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**Exploring English Language Learning Difficulties Faced by
Algerian Third-Year Primary School Pupils: Case of Ben Ammar
Fatima School -Ain Youcef**

*Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as a partial fulfillment of the
requirements for a Master's degree in Didactics of Foreign Languages*

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Statement of originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution. I also certify that the present work contains no plagiarism and is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated.

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Date: 26/06/2023

Signature:

Dedication

I have the great honor to dedicate this humble work

to my family

and to the soul of my Aunt Souad

and her children.

Acknowledgments

First of all, I would like to appreciate all the efforts of my supervisor Prof. Hamzaoui because without her guidance, I would not have even started. I consider her as a gift from Allah to show me the right path to conduct this study. Second, I would like to thank the jury members: Dr. Abi Ayad and Mrs Berezzag for evaluating my work.

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Abstract

Many countries in the world wanted to keep pace with globalization, so they moved toward the adoption of the English language in school institutions because English was the main consequence of globalization, and has become a lingua franca. Algeria is a case in point which has recently adopted the teaching of the English language in primary schools starting from the third level. The present research aims to know the difficulties faced by third-year pupils in learning English and how to overcome these difficulties. To reach these aims, an exploratory case study was conducted at Ben Ammar Fatima Primary School (Ain Youcef). Two research instruments were used for this study (classroom observation and teacher interview) and the selected sample was two EFL teachers and third-year primary school pupils. The collected data were analysed qualitatively using two procedures: content and thematic analyses. The results obtained using the previous research instruments indicated that most third-year pupils have a problem with pronunciation and incorrect spelling of some English words which can be influenced by their first foreign language. Although teaching English to third-year primary school pupils faced many challenges , it has many benefits and it will need some time to be adjusted.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

L1: First Language (mother tongue)

L2: Second Language

General introduction

Today, the world is witnessing an important development in various fields, whether economic, technological, or educational due to globalization which prevailed in various parts of the world. One of the effects of globalization is the dominance of one language which is the English language and the reason is that it facilitates communication between different people. So, the acquisition of this language becomes necessary for each person. Recently, the English language reached the status of a global lingua franca. As a result, many countries in the five continents saw teaching English as an important thing that should be applied as soon as possible to gain its benefits including effective communication and better professional opportunities in the future.

Algeria is one of the countries which has decided to integrate the English language into primary schools. This step can meet the annoyance of both parents and pupils themselves because teaching English starts in the third-year classes. This is an early learning stage. In addition, English is introduced at the same time with the French language. This will create many barriers while learning English which can be influenced by third-year pupils' first foreign language, especially since the two are foreign languages and they consist of similar words in terms of pronunciation. In contrast, the Arabic language has a different linguistic system than English and French in terms of verb tenses, consonants and vowels, sentence structure and the written form. So, these are only a few differences between Arabic and the adopted foreign languages which make it difficult for a pupil of 08 years old to learn their mother tongue besides two foreign languages with complex structures.

The present research will try to investigate the obstacles of learning a foreign language at a young age and how to overcome them. The researcher can't achieve what he is planning unless setting several aims. First, this research aims to determine most difficulties faced by Algerian third-year primary school pupils. Second, it seeks to search for effective ways to minimize these difficulties. The researcher has stated two important questions:

Q1: What are the English language learning difficulties faced by Algerian third-year primary school pupils?

Q2: How to overcome third-year pupils' English language difficulties?

The previous research questions push the researcher to draw two hypotheses:

RH 1: The main difficulties faced by third-year pupils are learning a language with different alphabets, the difference between spoken and written forms and the interference with the French language.

RH 2: To overcome the English language difficulties children need to be provided with more practice using different techniques, attractive activities, and technological tools.

To confirm or reject the previously mentioned hypotheses, the present work relies on the use of an exploratory case study that will help the researcher in his investigation. The actual research will depend on the use of two research instruments: classroom observation taking place in Ben Ammar school, and an interview with two EFL teachers working there.

This work is divided into two chapters. The first chapter will be the theoretical part which will evaluate the previous research related to the status of the English language in the world and in Algeria as well as the advantages and challenges of teaching English at an early age. The second chapter will deal with the research design, results and recommendations where the researcher will give more details about the research methodology presenting the research design, and the methods used for data collection which took place in Ben Ammar School (Ain Youcef). Then this chapter will present the findings and discussion. Later on, the hypotheses will be confirmed or rejected. At the end, this chapter will provide some suggestions and recommendations to achieve effective English teaching and learning at the level of primary schools.

Chapter One:

Literature Review

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 The Status of the English Language in the World
- 1.3 ELT in Algeria
- 1.4 Advantages of Teaching English to Young Learners
 - 1.4.1 Improvement of Verbal Fluency
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- 1.5 Challenges of Learning and Teaching English at an Early Age
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 - 1.5.9.4 Anxiety
 - 1.5.9.5 Lack of Motivation

1.1 Introduction

The following chapter will start by introducing the current situation of EFL in the world, then this chapter will be specified by stating a North African country that has recently adopted the teaching of English more precisely in primary schools. The second step will identify the advantages of teaching English in early childhood and the hidden effects on learners when learning English at a young age. The third step will determine most of the challenges faced by EFL teachers and pupils in the teaching-learning processes. From here, many factors involved in obstructing the good conduct of English language teaching are controlled by making a relation to previous research and the researcher's findings.

1.2 The Status of the English Language in the World

The English language is a well-known language all over the world as it is considered as a global language thanks to political and military reasons (Crystal, 2003). Devrim and Bayyurt (2010:04) declare that “it is an undeniable fact that English has become a global lingua franca, as it is the most spoken foreign language of media, language of technology, and language of science”. Recently, the English language has become the world's dominant language in many domains such as trade, scientific research, travelling and commerce (Parupall, 2019). The best thing is that it facilitates communication between different people from different countries (Verghese, 1989).

Moreover, it helps people to share their research in science, or any educational field that can offer help to someone who needs it. That is why (Louznadji, 2003:78) says "Any literate, educated person on the face of the globe is deprived, if he does not know English ". On the other hand, kitao (1996:01) states that

" English is the major language of news and information in the world. It is the language of business and government even in some countries where it is a minority language. It is the language of maritime communication and international air traffic control, and it is used even for internal air traffic control in countries where it is not a native language".

One of the reasons behind the high status of the English language is the power of the British Empire as well as the industrial revolution which took a wide place in England and the big territory dominated by the British Empire which was gained during the last 400 years without neglecting the important role played by British trade (Baugh & Cable, 1978 as cited by Slimani,2016). Nowadays, more than 1,5 billion people are learning the English language for different purposes, and due to the increasing need for learning this language, many EFL teachers gained the opportunity to travel for the sake of teaching the English language to students of the country which needs English teachers (Furlow, 2019).

Kachru (1992) cited three concentric circles of the world. First, there is the inner circle where English is considered as a native language. Its countries are the USA, the UK, and Canada. The second one is the outer circle where the English language is considered as a second language such as Singapore, India, and Pakistan. The third one is the expanding circle which has a high percentage of English speakers. The countries included in this circle considered English as a foreign language (as cited by Nurul Islam & Hashim, 2020)

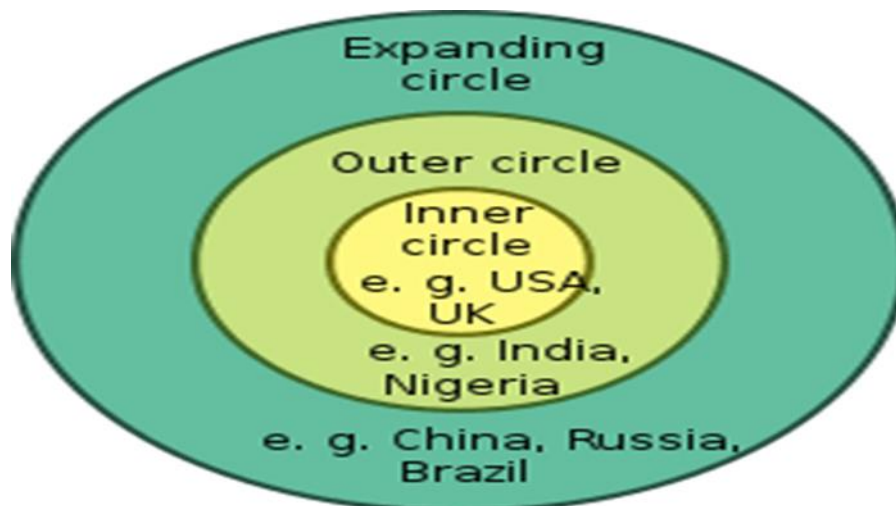


Figure 1.1: Kachru concentric circles of English (Kachru, 1992. p.365)

According to Crystal (2003:05) the widespread of the English language obliged many countries to adopt the ELT starting from primary to secondary level

“ English is new language most widely taught as a foreign language in over 100 countries such as China, Russia, Germany, Spain, Egypt, and Brazil, and in most of these countries, it is emerging as the chief foreign language to be encountered in school ”.

Algeria is one of the countries which integrated the teaching of English as a foreign language. Algerian policymakers wanted to adopt the teaching of English due to the urgent need for this language in light of world development. Crystal (2003:05) states “In 1996, for example, English replaced French as the chief foreign language in schools in Algeria”.

1.3 ELT in Algeria

By late 1962, Algeria wanted to add some educational reforms because of globalization as it wanted to keep pace with it. So, Algerian educationalists looked for some effective methods to teach the English language. Since independence three approaches were used in ELT including the structuralist approach, communicative approach, and competency-based approach (Madani, 2018).

In 1969, the Algerian educational system called for the implementation of the English language and that was directly after the creation of the general inspector of English (Mize, 1978). After the implementation of English teaching, the Ministry of Education reclaimed the shortage of English teachers. So, it decided to bring English teachers from foreign countries to fill this gap.

In 1976, a new system of education emerged entitled " The Fundamental Schooling System ". During the emergence of this system, the English language was integrated into middle schools, and this decision was not in favor of pupils who reached the age of 13 years old because they should have learned some basic English principles such as speaking skills before this age (Rezig, 2011).

In 1980, Algeria signed a commercial deal with the United States and the United Kingdom to invest in oil and gas. So, it became necessary to learn English to communicate effectively with them (Kouicem, 2019).

According to Kouicem (2019) by the beginning of 1993, the Algerian educational system focused more on teaching foreign languages. New reform has taken place in the educational system. This reform has given fourth-grade primary pupils the choice between French and English as a compulsory foreign language to be

taught. Unfortunately, most pupils' parents have chosen the French language to be learned by their children because it seemed that French was useful at that time, especially after 130 years of French colonialism. So, their choice moved toward the French language. Hence, The French language was implemented in the third-year primary level whereas the English language was postponed till the first year of middle school.

According to Kouicem' research (2019), the results showed that 55 English teachers were dissatisfied with the position of the English language in the Algerian education, because English is still a second Foreign language after the French language which gained the status of first foreign language in Algerian schools, and the English language did not get the credit it deserves although the high status reached in the whole world . The second reason for dissatisfaction is the implementation of the English language at the first-year of middle school. So, the English teachers think that it would be difficult for them and for pupils themselves to acquire a big amount of knowledge and they prefer to introduce the English teaching starting from primary level to make both learning and teaching processes easier. The third reason is the low frequency of English use in a broad variety of academic and professional settings and the teachers who were dissatisfied for this reason wanted to get rid from French and replace it with English. They claimed that the English language is still excluded from several domains such as universities where the French language is the dominant language.

According to (Kouicem, 2019) the main obstacles that limited the widespread of the English language in Algeria include historical obstacles which means that the French colonialism imposed the French language and pushed the Algerian people to learn it. Moreover, the political obstacles also have an impact on such a position of the English language through policy makers' decisions which encouraged the adoption of French as a first foreign language as well as the implementation of Arabization which is another political obstacle. Furthermore, the wide use of the French language either in media or daily conversations such as many politicians who use it to express their

opinions. In addition, the pedagogical obstacle includes the absence of English in some school institutions such as primary schools besides the lack of qualified teachers and effective materials.

Algeria is one of the largest countries in Africa and it is characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity due to many political reasons such as the French colonization which imposed its language during its invasion of the Algerian country (Benrabah, 2014). That is why it can be found that a high number of the Algerian Population are still using the French language, especially in their daily conversations (Benyelles, 2011). Such a thing makes the acceptance of the English language quite difficult, especially at the beginning.

1.4 Advantages of Learning English at a Young Age

Learning English at a young age can be much easier for children because their minds are still flexible and have a wide capacity to acquire a huge amount of information (Vigilanti, 2019). Thus, English language learning can have many positive effects. First, it develops ESL learners' critical thinking skills through asking the 'why' question that searches for the causes of something happening as well as helps them maintain their focus inside and outside their classrooms as it can make them creative learners (Lee, 2022). Second, ESL learning has a positive impact on learners themselves by giving them positive feelings such as self-esteem and self-confidence , getting a high level of motivation and perception to learn English , and making family members relationship stronger than before by engaging them in daily conversations using the English language (Clark, 2009 as cited by Cummins, 1984 & Clarke and Milne, 1996).

Teaching English at a young age can provide ESL learners with better future opportunities as stated by Hashemi and Azizinezhad (2011:2083) "English knowledge will help them in the future and it will be invaluable in their future careers ". Cameron (2001) claims the earlier teaching of a foreign language can be beneficial for two language skills: speaking and listening. Curtain (1990) asserts that introducing any

language learning at the primary level can lead to better language proficiency rather than the learners who go through the language learning process until the secondary level.

According to Khalifa Gawi (2012:127) “ international empirical research has shown that a person who starts learning a foreign language very early in his life generally acquire higher level of proficiency than those who begin at later stages”(as cited by Penfield, 1967; Taylor and Taylor, 1990; and Snow, 1993). Khalifa Gawi (2012) conducted a study on the effects of age factor in learning The English language, the findings revealed that the learners who started learning English at the age of 05-06 years old in private schools were able to obtain better English performance. Al-Dali (1997) also supported the findings of Khalifa and she also arrived at this conclusion in her study and considered early language learning a significant factor to gain a high proficiency in the target language.

1.4.1 Improvement of Communicative Competence

English learning will provide learners with better communication using the English language (Blazquez, 2018). Moreover, the desire to learn English at an early age will increase children's vocabulary knowledge and encourage them to be fluent speakers (Khalifa Gawi, 2012).

1.4.2 Cognitive Development and Positive Feelings

Second language acquisition has a positive impact on Brain development because there is a strong relationship between three elements: prefrontal cortex, cognitive development, and second language acquisition. It means that Second language learning positively affects cognitive development and the latter improves the ability of the prefrontal cortex of the human brain (Zhang, 2022). According to (Sun, 2023) second language acquisition in early childhood is considered as a beneficial exercise aimed at giving the human mind the ability to differentiate between two different languages. As a result, through this practice, the human mind will reach a high degree of metalinguistic awareness as well as learning a second language will

help children to improve their memory abilities. Thus, learning English is essential for children because it enhances their brains' abilities and makes it able to be more effective in performing any operation as well as help children to get positive feelings toward the English language (Cooper, 2007).

1.5 Challenges of Learning and Teaching English at an Early Age

Korneev (2020) claims that learning English can be a difficult process, especially for children who can have a difficulty in spelling, pronunciation and grammar structures. Barerah's research (2017) on the challenges of learning English indicated that most of the challenges faced by ESL learners in elementary schools of Kashmir division are the weak ability to speak in English, feelings of embarrassment and fear, insufficient time, and overcrowded classes. The study of Rayahu (2016) conducted in Indonesia to discover the challenges of teaching English to young learners in rural areas, arrived to discover three challenges which are the status of the English language besides teachers' educational background and competency and the student's socio-economic status.

According to Agarwal and Krishan (2014), many environments can help ESL learners to increase their English proficiency, among them the family environment where kids receive enough support from their parents to learn the English language as well as the social environment where can be found enough number of advertising and promotional banners that were written in English and that allow children to learn more English vocabulary, but many countries are missing this factor. Wanhade (2023) supported this idea and has given an example of these countries. The surrounding environment of India does not use the English language permanently which affects their exposure to the language and can hinder the development of speaking and listening skills by limiting the English language practice to their classrooms only. Kasi (2022) claims that it is difficult for Indian pupils to learn English due to the impact of their mother tongue 'Hindi' and many other languages such as Marathi, Punjabi, Telugu, and Tamil. Indian pupils usually switch From English to Hindi and that is another problem of English teaching in India. Further, the incorrect use and

misunderstanding of Grammar rules because pupils focus on memorization rather than comprehension. According to Hendrety's research (2013), many English teachers complained about the limited number of English sessions in Palembang school which was not exceed more than one session per week besides the ineffective learning methods which led to decrease the learners proficiency in the English language (as cited by Anggraini, 2018).

The English language is one of the dominant languages in Pakistan because the latter was one of the previous colonies of England. So, due to historical reasons, English was adopted in most Pakistani schools but no satisfactory results were recorded. On the contrary, the pupils' English proficiency was constantly declining (Dilshad et al, 2016). The unsatisfactory results may due to various causes, among them the inappropriate teaching methods (Dilshad et al, 2016), reliance on grammar translation method only (Rahman, 2001), Neglecting the teaching of speaking and listening skills (Shamim, 2008), teacher-centred classrooms (Zareen, 2000), unsuitable classroom materials (Ahmed , Nawaz & Munir, 2013). Rathod's research (2012) proved that the socio-economic level can create successful students and can lead to better achievements in the language learning process. Another study conducted by Alkhaldeh (2010) revealed that Jordanian pupils have several problems in learning English including: unqualified English teachers, crowded classrooms, poor tendencies toward the English language, and the absence of follow-up and support from pupils' parents. Another problem was the limited learning environment that was determined by ESL learners which can stand as a barrier in the development and improvement of important English language skills such as speaking and listening skills.

1.5.1 Limited Learning Environment

Alsalihi (2020) states that the learning environment plays a vital role in language learning, but many ESL learners have a limited use of the English language and that is only in their classes where they try to speak in English for educational purposes and to get the teacher' satisfaction but when they go outside their classes they have to switch to another language which can help them in communicating with their

mates and that can be harmful to their English learning process. Xayat and Muhamadamin (2021) claims that the ESL learners of Kurdistan do not use the English language in their homes and they depend entirely on their mother tongue. Further , teaching English or any other foreign language in non-native countries has not been given much importance through the limited time specified to teach it and the EFL teachers' reliance on another language in communicating with their learners as stated by Supasiraprapa (2019:107)

"a foreign language learning environment has some or all of the following characteristics. First, L2 instruction is limited to around 2-4 sessions per week, each lasting about 50 minutes. Moreover, the L2 input that learners receive it mainly from one speaker, which is typically an L2 teacher However, not all L2 teachers communicate in the L2 in the classroom ".

1.5.2 Lack of Qualified EFL Teachers

Hendrey's research (2011) proved that there was a bad assessment of young learners which was determined through the distributed tests which contain many mistakes due to the lack of experience among the EFL teachers. Alsalihi (2020) claims that the teacher is the guide of the learners and he should be well-qualified to show them the right way in the learning process because the learners think that all things given to them by their teachers are right but sometimes it is the opposite. So, if their teacher gives them information about a particular subject and another teacher tells them different information about the same subject, this will lead to confusion among ESL learners, and they will not get the right ideas and information.

According to Alquahtani (2021) Saudi Arabia has adopted ELT which has started from the first grade of primary level and it has made many efforts for the success of the learning process of the English language, but all the suitable conditions have been provided by Saudi Education Ministry did not achieve the desired level of English performance because most EFL teachers are unqualified. In addition, they depend much on their mother tongue to clarify English concepts and they usually

move toward Arabic language and it is a wrong act because they are two different languages as cited by (Swan & Smith, 2001:195) "Arabic and English phonological systems are very different, not only in the range of sounds used but in the emphasis placed on vowels and consonants". Moreover, some EFL teachers of Saudi Arabia use traditional methods in teaching such as 'Grammar Translation Method' which requires a balance between teachers and learners but the teachers are effective unlike most of the learners who are passive and have a lower level of performance. Further, Goss (1999) and Cheng (2004) have conducted a study to determine the challenges faced in English language teaching and learning in Japan and China separately. So, the findings revealed that the Lack of qualified teachers is the first challenge faced by ESL learners and the results of Shehdeh's research (2010) on the challenges of teaching English in the Arab world proved that there is a big shortage of qualified English teachers.

1.5.3 L1 / L2 Interference

According to Souid and Hidouri (2019), many English words such as information, attention, communication, and technology are borrowed from French, but having French vocabulary knowledge does not mean that English will be learned easily. Sometimes small differences in the spelling form between French and English words which cannot be observed till reading the full word such as the word 'pronunciation' in English and 'prononciation' in French. The comprehension of L2 has no relation with the use of L1 or mother tongue. Unfortunately, many teachers switch to their mother tongue or L1 in lesson presentations for the purpose of making learners understand what is given to them but this process will have negative effects more than positive ones. First, the learners will get used to this way of explanation and the use of the English language will be decreased. Also it will cause a weakness in two important language skills including listening and speaking. The Findings of Xayat and Muhamadamin's study (2021) revealed that among the factors which can affect English language learning negatively is the use of the mother tongue in teaching English.

1.5.4 English Language Difficulties

According to Souid and Hidouri (2019), many Tunisian English learners find problems in learning English. First of all, there are a lot of contradictions, for example some idioms contain words which have no relation with the meaning of the idiom such as 'they are in the same boat ' which means that they have the same problem and 'can of worms' which means unexpected problem. The same case for some homophones. According to Cambridge dictionary, homophones may have the same pronunciation but different spelling and different meanings such as in the words 'our' and 'hour'. From another hand, English verbs are divided into regular verbs by adding ' ed ' at the end of the verb such as the verb 'to start' which becomes started, and irregular verbs such as the verb 'to write' which becomes written in the past form. So, ESL learners will be confused when they want to conjugate some unknown verbs for them. Concerning the plural form , there are many cases , for example when ' y ' comes after a vowel the learners should just add an 's' but when it comes after a consonant the rule says that the 'y' should be omitted and add 'ies' and in some cases there is no thing to add just keep the word as it is such as the word 'sheep'. The ESL learners are obliged to memorize all these rules in order to make words in the right plural form.

1.5.5 Pronunciation

The English language is one of the languages which is characterized by a complex pronunciation as stated by Cassimiro (2011:50)

“The English pronunciation is complicated and confusing for learners because the system of vowels and consonants has a lot of different sounds. However, there is no graphical accent to show these differences from one sound to another. This is the reason why it is so hard for non-native speakers to deal with the English pronunciation”

The English language has passed through different periods of changes in terms of words pronunciation as highlighted in Campos (2004:12) " The current lack of correlation between orthography and pronunciation of the modern English which observes, especially in the vowels, in great part, the consequence of this change

occurred in the 15th and 16th centuries ". According to Kreidler (2004), These changes were the consequences of the influence of other languages such as French, Latin, Anglo-Saxon and the immigration from European countries.

According to Hornby (1987:497) pronunciation is " the way in which language is spoken; the way a word is pronounced; the way a person speaks the words of language ". One of the biggest problems ESL learners face is pronunciation due to the teachers' believing that the pronunciation process is unnecessary (Toçi, 2020). Many English words have the same pronunciation but different spelling such the word 'Bough' and 'Bow'. In addition to silent letters (k,t...) in some words like 'knowledge and listen' , mainly all students make mistakes when they come to silent letters. Further, many non-native speakers mix between English allophones, for example instead of saying / p / they say / b / and sometimes the opposite may happen and the reason is the influence of their mother tongue (Abdurahimova, 2022).

According to (Toçi, 2020) the errors made by ESL learners in pronunciation are due to careless jof teaching pronunciation or due to the lack of pronunciation practices during English sessions as well as a total absence of self-confidence. Pronunciation can be one of the hardest thing in learning English because it is a foreign language with a complex nature and difficult pronunciation of words, especially for young learners who have the ability to read some English words by making relation to letters (alphabet) and they can also read some letters through imitation only.

1.5.6 Lack of Materials and Resources

According to Maffea (2020), EFL learning process is not an easy task, especially for teachers who need effective teaching materials to do their jobs correctly and easily but without materials, the teaching process will be difficult because the teachers can not provide their learners with sufficient explanation without the help of any sort of materials and such a thing will decrease the learners' performance levels. This is the case in many poor countries such as India, Pakistan, and Colombia. Mejia's study (2009) on the challenges of teaching English in Colombia showed that there is a

shortage of teaching materials. Presenting a lecture without the use of innovative materials such as auditory and visual materials will make the learning process not interesting and the learners will take just a short part of their education.

Mupa and Chinoonek (2015) have conducted a qualitative study with the aim of determining the factors included in the contribution of ineffective teaching and learning in primary schools in Zimbabwe. The findings of this study proved that the teachers use limited methods and the learning process has no relation with the use of any type of media and they depend only on textbooks which are not available for most learners. Oeamoun and Sriwichai (2020) have undertaken a study to know the problems and needs in ELT from the viewpoint of pre-service English teachers in Thailand. The results of their study revealed that the main problem is the lack of instructional materials and visual aid such as tv, computers, audio clips, projectors, and wifi. In the same context, Kurdistan English teachers do not have access to the previously mentioned resources as stated by Xayat and Muhamadamin (2021:03) "Teachers may find themselves completely without these resources, or they may end up in a situation where supply is limited or not working properly".

EFL classrooms in Saudi Arabia suffer also from limited resources in teaching and learning processes and this happens in the absence of support from their schools. They only provide them with blackboards and textbooks which receive less interest from ESL learners (Shehdeh, 2010) as cited in (Al Seghayer, 2014).

1.5.7 Incorrect Choice of Pedagogy

The choice of pedagogy is essential in the language teaching process. Unfortunately, many EFL teachers are following the incorrect pedagogy which is Communicative language testing that can not be applied in large classrooms which contain a high number of pupils and the teachers have the chance of acquire only two essential parts of this pedagogy (theoretical and practical parts) which will lead to many problems during implementation (Little wood, 2007).

1.5.8 Crowded Classrooms

According to Swan and Smith (2001:195) "Large classes will be out of control and will witness a total absence of guidelines". Xayat and Muhamadamin (2021:02) State that "Sometimes the class size is small, the student population is large, the walls between classrooms are weak, and the noise will disturb other classrooms". Goss (1999) and Cheng's research (2004) on the field of English teaching and learning difficulties proved that Japanese and Chinese ESL learners are studying in large and crowded classrooms where the pupils are not provided even with sufficient teaching materials .

1..5.9 Psychological Problems

Most ESL learners at the beginning of the English language learning face many psychological problems, especially during learning the speaking skill. These types of problems can decrease the learners' desires to learn the English language. Among these problems there are Low confidence, feelings of fear, shyness, and anxiety (Krismanti & Siregar, 2017) .

1.5.9.1 Low Confidence

Self-confidence is an important element in any language learning. Shrauger and Schohn (1995:256) define self-confidence as "people's sense of competence and skill, their perceived capability to deal effectively with various situations". According to (Fatmawati & Haura and Supiani, 2020), the factor which can effect EFL learners' confidence of ESL learners is the low level of confidence because they feel that others are better at using language skills or being afraid from the English teacher's behavior as well as feeling that the English language is so difficult and can't be learnt easily .

1.5.9.2 Feeling of Fear

Fatiloro (2015:28) considered English speaking as an important skill in learning English and ESL learners can have many challenges in learning this skill, so he asserts that

“ A most important challenge confronting learners of English as a second language is students' fearful attitudes towards the use and usage of English especially in the presence of a competent user. Speaking English requires a measure of confidence and readiness, however if a speaker feels inadequate to speak it, it may lead to incoherence and incorrect expressions ”.

1.5.9.3 Shyness

Shyness can be considered as one of the bad feelings the ESL learners faced when they are obliged to speak English. It can hinder the learning process of shy learners as it obliges them to keep silent all time rather than participating in classroom activities (Krismanti & Siregar, 2017). Saurik in Juhana (2011:101) states that "Most of the English students feel shy when they speak the language because they think they will make mistakes when they talk".

1.5.9.4 Anxiety

Many ESL learners become anxious when their English teachers ask them to speak. According to Gardner & Macintyre (1993:05) " language anxiety is seen as a stable personality trait referring to the propensity for an individual to react in a nervous manner when speaking ... in second language".

1.5.9.5 Lack of Motivation

According to (Harmer,2007: 98) motivation can be defined as "some kinds of internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a course of action". Unfortunately, Many EFL teachers do not know how to motivate their pupils. Also, parents should participate in motivation process and they should be aware about the things which can motivate their children because motivation in EFL learning plays a great role and it has a direct impact on learner outcomes and that was confirmed by Mc Donough (1983) " motivation of students is one of the most important factors influencing their success or failure in learning language".According to Parson & Hinson and Brown (2001), motivation can be explained as a principle that can't be neglected during learning process. Spolsky (1990) claims that learners' motivation speeds up the learning process

as well as helps them to get satisfactory results. In contrast, the type of learners who receive a low level of motivation will have several problems such as the lack of concentration, lack of discipline, and bad behaviour.

Many factors can hinder the learner's motivation in learning English. Ekiz (2016: 20) identifies some elements which can negatively affect the motivation process by saying that "certain negative influences have a significant effect on motivation. They may relate to particular learning-related experiences (e.g. public humiliation, poor test results) or social learning events (e.g. the personality and the behaviour of the teacher, the classroom community) " (as cited by Dorneyi and Ushioda, 2011). Classroom atmosphere can be classified among the important conditions for learners to be motivated. In this sense, Santiara and Razali (2022:10) state that " the classroom is an influential place in education to increase students' motivation to learn" (as cited by Rukhamah, 2016). In fact, three essential elements can join to create a good classroom atmosphere including classroom shape, teacher and student's behavior. Moreover, the teachers have to choose the right methodology which can attract the learner's interest, otherwise, the learners will start to lose their motivation. Harmer (1991) claims that most students depend on effective teaching methods, so if they do not meet the teaching method which can be helpful, they will lose their confidence in the teacher's choice and they will be frustrated. Teacher's role in learners' motivation is classified as the third factor in increasing as well as decreasing the learners' level of motivation. Ersoz (2004) states many other problems which can prevent learner's motivation including shyness, limited knowledge, insufficient preparation for a particular lesson and according to Jafari (2013), demotivation can be related to the weak outcomes due to the boring method of explaining the lesson, neglecting the pupils' abilities, the lack of interest from pupils. Ekiz's research (2013) on the factors affecting learners' motivation revealed that the teacher's attitude, the absence of technological materials, and feeling of fear when speaking are the most negative factors which can hinder the motivation process of learners and frustrate their morale such as getting shy, bored and not interested. According to Liton (2012), in Saudi Arabia many ESL learners do

not receive intrinsic motivation in order to improve their language speaking skill to use it in English sessions (as cited by Al Seghayer, 2014).

According to Ryan and Deci (2020), teachers should build a strong relationship with their learners to be motivated because many ESL learners lose their motivation when the role of their teacher is limited to presenting and explaining the lessons without making any other efforts to help them to improve their English learning process. Krishnan and Pathan (2013) observed that the low proficiency in Pakistan schools is due to the pupil's low level of motivation.

1.6 Conclusion:

The first chapter began by addressing the position of the English language in the world in general, then in Algeria in particular. Later on, this chapter moved to discuss English teaching in Algeria by identifying the period of English' emergence in school institutions and the obstacles faced by the EFL teachers. Further, this chapter determined the well-known advantages of teaching English at an early stage. Moreover, most challenges of English teaching and learning have taken place in this chapter by giving examples of many countries which faced numerous difficulties in teaching English.

Chapter Two

Research Design, Results and Recommendations

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2.6 Conclusion

2.1 Introduction

The following chapter is going to identify the research methodology used by the researcher to conduct his study. Then, it will carefully study what has been incorporated into the research design starting from the type of research used in this study, sample population, research instruments used to collect data, and the methods used to analyse it for answering research questions, and to see whether it confirms or rejects the previously mentioned hypotheses. Later on, this chapter will interpret and discuss the findings and provide some suggestions and recommendations.

2.2 Research Design

The research design is the map of the researcher in which all the stages he goes through in his investigation are stated as Creswell (2009:03) says " research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from board assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis ". Ary et al (2010:426) gives another definition of research design by saying "the researcher's plan of how to proceed to gain an understanding of some group or some phenomenon in it's context". The researchers need to build a strong research design because it guides the researchers to the right path to success in carrying out their research as well as achieving reliability, validity, and accuracy. In addition, the research design facilitates setting the objectives of the research and achieving them at the appropriate time. Moreover, it helps the researchers to find solutions to a specific research problem whereas the weak research design surely will lead to the failure of the research project in its first steps (Somasundaram, 2022).

This study was based on the use of two research instruments: classroom observation and an interview with EFL teachers for the sake of exploring the studied issue, namely the difficulties faced by third-year primary pupils in learning the English language .The researcher used qualitative method to analyzing the obtained data which can't be measured or counted. Lincoln (2000:03) states that " qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them ".

2.2.1 Type of Research

The current research pushed the researcher to use a case study for exploring and discovering the challenges faced by third-year primary school pupils in learning the English language and looking for beneficial teaching and learning procedures that can help the pupils to succeed in learning English.

According to Yin (1990:23) a case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". In other words, it is a technique of investigating a particular phenomenon based on observation in collecting data over a long duration (Stake, 1995 as cited in Creswell, 2009). In this study, the researcher depended on an exploratory case study to gain a deeper understanding of the studied issue and obtain significant insights related to the topic dealt with by the researcher through experimentation and investigation as well as the desire to answer the research questions and testing the previous hypotheses (Chopard & Przybylski, 2021).

2.2.2 Sample Population

The researcher has chosen to carry out his study in Ben Ammar Fatima's primary school. The selected sample was third-year pupils aged 8 years old. 60 % of them were males and that was discovered after doing some statistics of the three classes in terms of gender and number with the help of their EFL teachers by providing him with the list of pupils. The following table presents the statistics of third-year classes in terms of gender and number.

Table 2.1: Pupils' gender and number of third-year classes.

Gender	First class	Second class	Third class
Male	20	18	20
Female	16	15	19
Total	36	33	39

Regarding EFL teachers, there were two women. One is 28 years old with a master's degree and the other of 35 years old with a license Degree. Both of them have an experience of no more than 08 months in the concerned primary school.

2.2.3 Research Instruments

To conduct this study, the researcher used two data collection instruments: a classroom observation with third-year classes and an interview with their EFL teachers in Ben Ammar primary school. The researcher chose these instruments due to their significance in the process of investigation and to achieve validity in the process of data collection.

2.2.3.1 Classroom Observation

The first research instrument used was classroom observation. Mackey and Gass (2005:175) highlight the benefits and importance of this instrument by stating that

"observations are used in that they provide the researcher with the opportunity to collect large amounts of rich data on the participants' behaviour and actions within a particular context. Over time and repeated observations, the researcher can gain a deep and more multi-layered understanding of the participants and their context".

Through this research instrument, the researcher gained insights about the process of teaching English to third-year primary school classes and identified all what seemed difficult for pupils to acquire about the English language. Indeed, classroom observation made him closer to both third-year pupils and EFL teachers to have a better look at the studied issue and to see if the pupils understand what is given to them or not and to know whether there is an amount of interest by pupils to learn this language. Moreover, the researcher chose this non-participant observation rather than any other research instrument due to its role in data gathering. According to Ary et al (2010) observation can be defined as the process of gathering qualitative data.

Classroom observation was done in three third-year classes where the researcher attended four sessions; two sessions in the first class (class A) and the two

other sessions in the remaining classes (class B and class C) and each session was limited to 35 minutes. As the observation took place in the month of Ramadhan. It was an exceptional timing. This observation took place in Ben Ammar school which is an old primary school, 60 km far from Tlemcen. The mentioned school opened its doors for more than 22 years. It covers an area of 1200 m² and contains 12 classrooms and a restaurant available for all pupils of this primary school, stadium, and a small space for administration members. The teaching process is supervised by 15 teachers including 12 Arabic teachers, 2 French teachers, and 2 English teachers. More than 420 pupils are studying in this school, but the researcher' study was directed to third-year classes during a short period of no more than 01 month.

Two observation techniques were used: note taking and observation grid which was filled. The second observation technique was divided into three parts. The first part was about observing the method of learning the English alphabet in which the researcher had to take into consideration all things used by the teacher in teaching alphabet. The second part was about the difference between the spoken and written form of some English words. Here, the researcher moved to observe the difficulties faced by third-year pupils in learning this foreign language as English is not a phonetic language. This means that the spelling of a word does not tell exactly how to pronounce it. The third part was about observing code-mixing between French and English or any other action related to French interference.

2.2.3.2 Teache Interview

A structured interview was carried out with two EFL teachers of Ben Ammar primary school in April, 2023 in their classrooms. The researcher wanted the interview to complete the data provided by classroom observation to get more reliable data. Moreover, the reason for using the interview was to know the teachers' thoughts and opinions about the researcher's topic (Ary et al, 2006).

Here, the researcher wanted to get more facts using an interview with EFL teachers about adopting the English language to Algerian primary schools and the challenges faced by third-year pupils in learning this new language, because they are

the closer to their learners, and they can determine the learning difficulties of their pupils.

The interview consisted of three sections, each section contained six to seven questions. The first section was entitled teaching strategies of the English alphabet. It had several aims, the first aim was to know if EFL teachers of the concerned school are novice or experienced teachers. However, the second aim was to know the method of teaching the English alphabet and the last aim was to know if there is support provided by administration or pupils' parents. The second section was entitled English pronunciation and spelling. The included questions aimed to know pupils' problems of pronunciation and the materials used to practice spelling. Finally, the third section was entitled French interference. The aim behind the questions of this section was to know any noticeable interference with the French language since they are learning this language at the same time as the English language. The interview focused more on the use of close-ended questions rather than open-ended questions to obtain more qualitative data. After finishing data collection process using the included research instruments, data analysis was carried out.

2.3 Data Analysis

The data collection process was followed by a qualitative procedure of data analysis since the collected data can't be measured or counted as well as it seeks to understand and explore the studied issue as Creswell (2009:04) says "qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (as cited by Creswell, 2007). The researcher used content analysis for analyzing the collected data related to the first research instrument (classroom observation) for the purpose of looking for important concepts related to research's topic and to analyze the meanings and themes included in qualitative data.

In the first step, the researcher started to read every detail of the collected data and made notes to be familiar with it, then he started to make a relationship with the

collected data from each class using the first research instrument. Later on, the researcher made a description of the data and set the objectives, and returned to the research questions to see if they can be answered through the obtained data. The following step was developing a framework, in this stage the researcher reviewed the data by searching for the ideas and concepts for coding them. The last step followed by the researcher was data interpretation by transforming the ideas and concepts into textual data.

The analysis of the collected data using the interview required the use of thematic analysis by following some steps, starting from repeated readings to the collected data and trying to understand the meanings behind the EFL teachers' answers to achieve Familiarity with the data. The second step followed by the researcher was trying to discover the similarities and differences between the answers and opinions of EFL teachers and trying to describe the meanings into full sentences as well as organizing the meanings in patterns which led to the emergence of themes. The final step was the organization of themes into meaningful and understandable texts.

2.3.1 Classroom Observation

The first instrument in this exploratory case study was carried out in four sessions of 35 minutes which took place in third-year classes at Ben Ammar school. During classroom observation which lasted 01 month (one session per week) many important facts were discovered.

2.3.1.1 The Results of Classroom Observation

Classroom observation was divided into three parts: observation on learning the English alphabet, the difference between spoken and written form of the English language, and the last part namely French interference. After having a period of observation on each part, the researcher arrived at numerous facts related to learning the English alphabet using note-taking and observation grid. The following table presents the results gained from the use of this research instrument related to the First part of classroom observation.

Part one: Observation on learning the English alphabet

Table 2.2: the results of observation on learning the English alphabet.

Observation on learning the English alphabet	Yes	No	observation
Do teachers use explicit phonic instructions during the lesson' presentation?		No	
Do they teach the English letters in a handful manner?		No	
Do they use Mnemonics and memory devices to teach the English alphabet?		No	
Do pupils have sufficient time in practicing the English alphabet writing?		No	
Do they depend on physical flashcards for teaching the English alphabet?	Yes		
Do they use games in teaching alphabets?			Sometimes
Do they use charts in teaching sounds?	Yes		
Do they use the alphabet' song (traditional way)?	Yes		

By the end of the first part of classroom observation, the researcher moved beyond observing how third-year pupils are learning both spoken and written forms of the English language and exploring the problems faced by pupils in learning these two language skills. The researcher depended also on the use of note-taking and an observation grid which was specified to this part only. The following table represents the results concluded from the second part of classroom observation.

Part two: The difference between spoken and written forms

Table 2.3: the results of observation on English spoken and written forms.

Observation on the difference between spoken and written English	Yes	No
Do pupils use the correct spelling in writing activities?		No
Do they use the correct pronunciation of words?		No
Does the teacher use any sort of audio materials?		No
Does the teacher use audio-visual materials?		No
Does the teacher use flashcards in teaching written and spoken English?	Yes	
Is there meaningful communication between the teacher and pupils?	Yes	
Does the teacher give different spelling of words with similar pronunciation?	Yes	

The end of this part of observation encouraged the researcher to move to the last part of observation entitled French interference where he stated all cases he believed were used by most third-year pupils when learning the English language.

Part three: French interference

Table 2.4: the results of observation on code-mixing between French and English

Observation on code-mixing between French and English	Yes	No
Do pupils use French pronunciation of some English alphabets?	Yes	
Do they call some numbers and months as they call it in French?	Yes	
Do they call some family members as they call them in French?	Yes	

2.3.3 Interpretation of Classroom Observation' Results

Classroom observation conducted in this case study revealed that EFL teachers of Ben Ammar school give great importance to physical flashcards to teach the English alphabet. They also depend on the use of some pictures and the traditional way of teaching alphabets (Alphabet' song). Moreover, they use dictation to practice the alphabet's writing skill and they rarely depend on the use of Mnemonics and memory devices to remember the English sounds. The EFL teachers didn't use explicit phonic instructions during lesson presentations but they divide a word into syllables. For example, in unit three an EFL teacher raised the pupils' awareness to the word composition of the house's rooms where she divided some words in syllables such as the word (bed/room). One more thing, it was observed that they do not take enough time in writing activities including dictation which comes at the beginning of some sessions and it does not exceed 15 min. To conclude, it was observed that EFL teachers rely entirely on the old methods in their teaching process and there is no development in teaching the alphabet despite the technological development that the world is witnessing in all fields. So, the absence of technological materials in primary schools will lead to feelings of boredom during lessons' presentation as well as the

absence of interest and lack of motivation which may lead later to decrease the academic performance of third-year pupils.

During the second part of observation, many things were observed among them the use of incorrect spelling in writing activities by pupils. In addition, most pupils didn't use the correct pronunciation of words, as an example some pupils made mistakes in the pronunciation of English vowels. More precisely, in silent letters. Regarding the materials used to teach sounds and spelling, they used dictation and conversations. Unfortunately, these materials were not provided by the concerned school. In fact, another EFL teacher who works outside Ben Ammar school offered these materials to help. As a result, the EFL teachers moved through traditional ways of communication such as holding dialogue between two pupils. Regardless of these difficulties, the teacher seeks to present the lesson in a better way and this was proved through the method of communication between the teachers and their pupils by asking questions and providing answers. After few sessions of observation, it was noticed that one of the challenging issues was teaching spoken English, as an example most of the pupils found it difficult to pronounce some English words and sometimes they hear some words but when it comes to writing they make many spelling mistakes because certain words are similar in pronunciation but different in writing. Another important point is that there was no sufficient time for practicing the writing skill and the EFL teachers specified only a few sentences to be written in a period of no more than 10 minutes. Concerning the speaking skill, there were many efforts by the teachers to enhance this skill but pupils still need more practice to fill this gap.

After finishing the third part of observation, the researcher found that many pupils used the French pronunciation when pronouncing some English vowels. Moreover, they used French words for some months and colors, for example the month (April) was called by them (Avril), the colors (green and grey) were called (vert and gris) respectively. Family members were also mixed, so instead of saying (father and mother) they said (père and mère). Another French interference was noticed in

some names of toys, for example instead of saying (byke) they said (vélo). Code – mixing between French and English will adversely affect the correct construction of both foreign languages. The third part of classroom observation revealed that third-year pupils often switch to the French language which means that their focus is only on French as a foreign language.

2.3.2 EFL Teachers' Interview

This work can't be completed and accomplished without being closer to EFL teachers and getting their opinions about their pupils' learning process in the English language. After asking for permission from Ben Ammar's administration and from its EFL teachers. A structured interview was addressed to these teachers. The purpose from this interview is to arrive at what could not be explored during classroom observation and to determine more difficulties faced by third-year pupils in learning English during the first and second trimester and to know the proposed solutions to overcome these difficulties to ensure an easier learning process.

2.3.2.1 The Results of the Interview

The interview was divided into three sections and each section contains several questions (from 06 to 07 questions). Therefore, the results were divided into three sections including:

First section: Teaching strategies of English alphabet

First question: EFL teachers experience in teaching English.

The first question of the interview showed that two EFL teachers have little experience in teaching English as they have been teaching English for only 08 months and the oldest teacher taught English for 09 months in Ain Youcef. They claimed that they do not have a wide experience in teaching English, but they could manage to teach the English alphabet.

Second question: The strategy to teach the English alphabet.

An EFL teacher said that she depends on presentation, practice, and production while the other EFL teacher uses body movements concerning the reinforcement of memorization and both of teachers depend on the use of songs and audio materials.

Third question: The activities used to practice the English alphabet.

Both EFL teachers use flashcards but they do not follow the same method. For example, one of them sticks flashcards of capital letters and small letters and she asks her pupils to put each capital letter with its small one, while the other teacher sticks flashcards (eggs shaped) on the board in disorder and she asks her pupils to put the letters of the alphabet in order.

Forth question: Materials to teach the alphabet.

Both EFL teachers use flashcards and alphabet's board as common materials between them, but the second teacher relies on more materials including memory tricks such as trusty zoo, phonics cards and songs to help the pupils to avoid confusion between letters' names.

Fifth question: School' support and parents' motivation.

According to EFL teachers, their school is poor and they have to bring their teaching devices otherwise, they can not present the lesson. They also complained about the absence of parents' role in motivating their children who they go through the process of learning English only in their classes and no support is received from their parents at home.

Sixth question: Problems with learning the English alphabet.

According to an EFL teacher, third-year pupils had a problem of pronunciation due to the influence of the French language and that appeared when trying to pronounce some English vowels as well as many English words that can be difficult for pupils to pronounce.

Second section: English pronunciation and spelling

First question: Spelling form in writing activities.

Both EFL teachers mentioned that a minority of pupils had a correct spelling in written activities while the others made mistakes when writing because they think that all words with the same pronunciation have the same spelling.

Second question: The correct pronunciation of words

The second section of the interview proved that third-year pupils find it difficult to pronounce some English words, especially when their teachers ask them to do a conversation.

Third question: Sound-spelling problems saved by pupils

Both EFL teachers agreed that their pupils have problems with some sounds which are similar in pronunciation but different in spelling such as homophones (pair, peer) and (ant, aunt).

Forth question: Materials used to teach spoken versus written forms.

Both teachers depend much on dictation, flashcards and slates and small conversations to practice spoken and written forms.

Fifth question: Strategies to teach sound and spelling.

According to an EFL teacher, she uses (presentation, practice, and production) strategy whereas the other teacher uses more strategies such as phonics, sight words, repetition, and flashcards.

Sixth question: The activities to teach sounds and spelling.

Both EFL teachers used dictation and filled the gaps with the missing letters.

Seventh question: The relationship between spoken and written forms.

According to the EFL teachers, any foreign language will be difficult at the beginning but once pupils get enough practice they will know the spelling of spoken words. Concerning the relationship between spoken and written forms, EFL teachers said that third-year pupils started to make connections between them because they have learned the alphabets.

Third section: French interference.

First question: Code-mixing between French and English.

According to the EFL teachers, some pupils have connected French with English which has been proved from the use of some French words in English sessions (Maitresse, bonjour, madame, bus ...)

Second question: Sound spelling problems saved by pupils.

During a session of alphabet learning practice, it was noticed that many pupils use French pronunciation when their teachers ask them to read each letter separately.

Third question: The use of code-mixing in numbers and months.

All of the EFL teachers agreed that pupils sometimes switch to French when they ask them about the date, for example instead of saying (march) they say (mars)

Fourth question: Other cases of using code-mixing.

Some pupils use the word (soeur) instead of using the word (sister) and (frère) instead of (brother). They also refer to some animals by using French names, for example they refer to (cat) by saying or writing (chat).

Sixth question: The proposed solutions to face code-mixing.

EFL teachers explained that the solution would be to introduce pupils to just one foreign language in third-year level, then in later levels they would be taught the second foreign language.

2.3.2.2 Interpretation of Teachers' Interview

The teachers' interview revealed several facts about EFL teaching in Algerian primary schools where English is a new foreign language to be acquired by young learners starting from the third level. It should be noted that EFL teachers are novice teachers and they still need training and that has been discovered after the first question. The second fact was concluded from the third, fourth, and fifth question was EFL teachers of Ben Ammar school focus more on flashcards, and alphabet's board which means that they are still sticking to the old methods of teaching foreign languages and there is no use of technological tools which the world is experiencing today. In contrast, the EFL teachers claimed that their primary school is witnessing a dire situation in terms of support with modern teaching materials. This section also revealed the influence of the French language which negatively affected the English learning process, especially in pronouncing some vowels.

The second section of the interview showed that some pupils find it difficult to pronounce some English words and others find it difficult to write because the English language contains several differences in spoken and written forms. Some words have the same pronunciation but not the same spelling such as homophones.

The third section of the interview proved that there is a problem of code-mixing between French and English among third-year pupils. This was identified by their

teachers since third-year pupils are learning two foreign languages at the same time which makes it difficult for their young age and for their flexible minds.

2.4 Discussion of the Main Findings

For the purpose of knowing the English language learning difficulties faced by third-year primary school pupils and knowing the effective ways to overcome them, the researcher moved to discuss the findings in accordance with these research hypotheses.

The first hypothesis stated that the English language learning difficulties faced by third-year pupils are learning a language with a different alphabet, the difference between spoken and written forms, and the interference with the French language. The obtained data showed important facts about this issue. Classroom observation in third-year classes enhanced the idea that third-year pupils had several problems in learning the English alphabet. First, pupils made a relation with the French language when they pronounce some English vowels and their teachers used ineffective activities and depended entirely on old teaching methods such as board of alphabet, slates, and flashcards. All these things made pupils not interested during lessons' presentation. The previously mentioned tools were the only teaching materials of the English alphabet and this fact was discovered through classroom observation and interview with EFL teachers. Moreover, many other facts were concluded during the use of the first research instrument. Many pupils had a problem in writing English words because they think that all words with the same pronunciation have the same spelling. Another fact mentioned by EFL teachers through the interview was third-year pupils switched to French, especially when their teachers asked them about week' days and months when they wanted to write the date. All these were the main difficulties that were concluded by using classroom observation and interview which confirmed the first hypothesis.

The second hypothesis claimed that to overcome the previous difficulties, children need to be provided with more practice using different teaching techniques, attractive activities, and technology tools. Classroom observation revealed that the

time allotted for teaching the English language was 35 minutes in the month of Ramadhan, 45 minutes in the other days, and the English sessions were no more than 2 sessions per week. Moreover, it was observed that EFL teachers did not devote enough time and practice to writing activities and that was observed after looking at some pupils' notebooks. Regarding the activities used in the teaching process, EFL teachers used only dictation for alphabet writing practice and dialogues to enhance speaking skill. Furthermore, the English teaching process in third-year classes did not rely on any sort of technological materials. In contrast, they used only flashcards, board of alphabet, and some charts which were brought by the efforts of EFL teachers because their school did not provide them with any teaching materials. All these facts seemed to have hindered the process of learning English because third-year pupils were unable to acquire all the necessary elements of the English language. In their answers, teachers were well aware of this situation and asked for more teaching time and for school's support by providing teaching materials namely technology tools. All these results seem to validate the second hypothesis.

2.5 Suggestions and Recommendations

Teaching English to EFL learners requires big efforts to succeed in this process because their minds are still flexible and they depend on the use of specific methods. In fact, EFL learners require more practice, attractive activities, and technological materials which can attract their attention and make them interested and motivated.

2.5.1 More Practice

All EFL learners should give enough time to the four language skills: speaking, listening, writing, and reading. The main purpose of these four skills is to master the English language and to be fluent English speakers and effective communicators.

2.5.1.1 Speaking Skill

According to Bygate (1987) the speaking skill is the ability to convey a message through the expression of opinions, sensations, and ideas. In other terms, Brown (2004:140) defines speaking skill as "a productive skill in the organs of speech to express meaning". EFL

learners should take sufficient time in practicing this skill through making conversations with their mates or someone who masters the English language because speaking is considered as an important skill, especially for their educational achievements and future careers as stated by Parupalli (2019:08) " more emphasis is now laid on developing the speaking skills of the learners to pursue their studies successfully and excel in their fields once they finish their education". In fact, English speaking skill is most demanded and important for getting jobs, i.e, some jobs require that the candidate pass a test to measure his or her English speaking skills. The speaking skill can be improved using different manners such as conversations, role-play, games, and learning new words.

2.5.1.2 Listening Skill

According to Underwood (1989) the listening skill can be defined as the ability to absorb everything that is heard. From another hand, Brown (2001:247) says that " Listening is the major component in language learning and teaching because in the classroom learners do more listening than speaking ". EFL teachers should look for the appropriate methods of teaching this skill such as dictogloss technique. Vasiljevic (2010:41) states that "dictogloss is a classroom dictation where learners listen to a passage, not down key words and then work together to create a reconstructed version of the text ". The EFL teachers can enhance the listening skill using other methods such as watching videos, listening to radio programmes, note-taking, and listening to English songs.

2.5.1.3 Writing Skill

Brown (2001:335) states that " Writing is the written products of thinking, drafting, and revising that require specialized skills on how to generate ideas, how to organize them coherently, how to use discourse markers and rhetorical conventions coherently into a written text". Harmer (2004 :04- 05) defines writing as " Writing is the way of remembering and the way of thinking as well because it makes ideas permanent". The writing skill helps the writers' thoughts and opinions to be visible as it speeds up the process of explanation and communication through written texts such as emails, letters, invitations, and feedback.

2.5.1.4 Reading Skill

According to Brown (2004:185) reading is "a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning". Leu & Kinzer (1987:09) defines reading as "developmental, interactive and global process involving learned skill". In other words, reading can also be defined as an oral process by reading, understanding, and assimilating written contents. Reading skill can be considered as the brilliant key of learners' success as it has also many other benefits including improving children' concentration and intelligence, developing their abilities to communicate, getting a good amount of knowledge and vocabulary, developing people's culture (Schlauch, 2014). EFL learners can improve their reading skill by reading English books, newspapers, articles, and funny stories.

2.5.2 Attractive Activities

The use of attractive activities in English teaching to EFL learners will be beneficial for both teachers and learners. The teachers have to select motivated and interesting activities to make their learners active and increase their interest in the learning process because if they choose simple activities such as reading books, or writing in notebooks, they are losing a big chance to allow their learners to enjoy the learning process (Halliwell, 1992 & Read, 2007 , as cited by Miletic, 2017) . There are many types of attractive activities including:

2.5.2.1 Effective Games

Many teachers depend on some beneficial games in classroom activities to make their learners interested and improve their language skills such as the speaking skill as Parupalli (2019:13) says

" Generally most of the learners are interested in playing games in the classrooms and it is quite common that they ask for more and more games as they make them happy. When the learners practice these games in a fun environment, it is sure that they really improve their speaking skills enormously". According to Bendo and Erbas (2019:44)

playing a game can be a valuable element in the learning and teaching processes, so they assert that

"it is considered not only as a fun activity, but it is also taken into consideration as an educative tool for learning and improving certain skills. Playing games while teaching English requires a lot of effort on the teacher's side since the teacher has to find proper games to utilize in the classroom ". Through games, EFL learners are going to be motivated, engaged in classroom activities, and reduce their stress. Playing games can change the learner's feelings and attitudes toward the lesson, especially after getting bored. In this concept, Bendo and Erbas (2019: 45) say that " utilizing games in class is a great way to warm up the students before the lesson starts, or to give them a break during or after the lesson when you are dealing with a hard subject". One of the beneficial games that can be played in the classroom is the Bingo game which is considered a revision of previous lessons.

2.5.2.2 English Songs

According to (Phoowang, 2016) teaching English pronunciation using English songs can help the learners to reach the required level of English proficiency as it can enhance both learning and teaching processes and make the learners more interesting as well as help them to reduce lesson's resistance and receive positive feelings. This fact was concluded from the affective filter hypothesis which is derived from Krachen's theory (1982). Phoowang's research on the development of English pronunciation skills through English songs proved that using songs in lesson presentations has increased the learners' proficiency on English pronunciation and that was discovered from the sample's scores after studying with English songs.

2.5.2.3 Mnemonic Devices

According to (Musliana, 2015: 10) " Mnemonic is a memory enhancing instructional strategy that involves teaching students to link new information taught to information they already know ". Mnemonic devices have many types such as songs,

acronyms, and rhymes. The main role of mnemonic devices is to recall previous information and it is a helpful way to remember something difficult to memorize.

2.5.2.4 Role-Play

Parupalli (2019:14) " role-plays are the best activities to introduce in the English classroom to improve the learner's speaking skills in English during the second stage ". Role-plays have many benefits for the learners among them it creates a strong interaction between mates, making them sociable and encouraging group work.

2.5.3 Use of Technology

EFL teachers can depend on the use of some technological resources to enhance their teaching process and make the learning process more effective and enjoyable. According to Altun and Ahmad (2021: 227) " technology provides even hundreds of resources in real time to assist students. Students can use simplified dictionaries, make flashcards, and explore the internet in the language they are learning. they can find colleagues, conversational partners and tutors online ". Technology has many benefits when integrated into lessons presentations and that is what can be concluded from (Altun , 2021:228) who says that

"Technology flourishes the teachers' abilities and helps them to have a wide range of opportunities in teaching students the English language, for instance displaying videos or songs in the English language related to the subject that the teacher explains will help the students to understand faster and have a better view toward the subject ". Many kinds of technological materials can be applied in the classroom, among them:

2.5.3.1 YouTube Videos

According to (Kurniadi, 2020) pupils are very interested in the use of media such as YouTube videos and online classes in lesson presentations. They find it enjoyable and motivating as well as contain what the learners need concerning the lectures. Moreover, it helps them to improve the English words' pronunciation through listening to words and watching the manner used in producing some sounds. Furthermore, YouTube sources can provide the learners with more than 1592 videos'

lessons presented by native speaker teachers who can enhance the English words' pronunciation.

2.5.3.2 Computers

According to (Altun, 2021:231) "learners can learn meaningfully when technology is used through computers and the internet in the process of learning ". Ahmadi (2018 :116) also argues that the use of computers can be helpful for teachers in particular, so he explained that "computers are regarded as an important instructional instrument in language classes in which teachers have convenient access, are sufficiently prepared, and have some freedom in the curriculum" (as cited by Becker, 2000). Indeed, Computer technology is an innovative technique that can be the source of achievements in teaching and learning processes and it can be found that many teachers in secondary or high school use their computers to present the lessons with the help of a projector as they can record the learners' grades in it.

2.5.3.3 English Movies

Uzzaman & Roy's research (2015) on learning English through watching movies revealed that most EFL learners are watching English movies due to their role in increasing their proficiency in the English language and improving their language skills: listening and speaking as well as getting the correct pronunciation and developing their English vocabulary. According to Darlene (2020) learning English would be enjoyable and interesting by watching movies because choosing a new language to learn will be boring at the beginning, but if it is related to some movies it will be entertaining. Furthermore, learning English through movies will help EFL learners to use this language easily in their daily lives.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher determined the framework of his research by identifying all stages of research design starting from research methodology, the type of research, sample population, research instruments used to collect data, and procedures of data analysis. Second, the researcher presented separately the results of each research instrument, then he brought all the findings gained from data analysis and interpretation and he discussed them by making a relation with the previous hypothesis to confirm or reject it. At last, the researcher stated some suggestions and recommendations that can enhance the English learning and teaching processes and give ESL learners effective ways to be successful in learning this language.

General Conclusion

Teaching English to young learners is a new process in Algeria where it has been adopted in primary schools since September, 2022. Only third year classes are concerned with learning the English language besides French which was the only foreign language taught in primary schools for many years ago. It should be noted that dialectal Arabic and Berber are mother tongues in Algeria and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) is the official language which is used in education and media. Then, growing up in this rich linguistic background, Algerian children will have to learn an additional foreign language at an early age which is believed to present some challenges for these young learners.

The present research aimed to answer two important questions. The first question was what are the difficulties faced by Algerian Third-year Primary School Pupils in learning English? And the second question was how to overcome third-year pupils' English language difficulties. These two questions led to the creation of two hypotheses. The first hypothesis determined the English language learning difficulties which can be studying a language with a different alphabet, the difference between spoken and written forms, and code-mixing between French and English. The second hypothesis identified some solutions which can reduce the EFL learning difficulties using beneficial methods and materials. So, this work Focused more on the topic and searched for the obstacles to learning English at an early age. The concerned research was divided into two chapters ; the first chapter was concerned with the theoretical part which focused on the status of the English language in the world in general and in Algeria in particular, then looked for the advantages and challenges of learning and teaching English at a young age by giving examples of some countries. The second chapter was concerned with research design, results, and recommendations. In this chapter, the researcher identified the research methodology followed by him, the research methods used to collect data, and the procedures used to analyze the obtained data as well as the findings report. At last, some recommendations and suggestions

have taken place and the final stage was the general conclusion of what has been presented in the thesis.

The process of data analysis indicated many facts and significant results. The first research instrument proved that Third-year pupils had many problems in learning English. First of all, they pronounced some English vowels as they are pronounced in French and their teachers used non-motivating teaching materials such as flashcards and some charts. In addition, third-year pupils made many spelling mistakes when writing some words. Moreover, they use some French words from time to time in some cases such as names of colors, months, and family members. On the other hand, the teacher interview helped the researcher to gain new insights to confirm the second hypothesis. First, EFL teachers said that the English sessions do not exceed 2 sessions per week and each session has no more than 45 minutes mainly in all months except the month of Ramadhan when the English sessions take only 35 minutes. Further, the activities used by the teachers did not seem effective such as dictation and repetition of some dialogues. The teachers' answers on the two sections of the interview revealed that they did not receive any support from their administration and there were no motivating activities and no technological materials to enhance the teaching process and encourage the pupils to take care of their learning process.

Several limitations affected the current study. Teaching English in the Algerian primary schools has no more than 09 months from its implementation. So, the researcher was not able to determine more difficulties unless teaching this language for a long period. Furthermore, the researcher did not find enough sources related to the studied issue, especially when the researcher was looking for effective ways to overcome code-mixing between French and English. Another limitation was time constraint for making an interview with EFL teachers due to the limited time they gave them to teach and after finishing a session in a classroom they have to move to another primary school to teach other classes.

The researcher of this study wanted to explore the English language learning difficulties faced by third-year pupils and the solutions to overcome the mentioned difficulties. From his obtained experience in this research, it can be concluded that the best research design is the key to succeed in any type of research, especially time management which is an important factor and should be taken into account by allocating sufficient time to each part of the research to avoid the mistake done by the researcher. The researcher discovered also that the best results can't be obtained except after a lengthy investigation of the issue, especially if it is recent. In this case, the researcher must postpone his or her research for a few years in order to get a better understanding of the issue and know its negative aspects. So, these remarks should be taken into consideration in conducting any type of research. Moreover, it would be great to seek the issue of time constraints in teaching the English language at the third-year level and to look for its effects on the learners' English proficiency.

To conclude, one might argue that teaching English in Algerian primary schools typically consists of some basic language elements to be taught before moving to middle schools, and having more complex English language skills which need more practice, sufficient time, and competent teachers. Although teaching English in primary schools presents many difficulties for teachers and learners, some countries have successfully integrated English learning into their primary education programs proving that pupils have a rapid acquisition of this language.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Classroom observation grids

The First observation grid: Observation on learning the English alphabet

Observation on learning the English alphabet	Yes	No
Do teachers use explicit phonic instructions during the lesson presentation?		
Do they teach the English letters in a handful manner?		
Do they use mnemonics and memory devices to teach the English alphabet?		
Do pupils have sufficient time in practicing the English alphabet writing?		
Do they depend on physical flashcards for teaching the English alphabet?		
Do they use games in teaching alphabet?		
Do they use charts in teaching sounds?		
Do they use the alphabet's song (traditional way)?		

The Second observation grid: observation on the difference between spoken and written forms.

Observation on the difference between spoken and written English	Yes	No
Do pupils use the correct spelling in writing activities?		
Do they use the correct pronunciation of words?		
Does the teacher use any sort of audio materials?		
Does the teacher use flashcards in teaching written and spoken English?		
Is there communication between teacher and pupils?		
Does the teacher give different spelling of the same sound?		

The Third observation grid: observation on code-mixing between French and English.

Observation on code-mixing between French and English	Yes	No
Do pupils use the French pronunciation of some English alphabets?		
Do they call some numbers and months in the same way they call it in French?		
Do they call some family numbers the same as they call it in French?		

Appendix B: Teacher interview

First question: for how long have you been teaching English? Where?

First section: Teaching strategies of English alphabet

- 1-How was your experience in teaching the English alphabet?
- 2-Which strategy/ies do you use to teach the alphabet?
- 3-What activities do you use to practice the alphabet? Please, explain.
- 4-What are the materials you use to teach the alphabet? (flashcards, digital application, memory devices, sound charts)
- 5-Does the school provide you with any tool to teach the alphabet? Which one/s? Did pupils' parents help you in the process?
- 6-Do your pupils have problems with learning the English alphabet? Please, explain.

Second section: English pronunciation and spelling

- 1- Do your pupils use the correct spelling in writing activities?
- 2- Do your pupils use the correct pronunciation of words?
- 3- What are the sound-spelling problems faced by your pupils?
- 4- What are the materials you use to teach spoken versus written forms?
- 5- What are the strategies you use to teach sound and spelling?
- 6- What are the activities you use to teach sound and spelling?
- 7- According to your experience, do you pupils find it easy to make a relationship between spoken and written forms?

Third section: French interference

- 1- Do you notice any code-mixing between French and English among your pupils? Can you give examples?
- 2- In your opinion, what are the reasons behind French and English code-mixing?
- 3- Do pupils use the French pronunciation of some English alphabets?
- 4- Do your pupils mix between French and English when dealing with numbers and months?
- 5- What are other cases of code-mixing you have noticed?
- 6- What are the solutions you propose to deal with the problems of pupils' code-mixing?