When reading these definitions, the concluded idea is that the term bilingual may apply to anything other than the L1 despite the true meaning of the prefixes “bi” and “multi”,

thus by definition, a bilingual cannot speak more than two languages. (Cenoz et al., 2003; Herdina and Jessner, 2000). This controversy urged recent researchers to put endeavour in discriminating between the two terms.

Multilingualism study was first viewed as an extension of related research fields such as bilingualism and Second Language Acquisition. However, the learning of a third language has come to be recognized as being fundamentally distinct over time.

## **2. Cross-linguistic influence**

Cross-linguistic influence (CLI) research aims to explain how and under what circumstances prior linguistic knowledge affects the production, understanding, and development of a target language. (De Angelis, 2007). In early studies, the focus of CLI was Second Language Acquisition (SLA), in which learners' prior knowledge that may influence L2 acquisition is only their native language L1. Thus, CLI discussed how the learners' native language interferes in the acquisition of an L2. (Tremblay, 2006). In this regard, Cenoz (2001) states that TLA is a more intriguing research topic for CLI since it has to deal with two previously acquired languages and must select between the L1 and L2 systems as a language supplier, or source language in learning L3.

CLI research has identified several variables that influence the acquisition of an L3, allowing researchers to anticipate which background languages (L1 or L2) are more likely to be used as a source language. These variables are language distance, or the typological relation, target language proficiency and source language proficiency, recency of use, length of residence and exposure to a non-native language environment, order of acquisition, and formality of context (De Angelis, 2007).



### **3. Third Language Acquisition (TLA)**

When reviewing the literature on TLA, academics note that there does not appear to be any clear definition of the TLA term. Furthermore, as Garcia Mayo (2012) clearly notes, there has been considerable debate about utilizing L3 acquisition as a research topic. That is to say, until recently, TLA was not even considered a field of study, because it was seen as a phenomenon of second language acquisition. As a result, there have been no attempts to categorize TLA as a distinct phenomenon over the years.

Third language acquisition developed as a separate topic of research within multilingualism, due to some researchers' interest in the field such as Hufeisen (1998; 2003) and De Angelis (2007). In this vein, Leung (2007) claims:

Third language (L3) acquisition was once subsumed under the field of second language acquisition (SLA) in which a 'second' language meant any non-native language acquired beyond the first. In recent years, a number of researchers have started to look seriously at the phenomenon of L3/multilingualism as a separate domain of inquiry. (p. 95)

According to Cenoz (2003), TLA is the acquisition of a non-native language by learners who have already learned or are learning two other languages. The first two languages might be learned simultaneously (as in early bilingualism) or sequentially. Additionally, Hammarberg (2018) defines TLA as "the learning situation of learners with prior experience of acquiring one or more non-native languages" (p. 128).

### **4. Contrastive analysis VS Error Analysis**

James (1980) defines Contrastive Analysis as "a systematic comparison of specific linguistic characteristics of two or more languages" (p. 5). It is a field of linguistics that aims at describing the similarities and differences between two languages by comparing their phonology, grammar, and vocabulary. The focus of CA is to compare between the learner's

mother tongue, and the target language or the second language in order to predict the errors that learners may make during the learning process. According to Lado (1957), learners transfer semantic and syntactic features from their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture.

The strong version of CA is based on the idea that the similarities between a previously acquired language and a target language enhance the acquisition of the last. On the other hand, the weak version entails that difficulties in L2 acquisition are caused by the distance between the two languages. The claims of CA were criticized because in many cases the similarities between the acquired language and the target language can inhibit learning some aspects of the last.

CA was one of the first techniques used to investigate the error's source. After a few setbacks, CA ceded the field to error analysis (EA), Pit Corder, a British linguist, founded this theory in the 1960s as a reaction to the Contrastive Analysis (CA) theory. According to several scholars, the latter failed to adequately clarify and study learners' errors. The primary goal of Error Analysis (EA) is to examine, describe, and analyse those errors. As a result, teachers may find it simple to identify language areas that need to be strengthened (Corder, 1967). In other words, EA is extremely beneficial in either foreign or second language acquisition because it allows teachers, syllabus designers, and textbook writers to identify the areas of the problem. Errors are significant because they provide information about the current level of knowledge or skills that learners have acquired, and about what still needs to be acquired (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

As previously stated, the purpose of this research is to investigate the influence of French on English pronunciation of EFL learners. Hence, this study is not concerned with comparing French language and English language to predict the possible errors, but the main concern is to examine, analyse, and describe the pronunciation errors that resulted from the

transfer from French to English. Thus, the appropriate procedure to investigate the problem is through Error Analysis.

- **Error VS Mistake**

The two terms are often taught to have the same meaning; however, each term convey a different meaning. A mistake, according to Corder (1967), is a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip. That is to say, the learner is aware of the rules of language, but for a certain reason he/she could not apply it. Errors however, are more significant throughout the learning process since they occur because of learners' ignorance of the proper language forms. An error, according to James (1998), cannot be self-corrected, while mistakes can be self-corrected if the deviation is pointed out to the speaker. Mistakes can occur because of normal psychological or physical factors such as tiredness, carelessness, a lack of concentration, or the experience of a strong emotion.

- **Interlingual Errors VS Intralingual Errors**

Interlingual Errors are caused by using components from one language while speaking/writing in another. In other words, when learning the target language, the learner subconsciously refers to the language or languages he already knows and begins comparing the target language to the already-known language, which may result in positive or negative transfer. On the other hand, Intralingual Errors happen within the target language due to the incomplete knowledge; the learner tends to transfer the rules from and to the target language.

## **5. Language Transfer and Interference**

Odlin (1989) defines transfer as “the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired” (p. 27). This definition highlights the fact that there exist two forms of transfer; it could be positive or negative. Positive transfer happens when the two

languages are similar while negative transfer occurs when there are differences between the target language and any other previously learned language.

In Second Language acquisition, the transfer can happen only between two languages (L1, L2). Thus, the number of possible linguistic interactions is limited; it can be L1→L2 transfer, L2→L2 (intralingual interference), or L2→L1 transfer. However, in third language acquisition, languages may affect each other in any feasible arrangement, which substantially increases the number of transfer possibilities. As reported by Chłopek and Ionin et al (2011), for three languages the following arrangements may happen: L1→L2, L1→L3, L2→L3, L2→L1, L3→L2 or L3→L1. The most significant, according to Odlin (2005), is that different languages can influence each other in entirely different ways. For example, it is common for L2 to affect L3 in ways that L1 will never do, which is the case of French influence on English in this study.

## **6. Factors that affect Third Language Acquisition**

Cenoz (2001) claims that the main areas of investigation of CLI include the effect of different factors that may affect third language acquisition such as typological distance, L2 status, recency, context or proficiency on cross-linguistic influence from the L1 and the L2 on the L3.

### **6.1. Typological distance ( psychotypology )**

Kellerman's (1983) defines the concept of psychotypology, as the language that is perceived as typologically closer. According to Cenoz (2001), linguistic typology has proved to be influential in the choice of the source language. That is to say, speakers borrow more terms from the language that is typologically closer to the target language. Depending on the language combinations and research project, FL1 may serve as a predominant source of transfer, such predominance is returning to the typological distance (structural characteristics)

either between the Foreign Language 1 and Foreign Language 2 or to the acquisition order. According to Cenoz (2001), the effect of psychotypology has been confirmed in several studies. For example, learners of French and English who are native speakers of a non-Indo-European language tend to transfer vocabulary and structures from other Indo-European languages they know rather than from their first language (Ahukanna et al., 1981; Bartelt, 1989; Ringbom, 1987; Singh & Carroll, 1979)

De Angelis and Selinker (2001) conducted a recent study in which a group of university students from Poland is taken as a case. The participants are native Polish speakers, advanced speakers in English (FL1) and upper-intermediate users of German (FL2). Their speaking and reading performance of German (FL2) were recorded and analysed paying attention to foreign accentedness that is resulting from either L1 (Polish) or FL1 (English) influence. The results show that English (FL1) affected German (FL2) more than Polish (L1) did, which confirms the effect of typological distance on interference. More clearly, the more the previously language is close in structure to the target language, the more it has an influence on it either positively or negatively.

## **6.2. L2 status**

Meisel (1983) was the first to notice the L2 status phenomenon, which he termed the “foreign language effect”. Nonetheless, Hammarberg (1998) developed the term L2 Status to describe L3 learners' preference for the L2 as a source language over the L1.

Learners activate L2 as a language supplier deliberately or subconsciously due to its foreignness which has the same status as L3. Hammarberg (2001) defines the L2 status factor as “a desire to suppress the L1 as being ‘non-foreign’ and to rely rather on an orientation towards a prior L2 as a strategy to approach the L3” (as cited in Bardel & Falk, 2012, p. 62). Angelis (2005) states:

Native languages are classified as “foreign languages” category in learner’s mind creating a cognitive association between them. As one’s L1 does not sound “foreign”, it is usually excluded and blocked from the association, which is called ‘association of foreignness. (p. 11)

A recent study by Llama, Cardoso and Collins (2010) aimed to compare the phonetic production of Spanish as L3 for two groups, the first group had English as L1 and French as L2, and the second group had French as L1 and English as L2. It was found that L2 was favoured over the L1 in both cases. The researchers concluded that linguistic distance (psychotypology) was not a factor that could explain this language interference in the two groups of learners’ phonetic production.

### **6.3. Proficiency in target or source language**

As acknowledged in literature about L3, Proficiency in language plays an important role in cross-linguistic influence. According to Wrembel (2015), scholars agree that CLI is more likely to occur during the early stages of acquisition, when proficiency in the target third language is minimal; nevertheless, they do not consider the possibility of it appearing at higher levels. Odlin (1989) observed that the transfer characteristic for poor proficiency in the target language is generally negative because it is motivated by the need to fill the knowledge gaps. The positive kind of transfer, on the other hand, is more common during later stages of learning, when learners are able to draw largely on their prior linguistic knowledge.

Wrembel (2015) adds that scholars believe that the source language's proficiency level may also play a role in determining cross-linguistic impact; however, few studies discussed that issue. Several researchers (Fernandes-Boëchat, 2007; Gut, 2010; Ringbom, 1987) maintain that in order to have an impact on the target foreign language, the competency level in the source non-native language must be reasonably high. Wrembel (2015) concludes that the degree of skill in both the source and target languages appears to be a key element in creating cross-linguistic impact patterns.

#### **6.4. Recency and language Exposure**

These factors include the recency of language use, as well as the length of time of exposure to a foreign language environment, all of which are known to influence the degree and the form of transfer. Wrember (2015) notes that earlier studies on multilingualism (e.g. Hammarberg and Hammarberg 1993, 2005, Vildomec 1963) identified recency as a major factor of CLI. “The notion of recency of use or of a recency effect during the acquisition process refers to how recently a language was last used.” (De Angelis, 2007, p. 35). It is assumed that the activation of certain linguistic information stored in the mind of a multilingual enhances the occurrence of potential influence due to recent language use. As reported by Vildomec (1963), when it comes to exposure to a non-native language environment, it has been suggested that a lengthy term of residency in such a setting may have an impact on the amount and type of CLI in L3.

#### **7. Acquisition of L3 phonology**

L3 pronunciation acquisition is a relatively new area of research, which is limited in comparison to L2 pronunciation research. However, since the early 2000s, this status has begun to change; there have been some initiatives to delve into the field of third language pronunciation acquisition. This study is concerned with cross-linguistic influence on pronunciation; therefore, this subsection is devoted to shed light on previous studies on L3 phonology acquisition.

As reported in Bizongwako (2015), Hammarberg investigated the oral production of Sarah Williams, an English native speaker with German as L2 and Swedish as L3. Three native German listeners judged her accent. The results of their judgments revealed that Sarah’s speech was L2-accented (with a German accent) in the first stages of the learning process. However, the German accent diminished over time with L1 accent becoming more

and more prevalent. The researcher concluded that L3 was influenced by L2 in the first stages and by L1 in later stages of her interlanguage.

According to Lipińska (2015), a study by Wrembel (2010) proved that L2 structures are activated in third language speech production, and the transfer from the native language is blocked. Her research included a sample of native Polish speakers who also spoke L2-German and L3-English. Twenty-seven linguists recorded and assessed their speech output on a perceptual level. The subjects differed depending on their L3-English proficiency. The findings showed that one's second language had a greater impact on L3 speech production throughout the early phases of third language acquisition. Wrembel noticed that the typological similarity between English and German could possibly affect the participants' L3 speech production. These results, as noted in Bizongwako (2015), confirm Hammerberg's claim that the influence from L2 on L3 is stronger at the initial stage of phonological acquisition.

Furthermore, according to Wrembel (2015), investigations by Singh and Carroll (1979) of native speakers of non-European languages with L2 English learning French as their L3, offered evidence of non-native phonological transfer. The results showed a significant influence of L2 English on the subjects' L3 French speech. Wrembel (2015) concluded:

Several other studies that found evidence of L2 influence on phonetic performance in L3 pointed to typological closeness or perceived proximity (i.e. psychotypology) between the language systems involved rather than the L2 status alone as the driving force behind this process. (p. 92)

Based on the reviewed studies, it is concluded that L1 is not the only source of transfer when learning a third language. The results from these studies assumes that L2 plays a significant role in the acquisition of L3 phonology.



## **8. Interference of French**

While EFL students may be unaware of the overlaps between French and English, this does not mean they do not exist. The French influence is still visible in several elements of language and pronunciation specifically. Throughout the learning process, learners instinctively make use of any prior information that may assist them in making sense of a new concept. When it comes to studying English, Algerian native speakers may draw parallels to French rather than Arabic, since the likelihood of matching comparable features is rather high.

One may claim that French interference occurs when learners are natural French speakers who are studying English. Without any doubt, this interference of the first language is more likely to occur when the two languages have a high degree of similarity. For instance, when Algerian learners study English, they reflect on Arabic and French. However, since the English writing system is more similar to French (the alphabet, morphological features, word spelling, capital letters...), learners are more likely to transfer from French than from Arabic.

Lado (1957) states that the similar components that two languages share will be a facilitator for learners while differences might be inhibitors. However, in the Algerian context, the acquisition of English (L3) pronunciation is negatively affected by French language (L2). Recent studies have also proved that similarities can hinder the learning of a target language.

## **Conclusion**

The task of communication cannot be fully ensured if there is no understandable input/output between interlocutors. Pronunciation is a key feature for it helps transmitting the message correctly, with no misinterpretations. Therefore, it is necessary to study the process of acquiring pronunciation and the factors that might affect its performance. Thus, this chapter resumes the acquisition of L3 pronunciation, and highlights the cross-linguistic influence between English as L3 and French as L2.

**Chapter Three:**  
**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

## Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Interpretation

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## **Introduction**

The present chapter is devoted to the practical framework, which is intended to examine the impact of French on the English pronunciation by Algerian EFL learners. In order to test the validity of the previously stated hypothesis, research methods are used. Since English language in Algeria is only taught in educational settings, learners and teachers are the main variables of this study. Learners are the core of the teaching operation; hence, the whole study relies on them. Additionally, teachers' views and opinions are very significant to test the hypothesis because they are in charge of the teaching process. Thus, the most appropriate tool to investigate the stated issue is through interviewing teachers and making a classroom observation through audio records and a checklist, in addition to a questionnaire for learners. The chapter in hands provides information about the methodology used, a description of the sample, methodological instruments, in addition to data analysis and interpretation of results.

### **1. Research approach**

The aim of this study is to provide an in-depth understanding of the French influence on Algerian EFL learners' pronunciation. In order to reach the research objective, the descriptive method is adopted since it is the most convenient for the issue under examination. To answer the What's and the How's of the study, it is useful to provide data about teachers' opinions towards the issue in hands, and to observe the phenomenon occurring in its natural settings in addition to collecting data about the number of participants observed to have the problem stated. Accordingly, a mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) is the most suitable to guarantee a full understanding of the problem. According to Crossman (2020), "Qualitative research is designed to reveal the meaning that informs the action or outcomes that are typically measured by quantitative research. So qualitative researchers investigate meanings, interpretations, symbols, and the processes and relations of social

life.”(Para. 7). The qualitative method aims at collecting data from observations and interviews while the quantitative method seeks to gather numerous data about participants who are affected by this phenomenon to confirm whether the qualitative method tools are reliable. The mixed-method is known for its credibility and strong result evidence since it covers both qualitative and quantitative insights.

## **2. Research design**

In research from McCombes (2020), “a case study is an appropriate research design when you want to gain concrete, contextual, in-depth knowledge about a specific real-world subject. It allows you to explore the key characteristics, meanings, and implications of the case.” (para. 3). This study takes place in a natural setting i.e. in the EFL classroom. Hence, a case study design is seen to be the most appropriate technique to offer a detailed description of the research problem. According to Crowe et al. (2011), “a case study is a research approach that is used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context. It is an established research design that is used extensively in a wide variety of disciplines, particularly in the social sciences.” (p. 1). Furthermore, McCombes (2020) states: “a case study research design usually involves qualitative methods, but quantitative methods are sometimes also used. Case studies are good for describing, comparing, evaluating and understanding different aspects of a research problem.” (para. 2)

## **3. Sample and population**

In order to investigate the problem in hands, the population addressed is first year middle school pupils of Madani Rahmoune in Biskra. The total number of population is 270 1MS pupils divided into 12 groups. The participants of the current study comprise a number of 40 1MS pupils in the academic year 2020/2021. A probability random sampling, namely

cluster sample, was opted for selecting the participants. Wilson (2010) notes: “in cluster sampling the whole population is divided into clusters or groups. Subsequently, a random sample is taken from these clusters, all of which are used in the final sample.”(p. 227). Hence, two groups were randomly chosen for the study, 20 pupils in 1MS4, and 20 pupils in 1MS6. The reason behind choosing first year learners is the fact that they have been exposed to English for the first time at middle school. Another thing worth mentioning is that the subjects under investigation were not told about the aim of the study so that they can act naturally without any stress or hesitation that may be caused by focusing on correct and perfect pronunciation.

Moreover, five (5) middle school teachers participated in this study; two of which are from the same school i.e. Madani Rahmoune middle school, and three (3) are from other middle schools in Biskra. They have been chosen to provide the study with their valuable thoughts through responding to the interview about the problem under investigation.

#### **4. Data Gathering Tools**

According to the nature of the study, which is investigating and understanding a linguistic phenomenon, the data to be collected in this study uses both quantitative and qualitative methods. A questionnaire is handed to 1MS pupils as a quantitative tool in order to collect data about the extent of French influence on their English pronunciation. In addition to two qualitative tools: 1) An interview with middle school teachers, 02 teachers working at the Madani Rahmoune middle school in Biskra, and 3 teachers from other middle schools in order to collect their views about the problem. 2) A classroom observation for 1MS pupils pronunciation during the process of teaching including a checklist and audio records. Applying those three data collection methods is known as, triangulation. Triangulation increases the validity of the results and conclusions.

## **4.1. Classroom Observation**

According to Bhasin (2020), the observation method is a way of collecting relevant information and data by observing. It is also referred to as a participatory study because the researcher has to establish a link with the respondent and for this has to immerse himself in the same setting as theirs. Only then, he can use the observation method to record and take notes.

A major advantage of observation as a technique is its directness; moreover, the observation technique provides a chance for getting data that are more reliable. For this reason, this method was adopted in order to investigate the research problem from a closer reliable angle.

### **4.1.1. Aims**

The main aim of the classroom observation is to demonstrate whether there is a negative or a positive transfer from French as L2 while acquiring English as L3 in terms of pronunciation. In addition to gathering information about the given problem in its natural setting.

### **4.1.2. Description of Classroom observation**

The classroom observation is the most suitable tool to gain a clear and honest image about the linguistic phenomenon under investigation. Since the English learning in Algeria happens only inside the classroom, it is there where a researcher can have what he/she is looking for. The classroom observation was held during the teaching process, that is to say the researcher is a teacher and a participant in the observation. The observation took place in first year middle school classes at Madani Rahmoune School for a period of two months, and it happened in an unstructured way during the teaching period with a focus on learners' pronunciation. During that phase, the observation was covert, that is to say, the pupils were unaware that the teacher is observing their pronunciation. Hence, their production was not



inflected by any hesitation or disturbance. However, it took a structured form later on, with tools such as a checklist, and audio records.

**a) The checklist**

The checklist is a tool used in the phase of observation to help the researcher focus on the features he/she wants to observe in order to prove his/her hypothesis. It systematically records behaviours and their frequency. In this study, the checklist focuses on the pronunciation of English vowels, consonants, consonant clusters, suffixes, in order to investigate whether or not there is an L2 transfer. It consists of two parts, the first part is concerned with the instructor, and the second is concerned with learners.

**b) Audio records**

Audio records are advantageous tools in research about phonology because they provide a concrete evidence about learners' pronunciation, and they can be replayed several times for analysis. Pupils were given sentences to read. The sentences contain French-English cognates, words that are similar in two languages, in order to check the interference of the French language on the pronunciation of English; then, they were recorded, and listened to several times, and their pronunciation were transcribed and compared to IPA pronunciation.

**4.2. Teachers' interview**

According to the word's definition in the dictionary, an interview is a formal face-to-face meeting (or, over telephone, or internet) between an interviewer and an interviewee. Interviews in research are mainly associated with qualitative research. Wilson (2010) claims that "Interviewing allows the researcher to gain an insight into a person's beliefs and attitudes towards a particular subject." (p. 168).

### **4.2.1. Aims of the interview**

The teachers' interview opts for investigating the teachers' point of view about the impact of French as an L2 language in Algeria on EFL learners' pronunciation. Furthermore, it aims at investigating the problems that middle school teachers encounter when teaching pronunciation to EFL pupils.

### **4.2.2. Description of the teachers' interview**

The teachers' interview was directed to two (2) colleagues at Madani Rahmoune middle school in Biskra. The interview with the two teachers was held face to face in the staffroom of the school while three (3) other teachers were interviewed via internet. The teachers' interview is semi-structured and it consists of eight (8) questions. According to Wilson (2010), "a semi-structured interview is a hybrid of the structured and unstructured approach; it is based on a set of structured questions, but at the same time provides scope for the respondent to elaborate on certain points and raise particular questions or themes." (p. 177). In the first question, teachers are asked to provide the numbers of years they have been teaching English, because the more the teachers are experienced the more their answers are relevant. The following questions seek information about the teachers' attitudes and opinions about deficiencies in English pronunciation and their relationship with French language interference.

### **4.3. Questionnaire**

Wilson (2010) defines the questionnaire as "a method of data collection that comprises a set of questions designed to generate data suitable for achieving the objectives of a research project. It can be used to gather both qualitative and quantitative data." (p. 177). This method is widely used among students because it is considered as an effective tool to collect the needed data.

### **4.3.1. Aims**

The aim behind opting for the questionnaire as a data collecting tool, is to gather information about learners' perception towards the influence of French on their English pronunciation. In addition to spotting the learners' mistakes that are due to French interference.

### **4.3.2. Description of the Pupils' Questionnaire**

Because IMS pupils are novice English learners, the questionnaire was translated into their mother tongue (Arabic) in order to ensure their understanding of the questions; moreover, all the questions were close ended for the same mentioned reason. The questionnaire is distributed at school on May 2, 2021. The pupils were collaborative and they answered the questionnaire with some assistance of the teacher. The questionnaire is divided into two parts containing 13 questions varying from checklist to multiple-choice questions

- **The first section**

It is devoted to background information. It consists of four questions about gender, age, English level and the first exposure to English. This section is useful to gather information about the pupils' background. A dichotomous (Male/female) and multiple-choice questions are used in this section. (See appendices)

- **The second section**

It is devoted to the influence of French on EFL pupils' pronunciation. This part seeks to gather information about pupils' attitudes towards learning English in general, and learning English pronunciation. In addition to multiple-choice questions, that highlights the pronunciation of some English letters, clusters, and words.

### 4.3.3. Validation and Pilot testing of the Questionnaire

A pilot testing is a strategy that is used to test the validity, reliability and feasibility of the methodological instrument. To ensure all of these factors, the questionnaire was emailed to the supervisor and corrected; besides that, it was tested with two pupils to see whether it is understandable and close to their level.

## 5. Data analysis procedures

In this section, the collected data are analysed and discussed. In order to test the validity of the hypothesis stated previously, triangulation method were used to enhance the reliability of results.

### 5.1. Analysis of the classroom observation

The following note illustrates the settings of the observation, place, time, number of pupils, and instruments used to observe.

Name of the observer/instructor: M'sellem Soumia  
Observed class: 1MS4, 1MS6 (First Year Middle School pupils)  
Number of pupils: 40  
Date: 11/04/2021 to 03/06/2021  
Time: 08-8:45 / 9:30-10:15 / 11-11:45  
School: Madani Rahmoune Middle School, Biskra  
Topic: **Investigating the Influence of French as a second language in Algeria on EFL Learners' pronunciation**  
Instruments used to record data: Audio recorder, Checklist

During the first phase of observation, the researcher seeks to focus on pronunciation mistakes of pupils with regard to French language interference. Some of these mistakes tend to occur frequently among 1MS pupils. For instance, most of pupils find difficulties when reading the alphabet letters, I, A, E, J. Some of the pronunciations that have been observed of these letters were consecutively /i/, /Λ/, 'schwa', /zi/, which is relatively close to French

pronunciation. More of these pronunciations were seen in pupils' readings of some words. For example the word: 'made' /meid/ is rather pronounced /mɒd/, which might be confused with the word 'mud'. Furthermore, the pronunciation of the letter 'R' is sometimes affected by the French pronunciation of /r/ sound.

In another session, the pupils were asked to read a text about daily activities. Most of the words were already known by pupils. They have seen them in previous lessons. However, surprisingly the French influence still is clear in their readings. The word 'hall' was pronounced 'all'; the letter "H" was considered silent, which again, is a French pronunciation feature. Additionally, most of pupils tend to drop the inflectional "s" of the verbs and plural. The word 'arrives' were pronounced /ari:v/ by most of the pupils. The same example shows that the vowel 'i' was read similarly to its French pronunciation, not the English one (/ai/). The combination of 'th' is wrongly pronounced most of the time, even though the pupils have already had the lesson and practised the sounds.

After observing the pronunciation errors generally, the researcher has opted for a more structured observation with the help of tool such as checklist and audio records.

### **5.1.1. Checklist**

The checklist contains features of pronunciation, which were early observed to have French influence. The researcher is supposed to tick the right column whether the feature is observed, not observed, or frequently observed. (see appendices) It is divided into two parts:

#### **a) The instructor**

The teacher's pronunciation is acceptable and it is not French accented, however she relies only on her pronunciation as a model of natives. She rarely uses audios. Additionally, she hardly ever uses French language in her English class to ensure pupils' understanding. The pupils' pronunciation mistakes were taken seriously, the teacher focuses all the time on

the correct pronunciation. However, due to the lack of time, she sometimes ignore the mistakes to focus on other points (Grammar/Writing). Moreover, the instructor sometimes asks pupils to read aloud so she can spot the pronunciation mistakes and correct them.

### **b) The pupils**

The pupils enjoy the pronunciation session more than the other sessions, and they tend to focus on the teacher's pronunciation because it is different for them. However, they still make mistakes. For example, they sometimes do not pronounce the 'h' in the beginning of a word, and the 't' and 's' in the end of words. The letters 'j' and 'g' are pronounced /z/ most of the times. Pupils also struggle with the pronunciation of the consonant clusters 'th', 'ch', and 'sh'. In addition to the mispronunciation of words ending with the suffixes 'al,' 'able', 'tion', and the vowel combinations 'ee', 'au', 'ai', 'ou'. The checklist results are confirmed by the audio records.

### **5.1.2. Audio records**

The first phase of recording was held in a reading session. The pupils were asked to read the text as they used to do with the teacher. The researcher, which is at the same time the teacher, records the students' readings in order to analyse their pronunciation. Moreover, the pupils' pronunciation mistakes are not corrected until the whole participants are recorded; so that the researcher can spot the maximum of the mistakes. In these phase the pupils were not aware that they were being recorded.

The second phase of recording were more structured, the pupils were aware of the recordings. Additionally, the sentences given to them are not part of their lesson. The sentences contained words that were carefully selected to examine the French language interference when learning English pronunciation. The selection of words is based on similarities between the two languages (cognates, suffixes, vowels).

The following tables illustrates the words with transcription according to pupils' pronunciation using both English and French phonological systems, in addition to their correct IPA transcription. The pronunciation was classified according to suffixes, final 's', final 't', pronunciation of 'h', pronunciation of vowels. In this analysis, just few examples are chosen to be studied.

### 5.1.2.1. Pronunciation of words with the suffix 'al'

The table below shows the pupils' pronunciations of the words: 'animal' and 'normal'.

Suffix "al"	English	French	Pupils pronunciation	Frequency	Percentage
Animal	/'æniməl/	/a.ni.mal/	/a.ni.mal/	29	72.5%
			/'æniməl/	11	27.5%
Total				40	100%
Normal	/'nɔ:məl/	/nɔʁ.mal/	/nɔʁ'mal/	17	42.5%
			/nɔʁ'mal/	14	35%
			/'nɔ:məl/	9	22.5%
Total				40	100%

**Table 17 Words ending with the suffix 'al'**

The results show that the majority of pupils (72.5%) pronounced the word 'animal' in the same way it is pronounced in French. 77.5% of the pupils pronounced the word 'normal' according to French pronunciation, 42.5% of them pronounced the 'r' as the English /r/ while 35% pronounced it as the French /ʁ/. The stress of both words falls on the first syllable; however, most of the pupils put the stress on the last syllable, which is attributed to French pronunciation. The pronunciation of the vowel "A" is to be discussed later.

### 5.1.2.2. Pronunciation of words with the suffix ‘able’

The table below shows the pronunciations of the words: ‘adorable’ and ‘miserable’.

Suffix “able”	English	French	Pupils pronunciation	Frequency	Percentage
Adorable	/ə'dɔ:rəbl/	/a.dɔ.ʁabl/	/ adɔ' ʁabul /	18	45%
			/ adɔ' rabl/	14	35%
			/' adɔ.rəbl /	6	15%
Total				40	100%
Miserable	/' mɪzərəbl/	/mi.ze.ʁabl/	/mi.ze.ʁabul/	13	32.5%
			/mi.ze.rabul/	20	50%
			/mi.se.rabl /	7	17.5%
Total				40	100%

**Table 18 Words with the suffix ‘able’**

The results illustrates the big similarities between pupils’ pronunciation, and the French pronunciation. (45%) of pupils pronounced the word adorable with a French /ʁ/, and 35% with the English /r/. However, the two first pronunciations (85%) had the stress on the last syllable, which is a feature of French pronunciation. Moreover, the vowel ‘a’ is pronounced as ‘schwa’ in English version while in French it is /a/, which is the case of pupils’ pronunciation. Only 15% were close to English pronunciation.

### 5.1.2.3. Pronunciation of word with the suffix ‘tion’

Suffix “tion”	English	French	Pupils pronunciation	Freq	Perc
Education	/ɛdju'keɪʃən/	/e.dy.ka.sjɔ̃/	/e.dy.ka.sjɔ̃/	28	70%
			/e.dy. keɪʃən/	12	30%
<b>Total</b>				<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>
Information	/ɪnfə'meɪʃən/	/ɛ̃.fɔ̃.ma.sjɔ̃/	/ɛ̃.fɔ̃.ma.sjɔ̃/	11	27.5%
			/ ɛ̃fɔ̃masjɔ̃/	15	37.5%
			/ ɛ̃fɔ̃meɪʃən/	8	20%
			/ ɛ̃fɔ̃matjɔ̃/	6	15%
<b>Total</b>				<b>40</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 19 Words with the suffix ‘tion’**



The table above shows the results of pupils' pronunciations of the suffix 'tion'. The words 'education' and 'information' are true cognates; they have the same spelling and meaning, but different pronunciation. The results show that the prefix 'tion' is frequently pronounced similarly to its French pronunciation. For the word 'education', 70% of the pupils had the exact pronunciation as French, and only 30% pronounced the suffix correctly. For the word 'information', only 20% had a correct English pronunciation of the prefix 'tion'. Moreover, it is noticed that almost all of participants pronounced the prefix 'in' in 'information' as the French nasal vowel /ɛ̃/.

#### 5.1.2.4. Pronunciation of words ending with 'ant', 'on'

The following table shows the results of pupils' pronunciations of 'on' and 'ant'.

Words	English	French	Pupils pronunciation	Freq	Perc
Person	/'pɜ:sn/	/pɛʁ.sɔ̃/	/pɛʁ.sɔ̃/	14	35%
			/per.sɔ̃/	16	40%
			/per.sɔ:n/	10	25%
<b>Total</b>				40	100%
Elephant	/'ɛlɪfənt/	/e.le.fɑ̃/	/i.li.fɑ̃/	18	45%
			/e.li.fɑ̃nt/	16	40%
			/e.li.fant/	6	15%
<b>Total</b>				40	100%

**Table 20** Words ending with 'on', 'ant'

The selection of these words intends to check whether the pupils use nasal sounds in English as they do in French. The results confirm that the pupils transfer the French nasal vowels into English. (75%) of pupils pronounced the final 'on' in 'person' with the French nasal vowel /ɔ̃/. the French /ʁ/ is always present in some pupils' pronunciation (35%). (45%) of pupils pronounced the final 'ant' in 'elephant' similarly to the French /ɑ̃/, and (40%) of them added the /t/ sound at the end.

### 5.1.2.5. Pronunciation of French-English cognates

In the following table, the pupils' pronunciation of some cognates are analysed. In addition to the frequency and percentage of the most frequent recorded pronunciations. The cognates were selected to check whether pupils pronounce the words the same as in French.

English cognate	French cognate	Pupils pronunciation	Freq	Perc
Problem /'prɒbləm/	Problème /pʁɔ.blɛm/	/pʁɒ'blɛm/	18	45%
		/prɒ'blɛm/	22	55%
Rich /rɪtʃ/	Riche /ʁiʃ/	/ʁi:ʃ/	12	30%
		/ri:ʃ/	28	70%
Dentist /'dɛntɪst/	Dentiste /dɑ̃.tist/	/dɛn'tɪ:st/	15	37.5%
		/dɑ̃'ti:st/	25	62.5%
Blouse /blaʊz/	Blouse /bluz/	/blu:z/	31	77.5%
		/bleʊz/	9	22.5%
Point /pɔɪnt/	Point /pwɛ̃/	/pwɛ̃/	19	47.5%
		/pwɛnt/	15	37.5%
		/pɔɪnt/	6	15.5%
Delicious /dɪ'lɪʃəs/	Délicieux /de.li.sjø/	/de.li.s'jɒz/	23	57.5%
		/de.li.s'ju:s/	17	42.5%

**Table 21 Pronunciation of some cognates**

The results show that there is a significant resemblance between the pupils' pronunciation of the cognates and their French pronunciation. For example the word 'rich' was produced in a French pronunciation by all of the pupils; the 'ch' combination is pronounced /ʃ/ in French, and /tʃ/ in English. The word 'delicious' is stressed in the second syllable; however, in French the stress falls on the last syllable, which was the case of all the pupils' pronunciations. Additionally, 57.5% of them pronounced it like its French cognate. Only (15.5%) of the pupils produced the word 'point' correctly; (47.5%) of them produced the 'oin' combination as /wɛ̃/ (/ɛ̃/ is the French nasal sound as in 'in').

### 5.1.2.6. The pronunciation of ‘T’ at the end of the word

The following table shows the frequencies and percentages of the pupils’ pronunciations of words ending with ‘T’.

Word	English	French	Pupils pronunciation	Freq	Perc
Sport	/spɔ:t/	/spɔʁ/	/spɔr/	29	72.5%
			/spɔʁ/	11	27.5%
<b>Total</b>				40	100%
Fruit	/fru:t/	/fʁɥi/	/frwi/	26	65%
			/frwit/	14	35%
<b>Total</b>				40	100%

**Table 22 Words ending with ‘t’**

The results show that most of the pupils did not pronounce the ‘t’ at the end of the words, which is due to their background knowledge about French. All pupils did not pronounce the final ‘t’ of the word ‘sport’; this is attributed to the familiarity of pupils with the French pronunciation of the word /spɔʁ/. Additionally, the word fruit is an English-French cognate; 65% of the pupils produce it without the /t/ sound similarly to French. Moreover, the /u:/ sound was substituted by /wi/ which is the French pronunciation of the combination ‘ui’. Other words were pronounced without the /t/ were recorde such as ‘quit’ /ki/, ‘without’ /withu/

### 5.1.2.7. The pronunciation of ‘S’ at the end of a word

The inflectional “s” is pronounced in English language, whether it is of the plural or the verb. In French, however, it is silent. The following table shows the frequencies and percentages of the pupils’ pronunciations of words ending with ‘s’.

Word	English	French	Pupils pronunciation	Freq	Perc
Classes	/'kla:sɪz/	/klas/	/klas/	31	77.5%
			/kla:sz/	9	22.5%
Total				40	100%
Besides	/bisaidz/	/	/bizi:d/	21	52.5%
			/bisi:d/	19	47.5%
Total				40	100%

Table 23 Words ending in 's'

The results show that the 's' at the end is often ignored in the English pronunciation of pupils. 77.5% of the pupils ignored the plural 's' of 'classes', which is also attributed to the French pronunciation. Furthermore, it has been noticed that 52% of the pupils pronounced the /s/ sound in 'besides' as a /z/ sound. This is caused by the transfer of the French pronunciation of the letter 's' positioned between two vowels.

### 5.1.2.8. The pronunciation of vowels

Beginner learners of English have problems with English vowels; the table as follows, illustrates the pupils' pronunciations of the vowels i, a, o, u, and the vowel combinations ou, ee.

#### a) The vowel "i"

Words	Pupils' pronunciation	frequency	Percentage
Primary /'praməri /	/pri'mæri /	34	85%
Sick /sik/	/si:k/	29	72.5%
Arrive /ə'rɪv/	/æri:v/	31	77.5%

Table 24 Pronunciation of Vowel 'i'

The English vowel letter 'I' is pronounced /ai/; however, its pronunciation in a word differs depending on its position. Most of pupils have a wrong pronunciation of the vowel 'i'; the frequent pronunciation is close to the French /i/.

b) The vowel ‘a’

Words	Pupils' pronunciation	frequency	Percentage
Take /teik/	/tæk/	28	70%
Favourite /feivərit/	/fævəri:t/	27	67.5%

Table 25 Pronunciation of vowel ‘a’

Pupils' pronunciation of the vowel ‘a’ is similar to the pronunciation of the French vowel ‘a’. The word ‘take’ might be confused with ‘tack’, or ‘tuck’. The cause behind these mistakes is that pupils relate the letter ‘A’ to the French sound /a/.

c) The vowel ‘u’

Words	Pupils' pronunciation	frequency	percentage
Music /'mju:zɪk/	/mizi:k/, /myzi:k/	26	65%
Use /ju:z/	/i:z/, /i:s/, /yz/	28	70%

Table 26 Pronunciation of vowel ‘u’

The vowel ‘u’ in English is pronounced /ju/ or /ʌ/; however, in French it is pronounced /y/ which is close to the English /i/. The following tables shows that most of the pupils pronounce the English ‘u’ as in French.

d) The vowel combination ‘ee’

Words	Pupils' pronunciation	frequency	percentage
Feel /fi:l/	/fu:l/, /føl/	26	65%
Need /ni:d/	/nu:d/, /nød/	25	62.5%

Table 27 Pronunciation of the vowel combination ‘ee’

The majority of pupils have a close pronunciation to French when it comes to the vowel ‘e’, or the combination ‘ee’. These mistakes occur because pupils are accustomed to pronounce the letter ‘e’ as /ø/, which is the French sound that is similar to the English schwa. For example, the word ‘feel’ might be confused with the word ‘fall’

e) The vowel combination ‘ou’

Words	Pupils' pronunciation	frequency	percentage
colour /kʌl.ə/	/kɒlu:r/	27	67.5%
Flour /flaʊə/	/flu:r/	25	62.5%

Table 28 Pronunciation of the vowel combination ‘ou’

The table show that most of the pupils produced the ‘ou’ similarly to French. In French, ‘ou’ is pronounced /u:/ as in ‘loup’. Pupils tend to transfer this pronunciation feature to their English pronunciation when they face the same combination, which results in pronunciation errors. Hence, for instance the word ‘flour’ might be confused with ‘floor’

**5.1.2.9. The pronunciation of ‘h’**

The following table illustrates some of the pupils’ pronunciations of words with the letter ‘h’

words	pupils who did not pronounce the /h/	Total of pupils	percentage
Hotel	29	40	72.5%
Helicopter	26	40	25%

Table 29 Pronunciation of the letter ‘h’

The majority of pupils dropped the /h/ sound when reading the two words; these errors can only be referred to the French interference. The letter ‘h’ is always silent in French, which is the case in some few English words.

**5.2. Analysis of the pupils’ questionnaire**

The questionnaire aims at having an idea about the pupils’ perception about the French influence on learning English pronunciation. In this section, just few questions are analysed.

- **Section one: Background information**

The questionnaire was addressed to first year EFL students of middle school. The sample contains 40 students including 17 girls and 23 boys. Their age range between 10 - 14 years. Their level in English varies from very good to weak. The table below summarizes all the necessary information that are concerned with the sample of pupils:

Gender		Age	English Level			
Male	Female		Very good	good	average	weak
23	17	10 -14	09	08	10	13

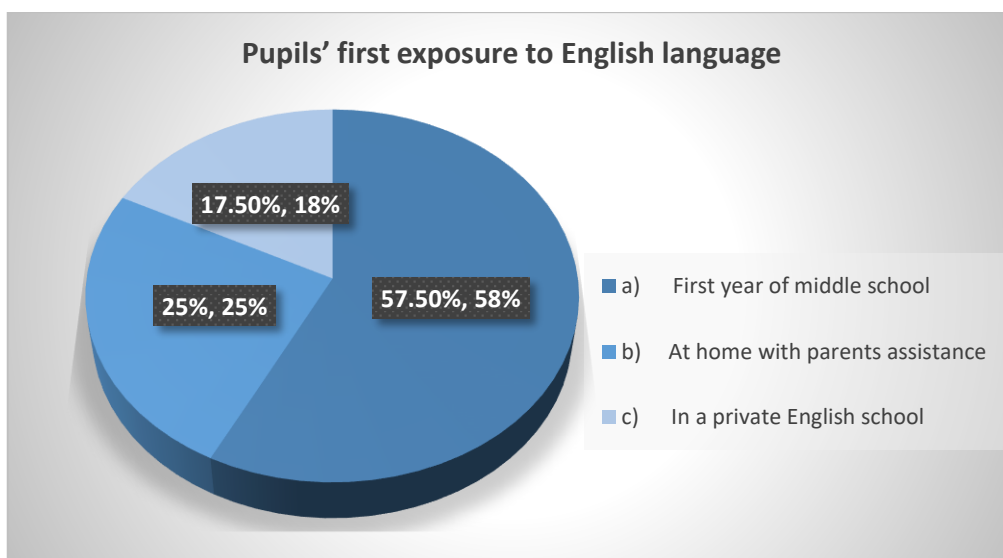
**Table 30 pupils' background information**

**Question 4: When did you start learning English for the first time?**

Most of the pupils started to learn English at middle schools. The following chart illustrates the percentages of the pupils' first exposure to the English language.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
First year of middle school	23	57.5%
At home with parents assistance	10	25%
In a private English school	7	17.5%

**Table 31 pupils' first exposure to English language**



**Figure 3 pupils' first exposure to English language**

- **Section two: The impact of French on English pronunciation**

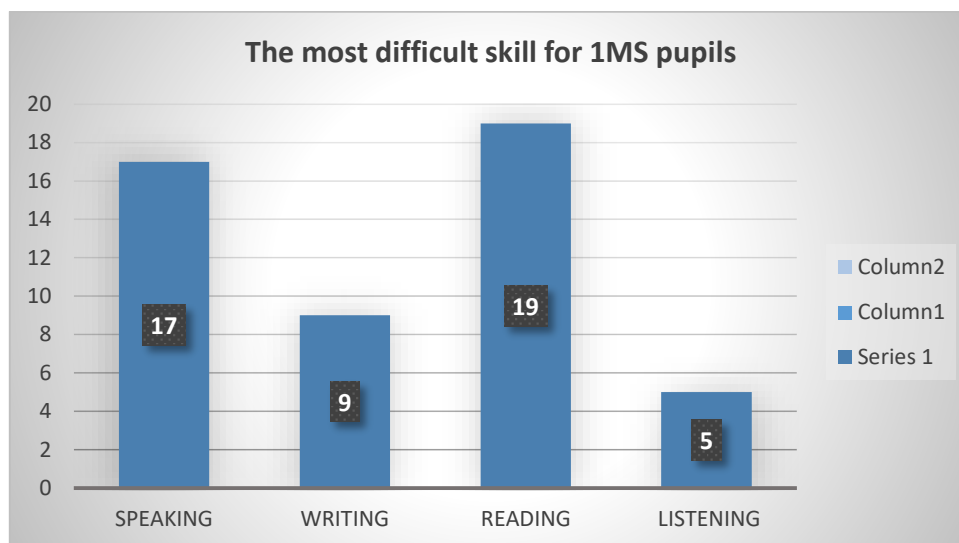
This section is devoted to investigate the pupils' perception about the English language learning in addition to French interference in English pronunciation.

**Question 2: What are the English skills that you find hard to learn?**

This question aims at identifying the pupils' area of deficiencies be it writing, reading, listening, or speaking.

Skill	Frequency
Speaking	17
Writing	9
Reading	19
Listening	5

**Table 32** The most difficult skillfor 1MS pupils



**Figure 4** The most difficult skillfor 1MS pupils

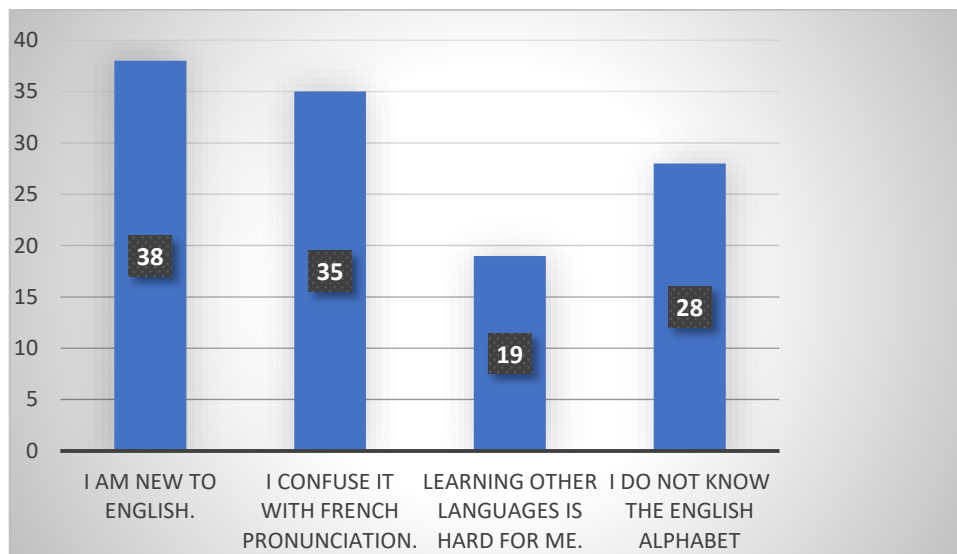
**Question 4: English pronunciation is difficult for you because:**

The results below show that the level of proficiency in English, and the typological distance between French and English are reasons for pronunciation difficulties.



Option	Frequency
I am new to English.	38
I confuse it with French pronunciation.	35
Learning other languages is hard for me.	19
I do not know the English alphabet	28

**Table 33 reasons of difficult English pronunciation**



**Figure 5 reasons of difficult English pronunciation**

**Question 6: Do you often mix between French and English pronunciation?**

The majority of participants (72%) said that they often confuse English with French pronunciation.

Option	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Yes</b>	29	72.5%
<b>No</b>	11	27.5%

**Table 34 mixing between french and English**

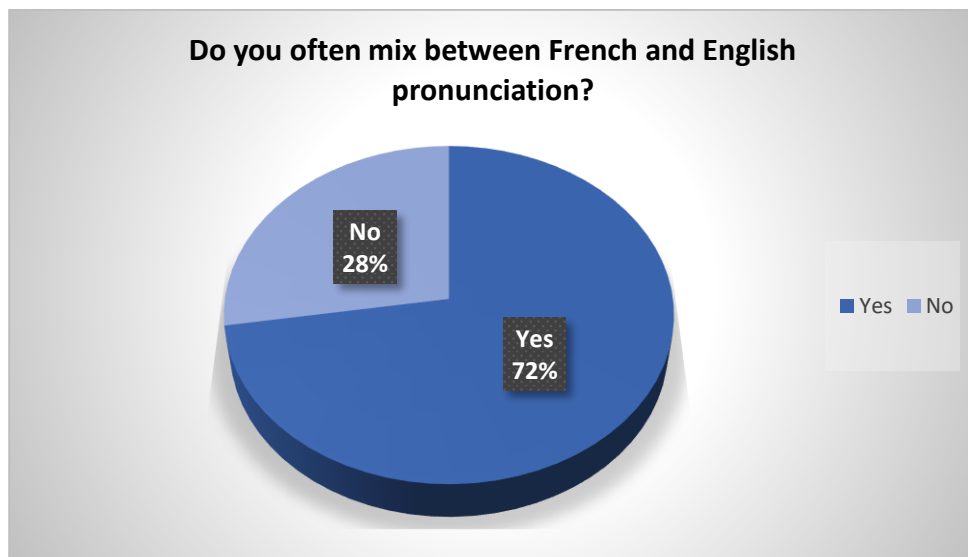


Figure 6 mixing between french and English

**Question 9: How do you pronounce the following English words?**

This question aims at identifying the pupils' pronunciation errors in order to confirm the results of the observation. Only three word were chosen from the questionnaire as examples. The options of pronunciation were given to the pupils in Arabic because they are not familiar with the phonetic symbols.

	مي	percentage	مو	percentage
Me	12	30%	28	70%
<b>Total</b>	40	100%	40	100%

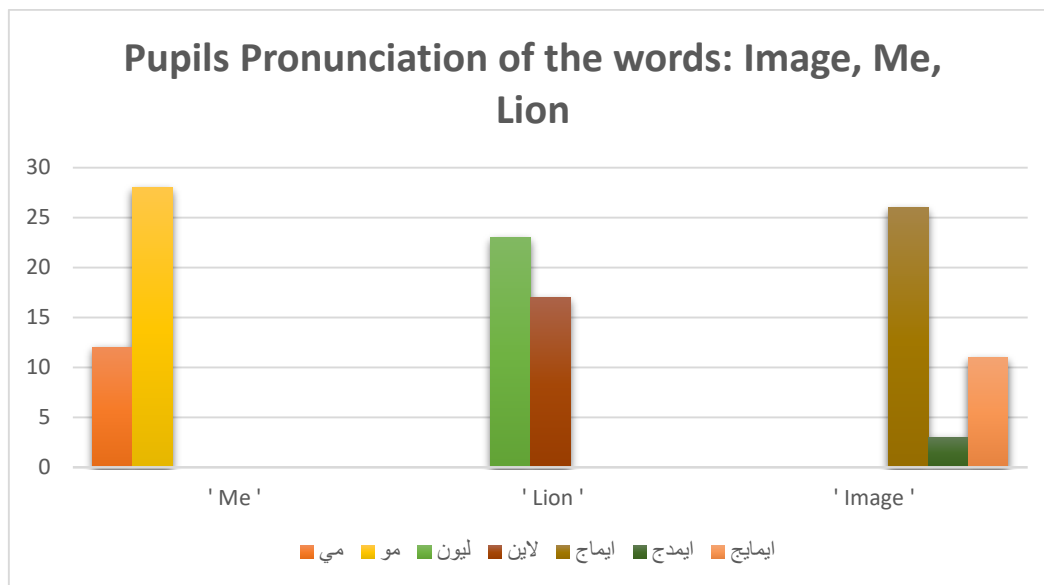
Table 35 pronunciation of the word 'Me'

	ايماج	percentage	ايمدج	percentage	ايمايچ	percentage
Image	26	65%	3	7.5%	11	27.5%
<b>Total</b>	40	100%	40	100%	40	100%

Table 36 Pronunciation of the word 'Image'

	ليون	percentage	لاين	percentage
lion	23	57.5%	17	42.5%
<b>Total</b>	40	100%	40	100%

Table 37 Pronunciation of the word 'Lion'



**Figure 7 pronunciation of the words: Lion, Me, Image**

According to the chart above, the majority of pupils pronounced the words ‘image’ and ‘lion’ the same as they are pronounced in French. For the word ‘Me’, the vowel ‘e’ is pronounced like the same French vowel. This result confirms the findings of the observation phase.

The results of the questionnaire confirms what was concluded from the classroom observation. IMS pupils lack proficiency in English language, which leads them to ‘borrowing’ French features and use them in when producing English.

### **5.3. Analysis of the teachers’ interview**

Interviews aids the researcher in gaining different points of view from different perspectives. The questions of the interview are analysed according to their aim, and the results are discussed after.

#### **Q1. How long have you been teaching English in middle school?**

The aim of this question is to elicit the teachers’ teaching experience. The two teachers of the school, were the case study takes place, were more experienced than the other three teachers

were. They have been teaching for more than 20 years. However, the other external teachers have an experience of 02 years.

### **Q2. Do you face any difficulties in teaching pronunciation?**

This question seeks to know whether teaching English pronunciation is challenging for teachers, or not. All of the five teachers said that they face many difficulties when teaching pronunciation; one teacher added “Especially for beginners”.

### **Q3. What are these difficulties? What causes them?**

This question aims at highlighting the difficulties that instructors face when they teach pronunciation, and the main causes behind them. The following are teachers’ answers:

- T1: “Because it is a new language for them and due to the lack of materials, and also time is never enough to practise pronunciation”.
- T2: “Because learners find it hard to pronounce English sounds”
- T3: “For example, after a pronunciation lesson, the pupils tend to forget the sounds they have been taught because they do not practise them outside the classroom; the time allotted for English is totally insufficient” she clarifies “the pupils neglect the English language because of its low coefficient”
- T4: “Difficulties in teaching pronunciation are caused by the lack of activities that reinforce pronouncing English sounds, which is due to the small number of English sessions”.
- T5: “The time devoted to teaching pronunciation is short, the focus on writing is much bigger”

The teachers’ gave a clear picture about the difficulties they encounter when teaching pronunciation, almost all of them claim that the main reason is the shortage of time devoted to English language teaching. The aspect of pronunciation needs time for practise in order to

master the English sounds. In addition, some teachers claim that the sounds of English are new for learners, and hard to utter; and again they refer back to time constraints and materials, which hinder teaching the English pronunciation.

**Q4. From your point of view, what are the reasons behind the Pronunciation deficiencies of your learners?**

The aim of this question is to see whether the teachers are aware of their pupils' pronunciation problems, and their causes.

- T1: "The reason is that my pupils do not practise reading aloud so that their mistakes would be corrected".
- T2: "The pupils do not listen too much to native speakers, such in movies or songs, and they do not practise the language outside the school".
- T3: "The main reason is the lack of using the English language outside the classroom, especially in the south".
- T4: "I believe that English pronunciation deficiencies are due to the fact that learners are accustomed to pronouncing the English alphabets the same as the French".
- T5: "Learners do not know how to articulate English sounds because they have not been taught Phonetics as a separate course"

The teachers' points of view vary from one to another. Some of them claim that the causes behind pronunciation deficiencies is the lack of English use outside the school, the pupils may learn how to pronounce a word in class, but then forget it later because he/she does not use it regularly. Additionally, pupils do not listen to native speakers or watch movies in English, which may help improve their pronunciation. One of the teachers referred to the French interference as the main cause for pronunciation mistakes. She claims that learners are

used to read the alphabet the same as French. This can be related to the fifth teachers' claim about teaching English phonetics in order to make differences between sounds in the two languages.

**Q5. Do you think that the interference of French influences your EFL learners' pronunciation?**

This question is meant to illicit the teachers' opinion about the existence of language interference from L2 French to L3 English in the process of acquisition of pronunciation. All the teachers confirmed that there exist a French influence. One teacher exemplified "It takes about a month to get first year learners used to the correct pronunciation of the English Alphabet since they always mistake it with the French one". Another teacher claimed that many pupils pronounce some words as they are pronounced in French.

**Q6. Do you think French facilitates or inhibits your learners' pronunciation of English?**

The aim of the question above seeks to investigate the teachers' opinion about the French influence on English pronunciation whether positive or negative. The five teachers agreed that French as L2 inhibits to some extent the acquisition of English pronunciation. Some of them however, think that it is also a facilitator but in rare cases. One teacher states that it is a facilitator for acquiring vocabulary, but not pronunciation.

**Q7. Would you please explain, and provide some examples?**

This question is regarded as a probe to the previous one; it seeks more clarifications with examples. The answers of the teachers differ from one to another, which is a plus for the study.

- T1: "just few words that are borrowed from French share the same pronunciation with English, but most of them are not pronounced the same"

- T2: “It is a facilitator when the pronunciation of the English word has the same pronunciation in French language. In other cases, it does not help. For example, when I spell a word with the letter ‘E’ some pupils write ‘I’.”
- T3: “Many words have same spelling in French, like colours, courage, comfortable, but they are not pronounced the same way as in French”
- T4: “Learners’ do not put efforts in learning English pronunciation because they rely on their knowledge about French pronunciation, and use it while producing English. For example, my pupils tend to read “initial situation” the same as they used to pronounce it in French, Even after correcting them several times.”
- T5: “A lot of words are spelled like in French such as existence, intelligent, important, profit. So, learners confuse the spelling of such words with the French pronunciation”

All teachers participating in the study agree on the idea that French language is an obstacle for learning English pronunciation. They claim that the reason is the similarities in the spelling of French and English words; they gave examples such as courage, intelligent, situation. Moreover, the spelling of the English alphabetical letters is most of the time confused with the French pronunciation especially during the early stages of acquisition. One of the teachers claims that pupils most of the times rely on French to utter English. It may seem helpful when pupils do not know the English pronunciation of a word; they try to guess it based on their previous knowledge about a similar spelling system (French). However, this situation reoccurs even when they are corrected several times as the fourth teacher claims.

**Q8. In your opinion, what are the reasons behind this interference?**

This question seeks to know about teachers’ opinions about the causes of French language interference in English language pronunciation. Their answers are:

- T1: “Because English and French share the same letters, learners get confused due to the lack of knowledge about pronunciation”.
- T2: “I think it is because of the similarities between the two language since they have the same letters and the same morphological rules in some cases”.
- T3: “I think it is due to pupils’ mastery of the French language, and to French being a second language in Algeria.”
- T4: “I think because English is influenced by Latin, so it becomes similar to French in writing”
- T5: “The reason behind this interference is perhaps the teaching method itself, and the pedagogical focus on French from primary school unlike English”

According to the answers, three teachers think that the main reason behind the French interference in English pronunciation is the typological distance between the two languages. Pupils tend to transfer features of pronunciation from French L2 to English L3 because for them they are alike on so many levels. The fifth teacher points that the influence from French is due to the status of French (L2) in Algeria and the extensive exposure of pupils to French (L2) comparing to English (L3). Accordingly, another teachers states that the reason behind this interference is the mastery of French language due to its status in Algeria as a second language, which is linguistically referred to as the second language proficiency factor.

## **6. Discussion and interpretation of the findings**

According to the classroom observation and students’ questionnaire, it was confirmed that French has an immense influence on English pronunciation of First year pupils of Madani Rahmoune middle school. It was noticed that their pronunciation was to a wide extent ‘French accented’. Many pupils transfer the French ‘r’ sound to English pronunciation. Additionally, the pronunciation of English vowels is puzzling for most pupils. Hence, they substitute the English vowel sounds with French vowel sounds. Moreover, the morphological system of



English and French are alike; the majority of the participants pronounce suffixes such as al, tion, and ant, the same as in French. In addition, the /h/ sound is often neglected, which is again attributed to French interference. The ‘T’ and ‘S’ at the end of the words are also dropped in the English pronunciation such in French. Furthermore, ‘CH’ and ‘j’ are pronounced /ʃ/, /ʒ/ instead of /tʃ/ and /dʒ/, which is similar to the French pronunciation of. Finally, the English language does not have nasal sounds like French, pupils however tend to pronounce combinations such ‘in’ similarly to French nasal vowels.

According to the teachers’ interview, the main reasons behind pupils interfering from French are the following. First, French has a strong status in Algeria and it is widely used in the community and administrations. Secondly, the insufficient knowledge about rules of pronunciation of the English language lead pupils to interfere from French because the two language have similar (to some extent) spelling systems. Moreover, the Algerian educational system has a bigger focus on French than on English, which is seen in the number of hours devoted to each of them.

The status of French in Algeria plays a significant role in influencing learners’ pronunciation of English. The pupils are more exposed to the French language inside and outside the school. They use French words in their daily life, and they hear French all the time. Besides that, a lot of them study French language in private schools at a young age in order to prepare for the final exam of primary school. All these factors have helped them reinforce the French pronunciation.

Most of the pupils agree that their deficiencies of English pronunciation are due to their lack of knowledge about the language in addition to confusing the English alphabet with that of French. Actually, the two causes of deficiencies are related to each other. First year pupils are newly exposed to the English language. In the process of their learning, they may face some difficulties based on the lack of competence about the language they are learning.

Therefore, they try to overcome these difficulties subconsciously through access to their prior knowledge and make connection to what they already know, in linguistic this is known as interlanguage.

Interlanguage may cause interference or language transfer, which is the case of pronunciation in this study. What makes this interference very reasonable is that the French sound system is similar to that of English and far much easier, and this is by no means arguable. The letter/sound relations are not very complicated compared to English. This pronunciation simplicity in French looks intriguing for learners especially because the two languages share a long history that led eventually to a great resemblance in hundreds of words. This resemblance triggers the learners' French interlanguage concerning the effortless French pronunciation. This point was discussed with one of the interviewed teachers who claimed that her pupils even when corrected still refer to French pronunciation because it is easier and more logical for them.

Another factor, as concluded from the interviewed teachers, is the focus of the Algerian educational system on French language unlike English. The time devoted to English in middle schools is much lower than French. This time shortage is considered as an obstacle for most English teachers in teaching pronunciation; they claims that the pronunciation of English needs practice, and material. Activities such as reading aloud, drilling, listening to songs require more time and practice inside and outside the classroom, which are two factors that are absent in the Algerian context.

The objective of this study was to shed lights on the linguistic phenomenon that is taking place in the Algerian schools, English classrooms specifically, which is the influence of the French language on EFL learners' pronunciation. The results of the data analysis of classroom observation, teachers' interview, and the students' questionnaire show that there is a significant influence from French language as L2 on the English pronunciation of pupils.

The data analysis answers the research question about whether the French influence on pronunciation is negative or positive. It has been confirmed that there is a negative influence of French on English pronunciation, which is clearly shown in the data analysis.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter is concerned with the practical part, which aims at investigating the French interference in the English pronunciation. Since this phenomenon happens in the classroom, both teachers and students are concerned. Thus, the study uses triangulation as a data collection method in order to prove the negative impact of French on Algerian pupils' English pronunciation. Finally, the results matched the initial predictions, and the hypothesis is proven.

## **General Conclusion**

The study in hand aims at investigating the impact of French on the English pronunciation of Algerian EFL learners at Madani Rahmoune Middle School in Biskra. In comparison to the preceding decade, Algeria's English language status is steadily improving. For that reason, it is of great importance to shed light on English learning in Algeria and the French interference as L2 encountered by Madani Rahmoune middle school first year pupils when learning English pronunciation.

This research consists of three chapters. The first chapter highlights the sociolinguistic situation in Algeria and the status of each language in the Algerian educational system. In addition to the relation between the two languages, and the French influence on English language on many aspect. The second chapter sheds light on the notion of language transfer throughout the different theories in CLI and TLA research. It also encompasses the similarities and differences between English and French sound systems. The last chapter is devoted to the practical part of the study. The chapter spotlights the methodology and the research design. It also exhibits the results obtained and their interpretation.

The participants of this study were forty (40) Algerian EFL young learners. The findings of the study provided answers for the research questions and confirmed the hypothesis. Algerian EFL learners' pronunciation is largely influenced by the prior knowledge of French. It is recommended that the use of cognates in teaching English pronunciation would facilitate the learning process and raise the learners' awareness about the differences between the English and the French sound systems.

## **Pedagogical Recommendations**

Speaking, writing and listening are taught in most colleges, but phonetics and pronunciation classes are not always part of the curriculum, and even when they are, they tend to be very basic (James and Smith, 2007). This research is of a huge importance at the academic level, and accurate pronunciation is one of the most important, yet somehow neglected aspects of a learner's knowledge in an academic setting of learning English as a foreign language. Unfortunately, it is true that this study aimed at identifying the influence of French on pronunciation without focusing on providing remediation.

Actually, the steps that were carried out in this study are of crucial importance because it is necessary to know the nature and causes of French interference in English pronunciation before deciding how to deal with this phenomenon.

Teachers can adjust their teaching materials to deal with errors at such an advanced level or to attempt to minimize their occurrence starting from first year middle school level, and this can be done with paying more attention to Phonetics, and sound articulation. It is also recommended for the teachers to highlight the differences in pronunciation between French and English. Oral expression sessions are also important but teachers usually focus on fluency, listening skills and comprehension techniques. Accuracy is one secondary aim and that is what brings us back to the inevitable need for more Phonetics lessons along the years.

In sum, it would be useful for teachers to inform them about the causes of French language interference, allowing them to adjust their teaching materials in attempt to remediate the errors resulting from it, to make the learners aware of the errors and their sources. Finally, this whole procedure can be applicable only if teachers are to be provided with the needed equipment and time.

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# **Appendices**

## Classroom observation checklist

Name of the observer/instructor: **M'sellem Soumia**

Observed class: 1MS4, 1MS5, 1MS6 (**First Year Middle School pupils**)

Date: 11/04/2021 to 03/06/2021

Time: 08-8:45 / 9:30-10:15 / 11-11:45

School: **Madani Rahmoune Middle School, Biskra**

Topic: **Investigating the Influence of French as a second language in Algeria on EFL**

### Learners' pronunciation

1- The instructor	Observed	Not observed	Frequent
Uses French language to explain English words.			
Has an accepted English pronunciation.			
His/Her pronunciation is affected by French.			
Uses native speakers' video or audio records as a model.			
Corrects pupils' pronunciation errors and takes them seriously.			
Uses French pronunciation to close the meaning.			
Asks pupils to read aloud to check pronunciation.			
2- The pupils	Observed	Not observed	Frequent
Focus on the teachers' pronunciation of the words.			
Try to repeat the words correctly.			
Interested in learning English pronunciation.			
Pronounce the letter 'J' as /ʒ/ instead of /dʒ/			
Do not pronounce the letter "H".			
Do not pronounce the letter "T" at the end of a word.			
Find difficulties in pronouncing combinations like "TH", "SH".			
Pronounce the English "R" as a French "R".			
Ignore the pronunciation of the final "S".			

Pronounce "CH" as /ʃ/ instead of /tʃ/.			
Find difficulties in pronouncing the English letter "E", and mistake it with the French letter "T".			
Mispronounce words ending with the suffix "TION", "AL", "MENT", "ABLE"			
Mispronounce the combination "OU", "EE", "AP".			

## Recorded Sentences

- My father works at a restaurant.
- She feels very sick; she has a health problem.
- I had a car accident. Can you take me to the hospital, please?
- My primary school is large; it has twenty classes.
- His grandmother is rich. She lives in a big house.
- The system of education in Algeria is miserable.
- Sara prepared a delicious meal, but she cut her finger.
- I am a dentist. Usually, when I arrive to work, I wear my blouse, and then I start checking the patients.
- Your brain use memorized information in communication without any effort.
- You need to practise sport, eat more fruit and vegetables and less chocolate and cheese.
- My favourite animal is the elephant. It is adorable.
- He is an excellent pupil; besides his academic intelligence, he plays music very well.
- “Everything is direct, to the point, and simple.”
- It is impossible for a normal person to quit his passion for any other option.

### Other words:

Colour – Flour – Tunnel – Helicopter – Bus – Diamond – Panda – Hall – Lamp

## Pupils' Questionnaire

Dear pupils, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions, which aim to investigate the influence of French language on English pronunciation, by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box. Your answers will be very helpful for this study.

### Section One: Background information

1. Gender:

Male (مذكر)

Female (مؤنث)

2. Age:

.....

3. Your English level is:

Excellent

Good

Average

Weak

4. When did you start learning English for the first time?

a) First year of middle school.

b) At home (parents assistance).

c) In a private school.

### Section Two: The impact of French on English pronunciation

**Question 1:** How do you find learning English language?

السؤال الأول: كيف تجد تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟

Easy

Moderate

Difficult

Very difficult

**Question 2:** What are the English skills that you find hard to learn?

السؤال الثاني: ما هي المهارات التي تجد صعوبة في تعلمها باللغة الانجليزية؟

Speaking

Writing

Reading

Listening



**Question3:** Is English Pronunciation hard for you?

السؤال الثالث: هل تجد صعوبات في نطق اللغة الإنجليزية؟

Yes

A little

No

**Question 4:** English Pronunciation is hard for you because:

السؤال الرابع: نطق اللغة الإنجليزية يصعب عليك لأنه:

1. You mix it with French pronunciation.

تختلط مع نطق اللغة الفرنسية

2. You are new to English.

اللغة الإنجليزية مازالت جديدة عليك

3. You do not find foreign languages easy to learn.

تعلم اللغات الأجنبية ككل ليس سهلا عليك

4. You do not know the English alphabet and sounds.

لا تعرف طريقة قراءة الحروف والأصوات الانجليزية

**Question 5:** Do you think French and English are similar?

السؤال الخامس: هل تعتقد أن اللغة الإنجليزية تشبه اللغة الفرنسية؟

Yes

No

**Question 6:** Do you often mix between French and English letters?

السؤال السادس: هل يختلط أحيانا عليك نطق الحروف الإنجليزية مع نطق الحروف الفرنسية؟

Yes

No

**Question 7:** How do you pronounce the following English letters? Choose one answer.

السؤال السابع: كيف تنطق هذه الحروف الإنجليزية؟ اختر إجابة واحدة.

'I'	<input type="checkbox"/>	آي /ei/	<input type="checkbox"/>	أي /ai/	<input type="checkbox"/>	إي
'A'	<input type="checkbox"/>	أ	<input type="checkbox"/>	آي /ei/	<input type="checkbox"/>	أي /ai/
'E'	<input type="checkbox"/>	أ	<input type="checkbox"/>	إ	<input type="checkbox"/>	آي
'J'	<input type="checkbox"/>	دجاي	<input type="checkbox"/>	جاي	<input type="checkbox"/>	جي

**Question 8:** How do you pronounce following combinations? Choose one answer.

السؤال الثامن: كيف تنطق تركيبات الحروف الإنجليزية الموالية؟ اختر إجابة واحدة.

'CH'	<input type="checkbox"/>	تش	<input type="checkbox"/>	ش	<input type="checkbox"/>	سش
'TH'	<input type="checkbox"/>	ث	<input type="checkbox"/>	تش	<input type="checkbox"/>	ته
'SH'	<input type="checkbox"/>	سه	<input type="checkbox"/>	ش	<input type="checkbox"/>	سش
'IN'	<input type="checkbox"/>	إن	<input type="checkbox"/>	آن	<input type="checkbox"/>	إين
'AI'	<input type="checkbox"/>	إي (é)	<input type="checkbox"/>	أي /ai/	<input type="checkbox"/>	آي /ei/
'OI'	<input type="checkbox"/>	وَ	<input type="checkbox"/>	أوي	<input type="checkbox"/>	أو

**Question 9:** Choose the correct English pronunciation of the following words.

السؤال التاسع: اختر النطق الصحيح للكلمات الإنجليزية الموائية. إجابة واحدة.

'chocolate'	<input type="checkbox"/>	شوكولا	<input type="checkbox"/>	شوكولات	<input type="checkbox"/>	تشوكلت
'Lessons'	<input type="checkbox"/>	لوصون	<input type="checkbox"/>	لاسن	<input type="checkbox"/>	لاسنز
'Different'	<input type="checkbox"/>	ديفيغون	<input type="checkbox"/>	ديفيغانت	<input type="checkbox"/>	ديفرن
'Arrives'	<input type="checkbox"/>	أغيف	<input type="checkbox"/>	أرايفز	<input type="checkbox"/>	أغيفز
'hotel'	<input type="checkbox"/>	اوتال	<input type="checkbox"/>	هوتال	<input type="checkbox"/>	اوتيل
'me'	<input type="checkbox"/>	مي	<input type="checkbox"/>	مو		
'horrible'	<input type="checkbox"/>	هوريبيل	<input type="checkbox"/>	اوريبيل	<input type="checkbox"/>	اوغيبيل
'Final'	<input type="checkbox"/>	فينال	<input type="checkbox"/>	فاينل	<input type="checkbox"/>	فاينال
'Age'	<input type="checkbox"/>	آيج	<input type="checkbox"/>	آج	<input type="checkbox"/>	آيدج
'fruit'	<input type="checkbox"/>	فروت	<input type="checkbox"/>	فروي	<input type="checkbox"/>	فخويت
'Lion'	<input type="checkbox"/>	ليون	<input type="checkbox"/>	لاين	<input type="checkbox"/>	ليان
'Image'	<input type="checkbox"/>	ايماج	<input type="checkbox"/>	إيمدج	<input type="checkbox"/>	إيمايج
'Important'	<input type="checkbox"/>	امبوغظون	<input type="checkbox"/>	أمبورنت	<input type="checkbox"/>	إمبورنت
'Foul'	<input type="checkbox"/>	فول	<input type="checkbox"/>	فاول	<input type="checkbox"/>	فيول

## Teachers' Interview

Dear teachers,

This interview is a part of a master project carried out to investigate the influence of the French language on English pronunciation in Algerian EFL classroom. Therefore, You are kindly asked to answer the following questions

1. How long have you been teaching English in middle school?
2. Do you face any difficulties in teaching pronunciation?
3. What are these difficulties? What causes them?
4. From your point of view, what are the reasons behind the deficiencies in English pronunciation of your learners?
5. Do you think that French has an impact on your EFL learners' pronunciation?
6. Does French facilitates or inhibits your learners' pronunciation of English?
7. Would you please explain, and provide some examples?
8. In your opinion, what are the reasons behind this interference?
9. According to you, what are the most effective ways to reduce the French interference in English pronunciation?

## المخلص

نظرا للحاجة المتزايدة إلى مواكبة التطورات العلمية، اعتمدت العديد من البلدان إدماج اللغات الأجنبية في نظمها التعليمية. في الجزائر مثلا، يتم تدريس اللغة الفرنسية كلغة أجنبية أولى واللغة الإنكليزية كلغة أجنبية ثانية. مما يجعل التأثير اللغوي المتبادل أمرا حتميا. وبناء على ذلك، فإن الهدف الرئيسي للدراسة الحالية هو التحقيق في ذلك التأثير بين الفرنسية والإنجليزية، وأثره على النطق الصحيح. بشكل أكثر تحديدا، تفترض هذه الدراسة أن اللغة الفرنسية كلغة أجنبية أولى في الجزائر قد تؤثر على النطق الصحيح للإنجليزية عند تلاميذ السنة أولى متوسط. وعليه، ومن أجل اختبار صحة الفرضية، تم تصميم دراسة حالة والتي أجريت في متوسطة مداني رحمون ببسكرة حيث تم اختيار عينة الدراسة عشوائيا. عدد التلاميذ المشاركين في الدراسة أربعون تلميذا في السنة الأولى، بالإضافة إلى أستاذتان من نفس المدرسة وثلاثة أستاذات من مدارس أخرى. أما فيما يتعلق بجمع البيانات وتحليلها، تم برمجة حصص للملاحظة داخل القسم حيث يتم فيها تسجيل نطق التلاميذ، بالإضافة إلى إجراء استبيان للتلاميذ، ومقابلة للأستاذة من أجل فحص آرائهم بشأن الظاهرة اللغوية المطروحة. وتؤكد نتائج الدراسة بشدة صحة الفرضية التي سبق ذكرها: أي أن اللغة الفرنسية لها تأثير سلبي على نطق اللغة الإنجليزية، وهو ما يشار إليه لغويا بالتداخل أو النقل. وعلاوة على ذلك، تخلص النتائج إلى أن السبب الرئيسي للنقل اللغوي يعزى إلى المسافة النمطية أو التشابه بين اللغتين الفرنسية والإنجليزية. في نهاية الدراسة تم توجيه توصيات للأستاذة في محاولة لتقليل التأثير السلبي للغة الفرنسية على نطق اللغة الإنجليزية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** اللغة الأجنبية، التأثير اللغوي المتبادل، اللغة الفرنسية، اللغة الإنجليزية، التداخل اللغوي، النطق