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***DICTION : A Writing Strategy To Improve
Secondary School Learners' Writing Skills case study
2ND Year Literature And Foreign languages Stream
Learners At Guneiber Mohammed El-Bayadh
Secondary School***

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candidacy for the degree of Master in Didactics

Presented by:

MS.M.RADJA

supervised by:

DR.C.MOURI

Board of examiners

Mr. M. Hadji : President

Mr. S. Lakhdari : Examiner

DR.C. Mouri : supervisor

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Declaration

I declare that this study “dictation a writing strategy to improve secondary school writing skills” was done by me, all sources have been acknowledged through references .

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my one and only sister Faiza for her trust and caring and unlimited moral and financial support in my education

My lovable mother, for her praying and patience, powerful and strong soul.

My dear and precious father for his infinite believing and faith in me.

My brothers Bahbouh, Aziz, Khaled and Amine for their support .

To my little Candels Nour, Meriem, sadjida, Abd EL-Allah and Islam.

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the impact of dictation on improving second year secondary school literature and foreign languages stream learners writing skills. The variables studied include spelling and punctuation, two research questions were set and answered and two hypotheses were also tested in the study, experimental research was adopted for the study the population consisted of fifteen (15) 2ND year LFL stream learners in EL-Bayadh, Brizinna district for the 2018/2019 academic year out of which twelve (12) learners were sampled and assigned with a dictation activity which included three reading passages selected from the learners' textbook which were conducted in three sessions with the a collective correction, data were gathered by means of three instruments, classroom observation with 2ND year LFL branch learners in Genniber Mohammed secondary school in EL-Bayadh Brizinna, a designed questionnaire with the learners and an interview addressed to teachers, the results of the study found that there seemed to be no significant effect of dictation on spelling component and punctuation component.

Key words: Dictation, writing skills, spelling, punctuation, learners

List of Accronyms

CBA: competency Based Approach

ESL : English as a second language

EFL: English as a foreign language

FL: Foreign Language

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

L2: Second Language

LFL: Literature and Foreign Languages

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Chapter One

General Introduction

For many years, dictation has been applied in language teaching field, it was associated with the classical method Grammar Translation Method (GTM) firstly while it was ignored with the appearance and dominance of the audio-lingual method in 1950's 1960's, this activity gained recognition as a language testing tool again because of its help in the learning process and most importantly in the progress of language skills listening, writing reading and speaking. Dictation is a significant teaching and learning strategy which enhance the learners' writing skills, Davis and Rinvoluceri (2002) in their book of new methods new possibilities defined dictation as a decoding the sounds of English and recording them in writing.

1. Background of the study

At EL-Bayadh, Brizinna district secondary school teachers do not employ dictation as technique in teaching , because of the intensive program, some people consider it also as a teacher center technique and has no effect on improving EFL learners writing skills .Hence, this research attempts is to investigate that there is a big distinction between those who employ dictation and those who do not.

2. Problem statement

It could be stated that 2ND year secondary school literature and foreign languages stream learners who are learning English as a foreign language are faced with difficulties in putting structure of words into written form and this was probably due to the lack of listening activities such as dictation.

Even though there were numerous evidences to this problem, the present study noticed that dictation with all its opportunities for facilitating writing skills components, such as spelling and punctuation, it has been ignored and considered an old fashioned strategy. Therefore it was generally thought that dictation as a teaching method contributed mainly in the learners' outcomes, this study attempts to investigate the effect of dictation as a strategy on improving secondary school learner's writing skills components such as spelling and punctuation in secondary school.

3. Research questions

What is the impact of dictation on improving the following parameters:

1. What is the impact of dictation on the spelling component of written English of 2nd year secondary school literature and foreign languages branch learners?
2. What is the impact of dictation on the punctuation component of written English of 2ND year secondary school literature and foreign languages branch learners?

4. Hypotheses : the following hypothesis will be tested in this study:

Even if teachers supplied dictation texts, secondary school learners writing skills would not improve.

Secondary school learners would strengthen their productive competences, if intensive dictation sessions were planned and set up.

5. Population sampling

This study take place in secondary school of Mohammed Guneiber of Brizinna district wilaya of EL- Bayadh more specifically 2ND year literature stream of foreign languages, a sample of 15 learners who are going to be tested in a practical activity of dictation and see how it effects their writing abilities.

6. Methodology

The most suitable method is descriptive one since it is related to an educational issue, classroom observation, a dictation activity with learners questionnaire addressed to learners and interview with teachers.

7. Data Gathering Tools

In this research, three tools were used

A : **classroom observation** it is used with 2ND year secondary learners literature and foreign languages stream in order to have an obvious picture about the problem , in a period of a month

B: **questionnaire** with learners

C : **interview** with teachers

D : **Dictation activity** done with learners to see their writing abilities

8. Literature Review

Dictation is an important learning and teaching strategy that has gone through a long history and has been employed for centuries which is defined as an activity of writing dawn what is being said, Research has explained that dictation can assist learners improve numerous aspects of their language proficiency,(Jafarpur and Amini 1993) explained that: dictation permit the language learner to both understand and produce the language in the context of meaningful discourse.

Some people consider the dictation use has no relation with improvement of learners proficiency, as Stansfield (1985) who refused using dictation as test of language proficiency due to its strong connection with(GTM) Grammar Translation

Method, and also Cartledge (1968) who viewed dictation not as a teaching tool but help them in oral comprehension practices.

In contrast with those researchers, others believe that dictation can be used as teaching strategy due to the amount of input provided for learners, Davis and Rinalucry, (2002) explained that dictation contained a wealth of new technique to extent the traditional language activity of dictation according to alkire (2002) there are plenty of advantages for dictation the most essential are: 1. Improve the four language skills in integrative way 2. Improve grammar Oller (1979) 3. Enhance short-term memory and develop more awareness with context clues. In conclusion dictation has a big affection on writing skills.

1. Introduction

Dictation is a premium language teaching and learning device that has been used for years and often viewed as teacher-centered although being neglected by many people, dictation refers to someone reading some text out loud with pauses so that the listener can mark down what is being said. Norris (1993)

A number of studies investigated this area that showed its efficiency with learners and the setting of classroom. Dictation was initially connected with (GTM) Grammar Translation Method than it lost its popularity with the appearance of Audio lingual Method in 1960, however it was regained afterward because of the Foreign language improvement that this technique offers. Stansfield (1985)

Oller (1971,1979) examined EFL learners in the university of California Los Angeles, the exam consist of 5 parts, dictation is one of them and the result between dictation and whole score was 91. This result propose that dictation could be a good evaluation of language proficiency, the same experiment was conducted in Japan 2002, English language proficiency test CASEC (Computerized Assessment System for English communication) ,Matsuoka 2006 marked that dictation has the highest score, Oller asserted that, dictation can be used as cognitive device of measuring learners language skills this provide another evidence for dictation in improving language proficiency .

Others disapproved with dictation, Cartledge, (1968) disputed that dictation is not a teaching device , the same with G.jacobs (2003) who described dictation as a an old form that has been criticized as a pattern of learning method which learners copy-paste only what teachers reads without any thinking, consequently a mechanical form of literacy is produced, in brief those opinions did not refuse dictation totally somewhat they showed its weakness on language teaching and learning.

1.1 English in The Algerian Educational System

English is increasingly becoming necessary, it is the language of media (TV internet, Social media), and considered an international communication language since it is spoken by 1.5 billion people around the world , in different fields business, banking, travel , entertainment, technology and sport.

Moreover, in the field of education, the English language becomes really important all over the world, more specifically in Algeria government do not give much interest to English, and they have limited access to its quality, since the French language is the dominant in our country

In 2001, Ministry of Education proclaimed an educational reform concerning English teaching . English is introduced at the level of middle school at the age of eleven 11, it covers 7 years, 4 at the middle and three 3 at secondary school.

In the educational system, English is a second foreign language after French due to historical and social reasons, it is taught also for educational reasons to do the exams, it is used primary in official classroom environment, and in daily communication objectives. (Salem zemali, English in Algeria)

1.2 Teaching English in Secondary School

The English syllabus of second year permitted by Ministry of Education 2006 contained an introduction, a sequence of objectives were presented which can be accomplished trustfully within three years.

The concept of language learning does not contain acquisition of linguistic items only but also extended to include cultural and methodological objectives , the following statement makes it obvious which states that:

“The aim of teaching English is help our society to get harmoniously integrated in modernity through a fully complete participation within a community of people who use English in all types of interactions_ this participation should be based on sharing and exchanging ideas as well as experiences being scientific, cultural or civilisational this participation will help for better understanding for one self and the other” p.88.

Teaching English is also planned to:

- To encourage the learners to accept other culture
- To promote learners intellectual capacities of analyzing evaluating and synthesizing
- To help learner to promote self learning and critical thought
- To enable learners to exploit English documents

- To support the learners to accept other culture and initiate the spirit of tolerance, and broad-mindedness.

For teachers who are looking to make use of intercultural study and encourage tolerant attitudes between the learners the ministry of education propose chances for them by presenting the previous set of aims.

To sum up teaching English in Algerian secondary schools is not limited in terms of general aims of teaching, but also human universal and national values are encouraged, learners are expected to be open up to English represent their own country and its cultural values in English which are necessary elements for modernity and globalization.

1.2.1 Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Second Year Secondary School Learners

The Educational Reform (2001) approved by the new educational system characterized by employing Competency Based Approach (CBA) has a clear objective which is teaching English as foreign language to fit globalization requirements and educational progress , in addition to the major aim which is communication without losing one's identity, and to make sure that learners enhance their competencies, and this is what is presented in the second year book "Getting Through" which is a carry on version of what learners have studied in first year English learning and it is mainly based on the following objectives:

Linguistic Aims

To learn any language the learner should be required with essential linguistic materials (the four skills, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary) which are:

Methodological Aims

Critical thinking aspired by self-sufficiency is developed and combined self assessment.

Involve the learners in different subjects that are not interesting in, and allow them to employ many documents in the class .

Socio-cultural Aims

Encourage the learners' broad-mindedness, adopt and get access to cultural values of English language and stimulate their curiosity.

Incorporate the data attained by the learners by making sure interestingly coherence.

1.2.2 Second Year Textbook “Getting Through”

“Getting through” is the textbook that secondary school learners are currently using in their year it is the foundation of classroom courses. In the introduction of the book addressed to teachers book .B. Riche et al 2005 states that “Getting Through” employs the national curriculum for English issued by the Ministry of Education in December 2005. It follows the guiding principles which frame the curriculum, and which take into account the social and educational background of our learners, as well as the cultural values of Algeria. (Second year secondary school Textbook, P.3)

1.2.3 Description of the Text Book

“Getting Through” textbook has been published in (2006-2007) by the O.N.P.S It complies with the curriculum designed and issued by the Ministry of National Education in December (2005). It relies on the Competency Based Approach, which is both Learner centered and project oriented. The course book contains eight units, each unit is meant to be completed in a maximum of 15 hours. Each unit comprises five main parts, which are entitled and described by the authors of the book as follows:

-Discovering the language: The students in this rubric will discover the vocabulary, spelling pronunciation and grammar as constituents of the language to be dealt with in each unit.

-Developing skills: Here the students will build basic language skills as well as intellectual skills (thinking , guessing anticipating, making , analyzing, synthesizing, planning ,etc).

These skills are required for initiating work on projects and class presentations based on these projects .This enterprise naturally integrates the three competences described in the syllabus, i.e., interacting orally, interpreting messages and producing messages. Putting things together: Here the students come to the project itself as an outcome of the constituents of language and the skills acquired in each unit. The students find guidance on how to get the project materialized .They have the opportunity to combine primary and social skills and thus display their individual achievements.

-Where do we go from here? : This part deals with students' self assessment, i.e., checking their own progress through various means, including filling grids and keeping portfolios.

-Exploring matters further: In this part of the unit, students will get an opportunity to learn more about the topic dealt with through extensive reading. They will acquire more vocabulary and improve their knowledge of grammar.

They will also be made aware of spoken and written language registers.

The texts in the book are selected in relation to the themes dealt within each unit .Some texts are authentic taken from a wide range of different sources, such as newspapers, interviews and magazine articles. But many have been adapted in order to suit the level of the learners. The textbook has a clear approach to grammar. Grammatical structures are initially introduced in context , with exercises that encourage the students to work out the rules .The learners can refer to the “ Grammar Reference” at the back of the book, which is a useful tool that may be taken advantage before, during or after the lesson.

Furthermore, the course book has a useful teacher's book. It includes a clear explanation of the methodology and guides the teachers through the lessons. It enables them to use the activities. Therefore, the textbook means comprehensive help with useful suggestions for setting up pair work, group work and lesson planning .The teachers' book also provides keys to the suggested activities, so that teachers have a wealth of support. (Salem Zemali Second year Secondary school textbook, p.1.2).

1.3 Definition of Dictation

Language teaching and learning nowadays is built on communication and dictation seemed to be losing its status in the English classroom , But professors still employ it in their teaching , Dictation is defined as the transcription of spoken text one who is dictating speaks and another person who is taking dictation writes down as they are spoken, Stansfield (1985) believes that dictation assist learners internalize the language, because learners use more than one function, in other words dictation does not enhance their listening and writing only, but also understand what is being dictated and how.

In addition, the material dictated should be carefully chosen appropriate, suitable and interesting at the same time for the learners, in order to involve them more in the process, though both teachers and learners confront boredom during dictation.

The dictation process involve two persons, the teacher dictates the chosen passage at least three times, at first is read gradually, than repeated once or twice with normal pace, and finish with the same pace, learners than have time to go through their work and modify where necessary .

Davis and Rinvolucry (2002) define dictation as decoding sounds in aural input and recording them in writing, which motivate the unconscious thinking and learning of the target language, in other words dictation contribute in the correction of spelling and grammar mistakes of learners and also allow teachers to test their progress in more than one aspect at a time ,Such activity enhance learners spelling and writing abilities learning and how to utilize them correctly and appropriately .

Furthermore, it would be better if the dictation delivered at the beginning of the session and avoiding long passages as much as possible so that learners do not get frustrated, and most importantly focusing on creating a communicative environment rather than producing a perfect dictation activity.

Another important portion of this technique is teachers and learners attitudes toward it whether to employ in the classroom or not.

1.3.1 Types of Dictation

There are different types of dictation that can be used in the classroom, according to Oller (1979) there are five types of dictation procedure they are stated as follow:

1.3.2 Standard Dictation

Standard dictation is maybe the well known , learners are examined to write verbal sequences of material as spoken by an examiner or played back from a recording, the material or the passage being dictated should be dictated at a normal speed, and it is also long enough to test learners' short memory.

1.3.3 Partial Dictation

It is known as cloze or spot dictation , it is claimed to be a good test of listening ,Lado and Oller(as cited in Thrasher,2000) most of the dictated passage is partial where learners are required to listen and write the deleted words or phrases, it is nearly like a test of filling in the gapes.

1.3.4 Dicto-comp or Dicto-gloss

It was first introduced by Wajnryb (1990), those types are quite the same in the procedure since both of them require the use of large unite of language more than just words and phrases, the main difference between standard dictation and dicto-gloss is that in the former learners memorize the words, phrases exactly, but in dicto-gloss memorize only the main idea of the dictated passage and write it in their own style it is "an output-oriented focus-on-form type of instruction" (QIN 2008,P.61), it is considered a multy skill activity where listening, writing and speaking are produced

1.3.5 Dictation with Competing Noise

This type of dictation is actually challenging and difficult because the passage is produced with noise during the procedure ,this dictation promote communication context in the classroom.

1.3.6 Pair Dictation

This kind of dictation require the collaboration between learners to join two unfinished passages into one unit, each learner has half of the work and they must not

look at each other's work until the end of the activity, which demand deep concentration, and it effectively contributes in the improvement of listening, writing, and reading skills.

1.4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Dictation

1.4.1 Advantages

Several scholars discussed the benefits of dictation use Oller (1979) think that dictation is successful because it is a language processing task which reflect what people do when they employ language for real, Stansfield also mentioned that many studies were done about dictation in (1970) and they were all positives or "invariably favorable".

- Dictation can help in the improvement of the four skills.
- Engage learners in problem solving, and mistakes correcting which lead to oral communication.
- Involve learners in the tasks, though the class size or the skill area.
- Enhance the short term-memory which mean learners practice more significant phrases and sentences before noting them down.
- Valuable practice of note taking.
- Foster unconscious thinking of the target language.
- Spelling and grammar mistakes are corrected.
- Provide access to all kinds of texts.
- Dictation can be practiced with different levels.
- Correction of dictation can be done by learners.
- Learners will be motivated and active during and after the correction.
- Dictation is psychologically powerful and challenging.

1.4.2 Disadvantages of Dictation

Dictation also have disadvantages since some researchers criticize this technique, Mohamed Rhalmi (2009) mentioned some disadvantages:

- Learners might get bored easily if it is not done appropriately or misused.
- Dictation is a time consuming activity.
- Dictation is more teacher centered activity.
- It might effects terrified and unsafe learners.
- Focuses more on aural skills.
- Dictation can be administered by inexperienced teachers.

1.5 Delivery of Dictation

Scott Alkire (2002) mentioned “the perfect time to deliver dictation is at the beginning of the class ,the reasons are to focus the learners on English right away calm them and ensure punctuality” which means that to attract learners attention and gain more time it should be done firstly, he also added that learners should be familiar with chosen passage ,it is better selected by the teacher from the class textbook (e.g short story essay..) he dictates it first and learners should only listen then the second reading with slow pace ,and providing punctuation and repetition, then the third reading with normal speed where learners check their work and make last changes.

1.6 Selecting a Dictation

Alkire (2002) mentioned also “the ideal dictation comes from a contemporary source of clear standard English” which means that the passage chosen should be based on a modern understandable English, and most importantly the learners’ level, beginner’s dictations should be elementary statements whereas, simple paragraphs applied with intermediate level and at the advanced level the teacher should dictates unfamiliar passages, in addition to the subject matter of the passage is selected by the teacher.

1.7 Possible Problems during Dictation

1.7.1 Boredom: both learners and teachers during dictation may have some sort of hatred toward this activity mainly because of The length of the passage, so it is better if new and fun ways being created to deliver it to motivate the learners, and most importantly, they should consider dictation a learning experience rather than a testing activity .

1.7.2 Difficulty: in every classroom there are mixed-ability learners this is the second problem, is that some learners consider dictation as a complex technique, to solve this it is better for teachers to check their level by giving more simplified dictation for weak learners (e.g filling in the gaps activities) rather than long empty sheets of papers .

1.7.3 Accuracy When Checking : usually learners do not find difficulty in noticing other’s mistakes and errors rather than their own errors, so to improve learners observation abilities, it is necessary that the teacher maximize the time between completing the dictation and checking the passage against a right version since learners are better in finding errors , and this would a good training for them .

1.8 The Relationship between Dictation and Writing :

Writing is more than copying down on paper what already exist in the brain, it is more than grammar or spelling activity, it is like a mirror which reflect human being thinking , Writing is a primary step toward foreign language learning ,however it is considered a complex activity in which different strategies , techniques and instructions are offered to be applied to facilitate the skill and language learning many learners agree that writing is the pathway to FL learning.

Brown (2001) When it thought about the relationship between writing and dictation we go back to imitative or writing down ,and controlled writing ,where one of the tasks of this kind of writing is dictation, in this kind of activity a paragraph is read at normal speed usually two or three times, another form of controlled writing is a Dicto-comp here the teacher asks learners to rewrite their creative version of the original paragraph, Many scholars consider dictation as language activity with integrative impact on teaching and learning English in second language situations especially that it could be appropriate for practicing different skills, i.e when the teacher gives dictation to his learners many skills are implicated.

1.9 Dictation and Language Skills

The value of dictation as an integrative activity involves all the language skills. Larsen – Freeman (1991) agrees that dictation could provide a means of practicing general capacity (both productive and expressive skills) as it encourages learners to attend to forms semantic and pragmatic factors.

Furthermore, Mason (2012) describes dictation as multisensory method which links all the processes of communication. For instance, dictation integrates with:

- Listening skills when a passage is dictated for learners

Speaking skills when the dictated passage is used for discussion activities

- Reading skills which could be used as a follow-up activities for learners to read a dictated passage and Practice Pronunciation or interpretation skills
- Writing Skills when learners write down a dictated material as a means of practicing a certain structure.

In the same vein, NTI - TESSA (2008:8) emphasized that dictation is a technique that can effectively be used for teaching reading, writing, listening and pronunciation skills. In particular, Baxter and Warranton (1986) point out that dictation involves retrieving assembling and selecting an orthographic representation. This specifically means that the teaching of dictation lessons could play an important role in leading to a better conclusion on learners' level of writing proficiency.

Krashen (1982) in his language acquisition model states that comprehensible “input” becomes “intake” when learners are provided with adequate meaningful L2

ideas. By suggestion, this means that dictation passages may qualify as good comprehensible input and therefore enhances the subconscious acquisition of structures. Hence, it could help the learners to develop the ability of accurate and logical writing in learning English as a second language.

In analysis of the above, this study observes that there is inadequate explanation of integrating dictation with the four language skills from the 13 perspectives of communicative language teaching. This could possibly be a reason behind the decline or ignore of teaching dictation in the communicative period. However, it is confirmed previously that dictation has been experiencing a sort of revival as evidenced by recent appearance of different works which involve modern communicative procedures. Consequently, this study supports the vision of Baxter and Warinton that dictation empowers cognitive process and writing ability. Hence, Krashen's language acquisition model could have implication in this study because dictation text can be used as appropriate input for learning language structures.

1.9.1 Impact of Dictation on Spelling

Dictation lesson could be used during teaching and learning process which challenges the cognitive and aural abilities of learners to spell the dictated words correctly.

Word spelling during dictation means ability to form an orthographic symbol of the dictated words accurately on paper. Mason (2012) and Bowen (2000) state that dictation is a natural way to teach proper spelling especially when learning a new language because it is used to train learners abilities to listen and understand spelling of words. However. Numerous scholars believe that during dictation activities the spelling difficulties affect writing execution, Mason (2012) argued that dictation can be complicated in teaching grammatical items because the learners can modify the structures of the dictated text, Hatfield and Petterson (1983) and Shallice (1981) emphasize that the main impairment during writing responses in a dictation class is that the orthographies and phonological connection are characterized by extremely incompatible relationships.

However, Barry (1994) observes the following difficulties in relation to spelling process during dictation exercises:

- a) learners make considerable modifications
- b) learners have problems with discipline specific terms
- c) learners become uninterested with mere spelling of words compared to doing several activities with them.

In analysis of the above, Harmer (2004) pointed out that to improve infrequency of error making in spelling at the end of the dictation lesson, learners should study the wrong word until they are sure of it. This process could allow the learners to

maintain the mental picture of the words and help them memorize how to form proper spelling of words. However, Richard's (1992) process would have been better because it includes text comparison in pair work. The viewpoint of the author has a link with this study which is teaching dictation to facilitate spelling of words because it involves communicative language teaching principles such as cooperative work by the learner.

Moreover, the study conducted by Delattre and Barry (2006) found that during a dictation task, participants spell more regular words than irregular ones. They consider the irregular word as spellings containing low probability such as the homophones, clusters, double consonants, inflection, etc. Ellis (1982) suggests two models of processing spelling production as follows:

- a. Lexical route that retrieves spellings of known words from a memory store of word-specific knowledge.
- b. Non lexical (assembled) route which guarantees spellings of irregular and arbitrarily spelt words as in /yot/ spelled as yacht.

Nevertheless, Hotopf (1980) observes that the dual route models interact at some level in normal spellers. Unlike the lexical route of spelling, the assembled route spelling have a great influence on poor spelling of words. For instance, Ellis (1979) pointed out that assembled spelling plays some role in writing as in free composition. Evidence from empirical studies shows possibility of teaching dictation to improve written word spelling. Such studies are Barry and Seymour (1988)

Campbell (1983) and Perry (2003) who offer different alternatives of spelling on different occasions; Olson (1994) and Houghton and Zorzi (2003) a model of spelling which report for the ability both to recover lexically specific spelling and to gather reasonable spellings; Damain (2003), Meyer (1990) and Teruel (1999) who found effective spelling performance by using picture-word interference which influenced the cognitive processes of the participants; and Fayol (2001) and Bonin and Meot (2002) that observe the delay between a dictated item and the written production. As noted above, many scholars classified different spelling errors among the aspect of language teaching which could be minimized through dictation. These errors include:

- a. Omission of inflectional suffixes such as -ed, -s, -est, etc. which can carry grammatical information and are often missed in learners' written work. For example, omission of -ed past tense marker as in: "happend" instead of "happened" "has fail" instead of "has failed" (JERD 2010, Eyisi 2004, Elsie 1998).
- b. i. Reducing double consonant to single as in: "inteligent" instead of "intelligent"
- ii. Wrong homophones as in: "loan" instead of "lone" "roads" instead of "rodes"

iii. Omission of silent letters as in: “Wenesday” instead of “Wednesday” “Nemonia” instead “Pneumonia”.

In brief, dictation activities could be conducted to enhance the ability of learners to write words properly. For example, word spelling could be practiced through “key word” dictation or studied dictation which is an adaptation of a procedure suggested by Mason (2012). The technique enables learners to learn spelling of words through key word dictation by performing several exercises in a group.

The present study believes that employing dictation could offer better performance in the spelling of words. For example, a passage could be dictated with the target words underlined (such as -ed, -s, -er, endings) in which learners work in group to study and use the words in sentences. At the end of the dictation, the teacher assesses and corrects their exercises. After the correction learners offer their scripts and the lesson concludes with guiding learners to practice the spelling of the studied words again so that they can write them correctly.

Those activities could enhance internalizing the grammatical items because the learners have got adequate interaction with the words. In view of that, Delattre and Barry (2006) propose that learners should listen to a dictated target word and write it down three times, but spelling errors on the first written production should be given much attention as they might affect auditory recognition of the target words.

However, Davis and Rinvoluceri (1988) argue that the spelling procedure failed to mention how dictation teaches learners to stop imposing sound system of their native language upon the system of L2. They propose item-dictation technique which aims at increasing the learners’ ability to recognize sound and their contrast when attempting to transfer information into written form.

The above findings by Mason (2012) and Delattre and Barry (2006) are important to this study because they make provisions for ESL learners who have difficulties with spelling of words.

1.9.2 Impact of Dictation on Punctuation

in the past, punctuation appeared much later than the alphabetic writing system, which was regarded as solely as a record of spoken words, Parkes (1993) . It was not until the sixth century that punctuation was brought in the writing of religious documents to record the pauses and intonation in speech. The modern system of punctuation was started in the Renaissance period. Its objective is not exclusively to transcribe pauses and intonation; it also serves to disambiguate and clarify meaning.

The use of punctuation has evolved remarkably in the last century. The modern use of punctuation is documented in standard style manuals, such as “The Chicago Manual of Style”(1993), or dedicated handbooks, Shaw and Collins (1993). However, the style of punctuation differs from author to author, and from field to field.

Punctuation is also used to modify the meanings of the text. Therefore, absolute accuracy of punctuation regarding a given unpunctuated text is not a totally fair measure.

Punctuation is an indispensable element of modern writing. In current speech recognition systems, in order to have punctuation marks appear in the transcribed text, each one must be pronounced by name, such as PERIOD, COMMA, QUESTION MARK, etc. However, in natural speech, punctuation marks are usually not pronounced. To transcribe natural speech into an orthographically adequate text, a method of automatically inserting punctuation marks in the transcribed text is essential. The practical need for automatic punctuation is evidenced in the following situations:

1. When using dictation systems for spontaneous speech recognition, or free-hand composing, punctuation is often not originally in the thought. It is more natural to dictate the idea first, then add punctuation later. In this case, if the dictation system can punctuate automatically, even with limited accuracy, the result is useful in the subsequent editing stage.
2. Automatic transcription of radio and television broadcast, or public speech. Pronounced punctuation is not allowed in such types of speech. Automatic punctuation, even if it is not very accurate, will greatly improve the readability of the transcription.
3. In natural language systems, such as information retrieval, automatic banking, or travel service systems, the phrasing or punctuating of the transcriptions of the input speech will facilitate natural language understanding.

Automatic Punctuation Using The Language Model: Several authors have attempted automatic linguistic segmentation or automatic punctuation by post-processing the unpunctuated recognized text. Stolcke and Shriberg (1997) report results of experiments on linguistic segmentation of conversational speech using N-gram language models. Good progress has been reported in the prediction of segmentation boundaries from the dictated text. Beeferman, Berger, and Lafferty (1998) developed an annotation system to insert intra-sentence punctuation from a unpunctuated text; in their study, the sentence boundaries were predetermined.

Only one type of punctuation mark is predicted, the comma. Using a trigram language model and a straightforward application of the Viterbi algorithm, the results are promising. Although the lexical structure of the unpunctuated text provides certain information about punctuation, in most cases it is not sufficient. For example, the following unpunctuated sentence

Woman without her man is nothing, can have different meanings according to punctuation:

Woman! Without her, man is nothing.

Or : Woman without her man, is nothing.

In the above case, the unpunctuated sentence does not provide a clue to punctuation. However, the punctuated sentences aloud, the linguistic segmentation becomes unambiguous, because prosody (pauses and intonation) offers the clue. This example obviously indicates that acoustic information is essential for the automatic prediction of punctuation, although acoustic segmentations do not correspond one-to-one with linguistic segmentations, the combination of acoustic and lexical information permits an adequate automatic prediction of punctuation marks.

1.10 Writing as a Complex Skill

Writing is an essential skill for educational success, but also one of the most complex skills to be mastered, in academic and developmental areas children with learning difficulties encounter major hindrances which are often the result of intellectual disability, physical, emotional and sensory lack of educational chances insufficient environmental practices and sickness or interruption to schooling , there are other factors which contributed in learning difficulties such as psychological and environmental problems such as poverty in educational organization, and psycho social stress pressure in school and family context.

Prevalence of learning disabilities

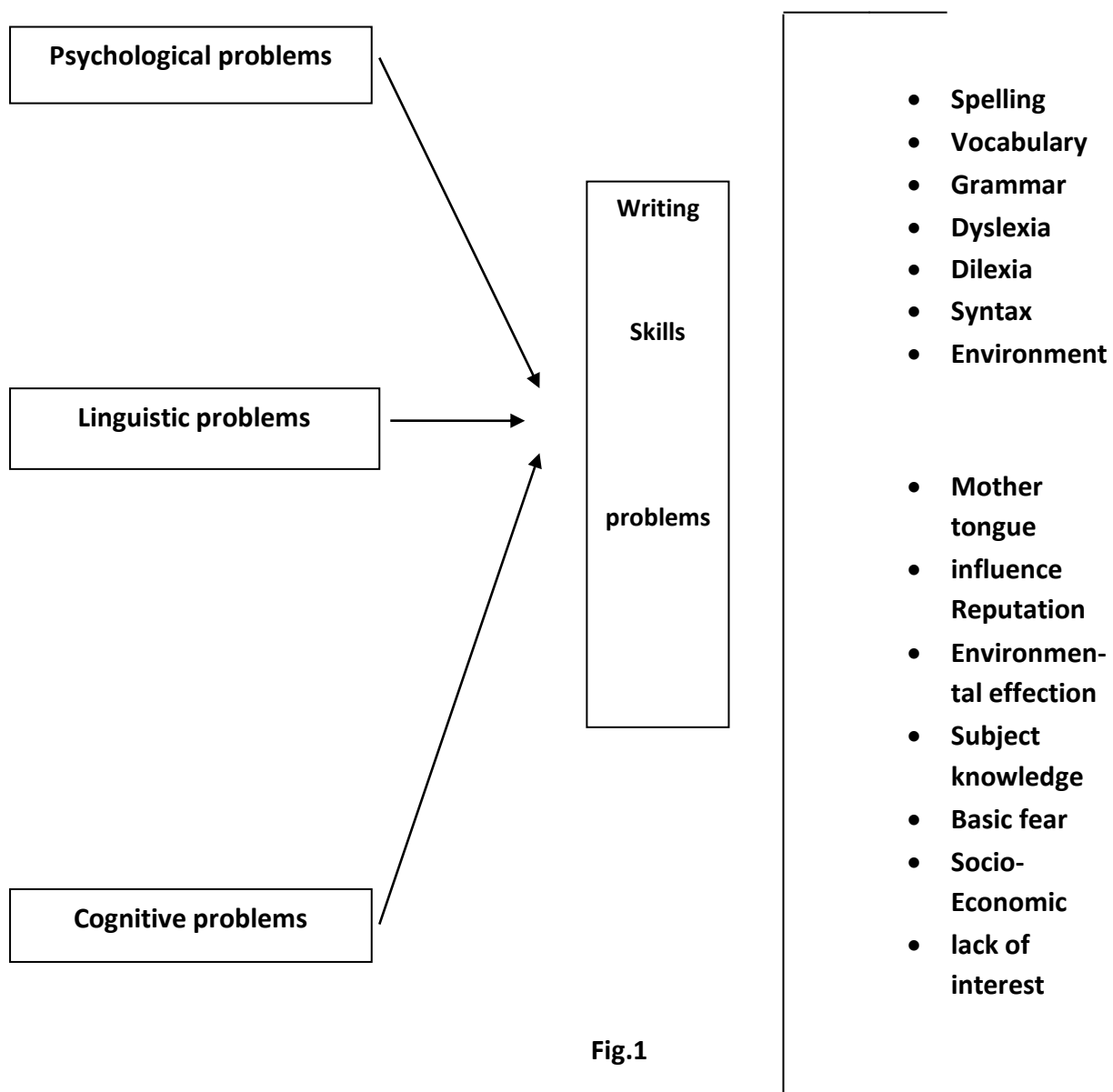


Fig.1

Note . http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/51437/7/07_chapter3.pdf
(p.65)

1.10.1 Learning Disabilities

Is a general term which refers to neurologically-based processing problems these problems can interfere in learning basic skills such as reading and writing, they can interfere even in higher stage skills, i.e attention, reasoning, short time memory, organization and time planning, it is very essential to know that these disabilities may impact individual's life academic and even relationships in family, friends and

workplace, there are specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia , Dysgraphia which is related to writing disability .

1.10.2 Writing Disability

1.10.2.1 Dysgraphia

is a specific learning disability which effects learners' handwriting ability and motor skills including poor spelling incomprehensible, disordered written ideas mechanical errors inconsistent spacing, omission of letters or words ,due to the complex nature of writing skills ,children with learning difficulties could experience major hindrances in academic and developmental areas.

Emotional Problems

Individual's thought or behavior disorganization which may show perplexity toward the environment, it is also related to self feeling disturbed and out of control.

Verbal Aggression

Individuals who are seemed as noisy and aggressive .

Physical Aggression

Individuals who provoke others physically and bully them typically, hitting and pushing their classmates.

Non- Compliance

Individuals who show no respect to authority and seem to be uncooperatively and badly behaving.

Hyperactivity

Individuals who seems as uncontrolled, irritated reckless and easily thrilled.

Distractibility

Lack of concentration and attention, and hardly listen to the others ,those are the characteristics of individuals of this category.

Anxiety

Individuals who face difficulty in being calm, relaxed, and being nervous with shaky habits and face problems with self-esteem .

Somatic concerns

Individuals to stay away from tasks and activities in class, they might pretend to be injured, hurt, ill and pain and over request to see doctors, and even act dramatically.

Withdrawal

Those who appear to be isolated from the society, and they try to escape from any gathering, and avoid crowded places and they seem quiet and calm and detached from others.

Depression

This is the most sensitive category because individuals seem unhappy, uninterested and dissatisfied with different life activities, hopeless, gloomy.

Low self-esteem

It is a badly feeling about oneself characterized by lack of confidence, feeling unlovable and incompetent.

1.11 Conclusion

To conclude, in this chapter a brief background of the study is presented and some definitions of major literary skills, by presenting one of the main classroom activities despite the fact that dictation is an old-fashioned teacher-centered technique, it is practical and productive, it develops aural comprehension, and enforces listening-writing skills, it guides the learners to differentiate between the sounds, and it enables the learners to fix their spelling and punctuation.

Chapter Two

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is designed to investigate the findings obtained through analyzing the impact of dictation on improving learners writing skills.

The aim of the study is to confirm that if dictation is employed in secondary school, learners' writing skills will be improved.

The main tools for the investigation and data gathering is through a classroom observation, and dictation activity done with learners, in addition to the questionnaire designed for them, and also an interview addressed to the teachers, we have selected second year secondary school learners of literature and foreign languages branch, to look for more data about the research problem.

2.2 Research Methodology

In the designed study, a descriptive method is used in gathering and analysis of data, classroom observation with second year secondary school learners of literature and foreign languages branch and a dictation activity that was done to obtain more realistic and reliable information, in addition to a designed questionnaire to learners, and an interview addressed to the teachers.

2.3 Population and Sampling

This study deals with learners of second year secondary school learners of literature and foreign languages branch at EL-Bayadh, Brizinna, there are 15 learners since our aim is to observe why dictation is not employed in secondary school, actually the reason behind selecting the second year learners population, is to have a clear thought about the difference between those have improved their writing skills and those who do not by applying the dictation strategy at the end of the observation.

2.4 Data gathering tools

The research is based on four data gathering tools, the classroom observation to collect more solid proof during our attendance in actual teaching and learning context, in all the sessions we have attended ,we have reported, witnessed and observed objectively, without direct interfering in lectures.

Moreover, a dictation activity, and a designed questionnaire to learners, in addition to the interview addressed to teachers.

2.4.1. Classroom Observation :

Classroom observation was the first data gathering tool with second year secondary school literature and foreign languages branch as a sample of population.

2.4.2 Description of the Observation Results:

The observation was carried out during the second term from February till arch (2018, 2019) with second year literature and foreign languages branch learners at EL-Bayadh ,Brizinna secondary school, we have attended 12 sessions, they had lessons on Sunday from 8:00 A.M to 10:00 A.M and on Wednesday also from 8:00 A.M to 10:00A.M, and Thursday from 9:00A.M to 10:00A.M, during the observation we did not involve ourselves and acted passively , learners rate of presence was 95% at the first session with one absence only, than 100% at the other sessions, to be more specific, the whole population of this branch is 15 learners of 11 girls and 5 boys with high presence.

for the observation a checklist was designed to observe easily the classroom during the attendance of the lessons, we sat at the back of the classroom to be able to see both teachers and learners, and to make sure that they act naturally and the physical setting including the class size, the lightning, white board or black one remarked that the classroom was very clean and the learners' tables, the teachers' desk everything is well organized, there were three rows, each row with two to three tables taking into consideration the small size of the classroom.

At the beginning of the sessions, it was noticed that learners were seating in an organized way, and this due to the sense of organization of the teacher, in addition to her good relationship with the learners, while observing the teaching and learning comprehension was enriched in a period of month and total of 12 sessions which were conducted all in the classroom.

The main objective of the observation is to examine our major concern is how dictation as writing strategy improves secondary school learners' writing skills, and especially how teaching and learning process is carried out, since learners are common with English from middle school, how lessons are presented, and teachers' feedback, learners' reaction and motivation.

2.4.3. Discussion of the observation results

Table 2.1: classroom observation checklist

session	Preceance Rate	Teacher		Learner		learner motivation		Teacher feedback	
		With dictation	without dictation	Write	Do not write	Ask question	Do not ask question	Answer question positively	Answer question negatively
1	95%		-	+					
2	95%		-	+		+		+	
3	100%		-	+					
4	100%		-	+		+		+	
5	100%		-	+		+		+	
6	95%		-	+					
7	95%		-	+					
8	95%		-	+		+		+	
9	95%		-	+		+		+	
10	95%		-	+		+		+	
11	95%		-	+		+		+	
12	95%		-	+					

As it was remarked in the table, the majority of the learners were present in all the 12 sessions, concerning their motivation they did not ask any question, it was a listening and speaking sequence, pair work about a dialogue, while the learners were writing the dialogue in their copybooks, the teacher was moving here and there and observing them at the same time.

the teacher asked one of the learners to write on the board by dictating her, but she demanded for spelling from the teacher and the learners in this session were motivated by asking questions for comprehension of the word “Lament” and the

teacher explained indeed, and gave positive feedback, at the end she gave them a homework about writing a Lament of their choice.

In the third session, it was a continuation of the last session from the table we noticed there was no participation concerning teacher- learner interaction, the teacher asked one of the learners to write her own Lament on the board .

Moreover, from the table it was noticed that there is a positive interaction between the teacher and learners in the fourth session, since the teacher asked them to open their books and observe the two pictures and read the text silently, in addition to answering the questions of the text , it seemed that the learners asked for clarification of some words so the teacher was obliged to use the mother language, i.e the word “whether” they misunderstood it with “the climate” but the teacher explained and gave positive feedback.

In the revision session, the teacher prepared three activities and one about giving opposites to words, and what attracted our attention was the spelling mistakes, that is to say, the majority of learners used French spelling most in pronouncing the prefixes i.e (UN, IN) , but the teacher corrected their mistakes , it was noted that learners look for any chance to talk to each other, but the teacher did not allow them and asked them consequently to be quiet and was controlling them.

the observation was characterized by the attendance of majority of the learners as it was remarked from the table, the last sessions were reading and writing sessions, the teacher asked the learners to open their books and read the text, the teacher reported that they have a serious problem with pronunciation of sounds especially “p” sound because of the German language interference, then the teacher asked one of the learners to write the paragraph on the board, this learner forgot to leave indentation at the beginning, the teacher remarked and corrected her, the other learners wrote on their copybooks it was noticed that some learners look for any chance to talk and the learners were not motivated and did not ask any question.

The teacher started his session with distribution of the assessment sheets, which was an assessment that the learners do at the end of each unit to test their knowledge and understanding of what they have done during the unit and asked them to read silently and answer the questions, the learners answered the questions, some of them were noisy, then the teacher began to observe their works and corrects them, after that she asked them to exchange their answer sheets and corrects each other’s works, it was noticed from the table that some learners seemed motivated by participating and interacting positively with the teacher by asking for the meaning of some words.

Another remark also in the correction was that some learners seemed to be confused with the pronunciation of final “ed” activity, in addition to her attempt to reach and involve everyone in the classroom.

After the assessment the teacher assigned an activity of adding the suitable prefixes or suffixes to root words.

However, as it was mentioned before they seemed to have the same problem of the transfer and the teacher kept correcting and asking them to avoid it.

Speaking about the lesson the teacher presented the new unit of "Disaster and Safety" which talk about the natural disasters especially in Algeria such as "Boumerdes" and "Bab El Oued" and the importance of solidarity and social awareness among peoples and the new sequence "No Man is An Island".

While the teacher was asking them about some natural disasters and about the meaning of "No Man is An Island", it was remarked that there was a lack of vocabulary background, there was a positive interaction between the teacher and the learners.

Furthermore, what was noticed is that the majority of participants were girls and most of them have a good handwriting, then the teacher asked them to open their books and observe the pictures and the symbols, after that she asked them to read the text and answer the questions another remark was the spelling mistakes of some learners, and pronunciation difficulty such as "CH" → "K", the session finished with no dictation, later then, in the last session the teacher presented the direct and indirect speech by explaining the sentences written on the board, however, the learners showed boredom, and seemed lost since it was the last session before the holiday .

As it was remarked during all the sessions and as it was clarified in the table the learners did not dealt with dictation, which was our major concern in the classroom observation.

2.4.4. Analysis of the Observation Results

During the observation a table was used in the process of remarking the teaching and learning details in the classroom, it was observed that:

- No dictation, which was the most important aspect of the observation.
- Some of the learners were motivated and participating, but only girls showed motivation and participation
- The teacher gave positive feedback to those who ask questions and tried as much to involve the whole learners.
- The most common mistakes among the learners were spelling ones and the use of the language transfer.
- Some learners seemed to be confused in the pronunciation of the final "ed".
- Writing and reading were the most used skills in the classroom.
- Some learners gave positive interaction with the teacher positive feedback.
- The majority of learners who used the board have good handwriting.

2.5.1 Dictation Activity

2.5.2 Description of the Dictation Activity

After the attendance with second year secondary school literature and foreign languages branch learners at El-Bayadh, Brizinna, an experimental research was adopted in this study, 12 learners were samples and assigned with a dictation activity, which included three attempts, each attempt consisted a passage from the reading rubrics of the textbook they read, they were required to read them, each reading acquired about 10 minutes and after each reading they carry out a dictation activity, besides a collective correction to each attempt.

At the beginning, the learners were introduced to what they were acquired to do, they were asked to open their books and do the first reading. after 10 minutes of reading they closed their books to start the dictation activity.

The traditional dictation was applied with them which dictating them three times. at the first reading they had to listen only, then they start writing at the second reading, after that, the final reading they verified their writing, later they same with the other attempts.

2.5.3. Discussion and Analysis of the Dictation Activity

Research questions: what is the impact of dictation on the following parameters:

1. What is the impact of dictation on the spelling component of written English of 2nd year secondary school literature and foreign languages branch learners?
2. What is the impact of dictation on the punctuation component of written English of 2ND year secondary school literature and foreign languages branch learners?

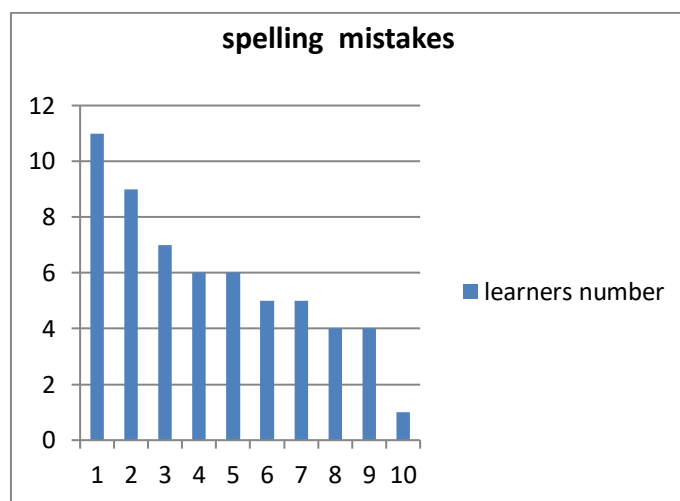
Attempt 1:

Table 2.2: Learners' Spelling Mistakes Checklist:

Spelling mistakes	Correction	Number	Percentage
1 Naber	Neighbours	11	91.6%
2 translaitor	Translator	9	75%
3 reblied	Replied	7	58.3%
4 Clamities	Calamities	6	50%
5 Carring	Carrying	6	50%
6 weil	While	5	41.6%
7 Ther	Their	5	41.6%
8 ho	Who	4	33.3%
9 for instens	For instance	4	33.3%
10 Cofring	Covering	1	8.3%

The previous table shows the results of the spelling mistakes of the first attempt which contains four columns, the first represents spelling mistakes, the second column represents the correction and the third one is learners number and the fourth columns is the percentage, the highest percentage of mistakes is 91.6% of learners have problem with the silent letters as in the first example , in addition to the “p” and “b” pronunciation problem with 58.3%, whereas the lowest percentage is 8.3% .

Figure 2.1



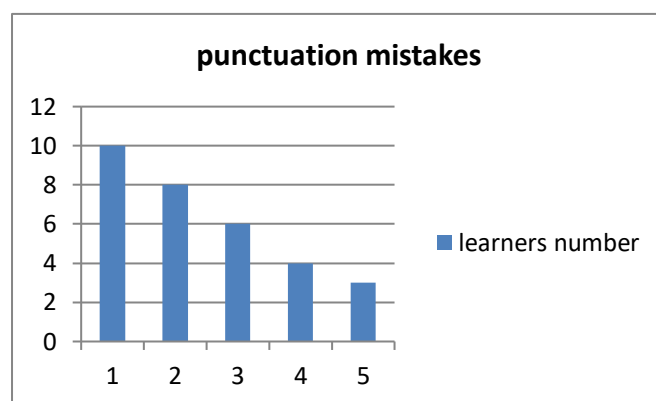
This figure demonstrates the results of learners’ spelling mistakes in the first attempt, it is clear that the majority of learners 9 learners in the first mistake , 7 learners in the second mistake, then the forth and the fifth examples with 6 learners, the sixth and the seventh mistakes with same number of learners and also the eighth and ninth mistakes with the same learners number, only one learner for the last mistake.

Attempt 1:

Table 2.3 : Learners’ Punctuation Mistakes checklist

Punctuation mistakes	Correction	number	Percentage
1 Quotation mark: kouskous	“kouskous”	10	83.3%
2 indentation: Great calamities can show the best.....	Great calamities can show the best.....	8	66.6%
3 subordination comma: for instance	For instance,.....	6	50%
4 question mark: where are they going all together like that	Where are they going all together like that?	4	33.3%
5 full stop:... he repliedhe replied.	3	25%

Figure 2.2



This figure illustrates the results of the punctuation mistakes of learners in the first attempt concerning the dictation activity, it is clear that the majority of learners 10 learners in the first mistake, then the second mistake with 8 learners, the third mistake with 6 learners, after that the fourth mistake with 4 learners and only 3 learners with the final mistake.

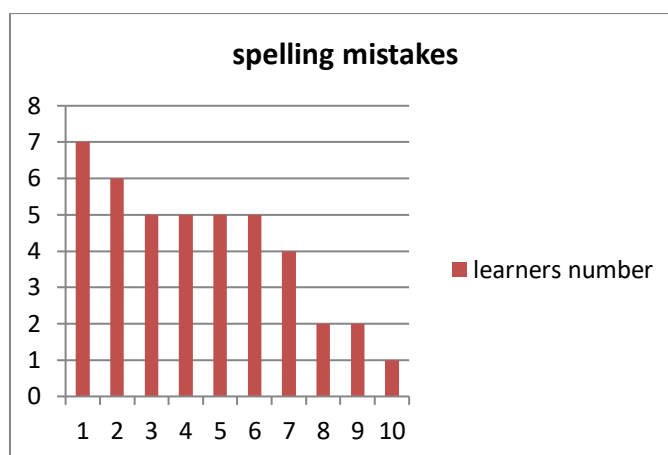
Attempt 2:

Table 2.4: Learners’ Spelling mistakes checklist:

Spelling mistakes	Correction	Number	Percentage
1 Pasis	Busy Street	7	58.3%
2 cot	Coat	6	50%
3 extchange	Exchange	5	41.3%
4 rasing	Raising	5	41.3%
5 stecker	Sticker	5	41.3%
6 valunters	Volunteers	5	41.3%
7 labols	Lapels	4	33.3%
8 Orgoneize	Organize	2	16.6%
9 Stund	Stand	2	16.6%
10 Clakting ten	Collecting-tin	1	8.3%

This table reveals the results of learners’ spelling mistakes, it is clear that the majority of learners have problem with the “p” and “b” pronunciation with the highest percentage of mistakes of 58.3%, whereas the lowest percentage of mistakes is 8.3%.

Figure 2.3



This figure illustrates the learners’ spelling mistakes in the second attempt, the first mistake with 7 learners, second mistake with 6 learners, and from the third to the sixth mistake with 5 learners, in addition to 4 learners in the seventh mistake and only small amount of learners in the last mistakes.

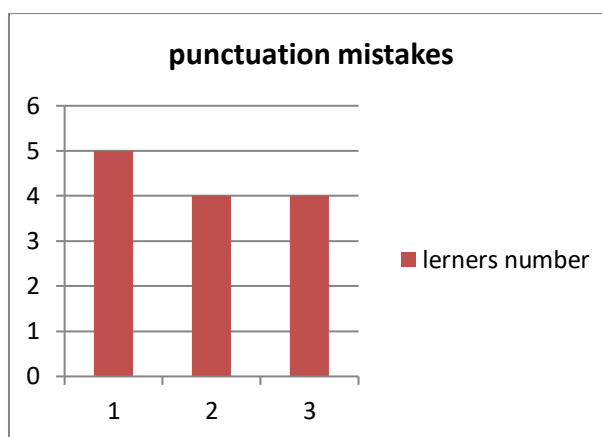
Attempt 2:

Table 2.5: Learners’ Punctuation Mistakes checklist:

Punctuation mistakes	Correction	number	Percentage
1 Indentation : The traditional method of raising money is.....	The traditional method of raising money is....	5	41.6%
2 Capitalization: the traditional method.....	The traditional method	4	33.3%
3 Full stop: on coat lapelson coat lapels.	4	33.3%

This table shows the results of the punctuation mistakes of the second attempt which contains four columns, the first represents punctuation mistakes, the second columns represents the correction, the third one is learners’ number and the fourth columns represents the percentage , the highest percentage of learners have problem with indentation with 41.6%,whereas the lowest percentage of mistakes is 33.3%.

Figure 2.4



This figure demonstrates the results of the punctuation mistakes of learners in the second attempt. The first mistake with 5 learners and the others mistakes with 4 learners.

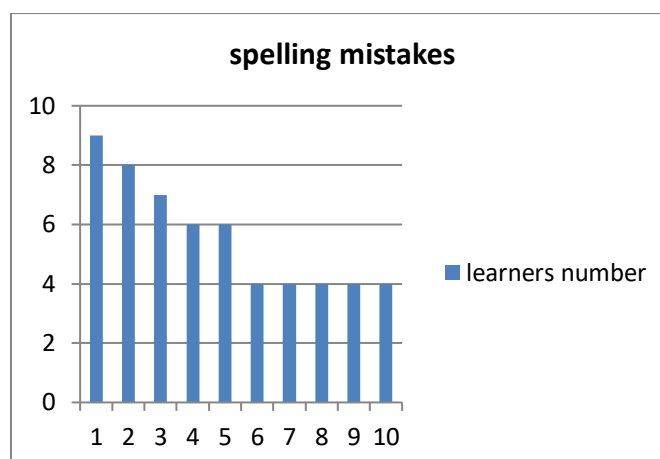
Attempt 3:

Table 2.6 : Lernalers’ Spelling Mistakes Checklist:

Spelling mistakes	Correction	Number	Percentage
1 flads	Floods	9	75%
2 whidespred	Widespread	8	66%
3 partiklar	Particular	7	58.3%
4 contris	Countries	6	50%
5 descriminit	Discriminate	6	50%
6 namber	Number	4	33.3%
7 safring	Suffering	4	33.3%
8 regons	Regions	4	33.3%
9 alon	Alone	4	33.3%
10 confind	Confined	4	33.3%

This table illustrates the results of the spelling mistakes of the third attempt , it is clear that the highest percentage of mistakes 75% of learners have problem in distinguishing French from English vowels, then the silent letters mistake, after that the “c” and “k” pronunciation mistake ,whereas the lowest percentage of mistakes is 33.3%.

Figure 2.5



This figure reveals the results of the spelling mistakes of learners in the third attempt, it is clear that the first mistake with 9 learners, the second with 8 learners, after that with 7 learners , the fourth and fifth mistakes with 6 learners and the last five mistakes with 4 learners.

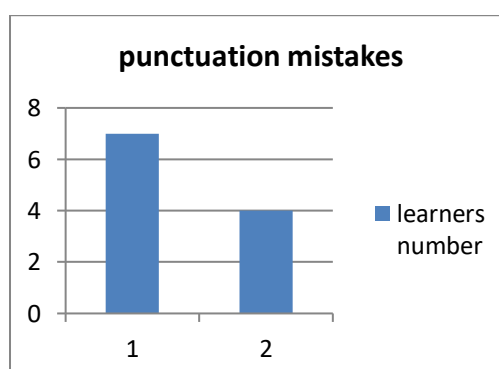
Attempt 3:

Table 2.7:Learners’ Punctuation Mistakes checklist:

Punctuation mistakes	Correction	Number	Percentage
1 Indentation : During the past decade.....	During the past decade.....	7	58.3%
2 Full stop :Italy, Switzerland ,AlgeriaItaly, Switzerland, Algeria.	4	33.3%

This table shows the results of the punctuation mistakes of the third attempt which contains four columns, it is clear that the highest percentage of mistakes 58.3% of learners have problem with indentation, whereas the lowest percentage of mistakes is 33.3%.

Figure 2.6



This figure shows the results of the punctuation mistakes of learners in the third attempt, From the graph it is clear that the majority of learners have problem with indentation with 7 learners then the full stop with 4 learners.

This dictation activity carried out with the learners of second year secondary school literature and foreign languages branch was divided into three attempts each attempt included 10 spelling mistakes ,whereas punctuation mistakes differs from each attempt to another , those were the major mistakes done by the learners, in addition to their correction.

Starting with the first attempt the majority of the learners had done spelling mistakes 11 learners mistook the term “neighbor” by omitting the silent letters “gh”, and other examples as “who” and “while” , and also the vowels problem with 9 learners, due to the transfer problem, in addition to the “p” and “b” pronunciation problem with 7 learners as the third example “replied”, then the forth and the fifth examples with 6 learners, the sixth and the seventh mistakes with 5 learners and the eighth and ninth mistakes with 4 learners, and only one learner for the last mistake.

Concerning the punctuation mistakes the majority of learners had problem with “memorization” with 10 learners as the first example “kouskous” then the “indentation” with 8 learners and the “coma” with 6 learners, after that the “question mark” with 4 learners, and only 3 learners with the “full stop”, although they were provided with “intonation and pauses” during the dictation process and no one has mistaken with capitalization.

In contrast, in the second attempt the red figures 2.3 and 2.4 show the results of the spelling and punctuation mistakes of learners, as it was noticed learners’ mistakes decreased compared to the first attempt, from the graph it was clear that the majority of learners have problem with the “p” and “b” pronunciation with 7 learners, due to the “transfer” problem again, since they study German as a foreign language, in addition to wrong homophones as in the second mistake with 6 learners, and from the third to the sixth mistake with 5 learners, in addition to 4 learners in the seventh mistake and only small amount of learners in the last mistakes.

Regarding the punctuation mistakes the number reduced also the “indentation” with 5 learners, “full stop” with 4 learners, but unlike the first attempt the “capitalization” mistake appeared here.

However, in the third attempt the learners failed to improve their performance in spelling and punctuation, the figure shows the results of the spelling and punctuation mistakes of learners from the figure it was obvious that the majority of learners have problem with distinguishing French from English vowels with 9 learners, then the silent letters mistake with 8 learners, after that the “c” and “k” pronunciation mistake with 7 learners, the fourth and fifth mistakes with 6 learners.

In addition, the last five mistakes shared the same mistake which was vowels problem “transfer” with 4 learners, concerning the punctuation mistakes the majority of learners seemed to have a problem in the “indentation” with 7 learners and the “full stop” with 4 learners.

As a result of the dictation activity, the 1ST hypothesis which stated that Even if teachers supplied dictation texts, secondary school learners writing skills would not improve

The 2ND hypothesis which stated that Secondary school learners would strengthen their productive competences, if intensive dictation sessions were planned and set up

2.5.4. Spelling Errors:

Based on the results of the given dictation, there were several spelling errors made by the learners, the majority of them still encounter difficulty when they had to give the correct spelling for words, errors in distinguishing /p/ and /b/ sounds, errors in distinguishing English from French vowels, errors in recognizing silent letters.

(A) Errors in recognizing silent letters 91.6%:

for example the items “neighbors” and “while”, instead of writing “neighbor” the majority wrote “naber” , it was concluded that learners did not know the spelling of the word they just prefer to write what they hear.

(B) Errors in distinguishing English from French vowels:

this error was done by many learners, for example instead of writing the items “floods” some of them wrote “ flads” 75%

(C) Errors in distinguishing /p/ from/b/ sounds 58.3%:

for example the item: “busy” , instead of writing “busy” some of them wrote “pusy” the majority of learners could not recognize the difference and this due to intra-lingual interference because of ignorance of rule restrictions, the errors occur because of lack of knowledge of correct English sound pattern.

Another error that was done by some learners in the dictation activity was that they did not finish their dictation by leaving a gap or skipping words and even sentences and this due to their lack of listening.

2.6 Causes behind spelling Errors:

To determine the dominant causes of the spelling errors in dictation activity of second year secondary school literature and foreign languages learners, a number of causes were discussed , transfer errors are those caused by other language interference French language interference and even German language , this what their teacher and the classroom observation confirmed, this error was done due to the interference of the “transfer” made by the learners because there was no contrast or difference between the languages, in addition to “Intra-lingual” interference errors due to the ignorance of rule restrictions, the error occur because of lack of knowledge of correct English sound pattern.

Based on the data collected, spelling and punctuation mistakes were the dominant ones, but the majority of the mistakes were in spelling made by the learners of second year secondary school literature and foreign languages branch, the highest percentage of mistakes was 91.6% and the lowest was 1%.

It was found that there were three main spelling errors, error in recognizing silent letters error in distinguishing “p” and “b” sounds, error in distinguishing French from English vowel “transfer” , the data can be described respectively as follow 91.6% caused by recognizing silent letters, 75% in distinguishing French from English vowels, 58.3% caused by distinguishing ”p” from “b” sound .

2.7. The participants

2.7.1.The Target Teachers

Two teachers of English in secondary school of Guneiber Mohammed, EL-Bayadh Brizinna were subject of this study one was a male and the other was a female , the female teacher was the one that I have attended with the classroom observation and the other was the responsible of the English language in the school they both have experience of more than five years.

2.7.2.The Target Learners

The target learners of this study were second year secondary school learners of literature and foreign languages branch for the sampling of this study 12 learners who have done the dictation activity were chosen to complete the questionnaire to see their opinions.

2.7.3.Learners’ Questionnaire

The questionnaire is paramount in any study because it can allow the collection of both quantitative and qualitative information and the use of open and closed formal questions (Patton, 2002). Hence , learners’ questionnaire was used to gather qualitative and quantitative data.

The second year secondary learners of literature and foreign languages branch were given a questionnaire to provide information about their opinions. It was divided into two sections:

The first section question 1 and 2 was to know their personal information Gender and Age.

The aim of question 3 and 4 learners were asked to know their level in English language and their attitudes towards English learning.

The second section question 1 and 2 and 3 was to know their main skills difficulties and the reason behind them.

In the same section question 4 and 5 and 6 learners were asked about the dictation activity and if it is useful and suggest solutions to improve their writing skills

2.8.Results of the Study

2.8.1. Learners' Questionnaire Results

Section one : personal information

Table 2.8 Learners' gender

	Male	Female
Learners' number	3	7
Percentage	30%	70%

The results of the first question, the learners were asked about their gender, it is clear that the majority of the learners 70% are females, and only 30% are males.

Table 2.9 Learners' Age

	18 years old	17 and 16 years old
Learners' number	8	2
Percentage	80%	20%

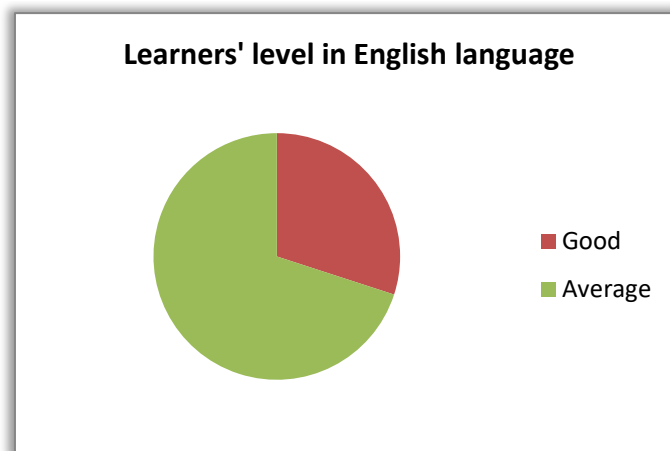
The results of the second question, the learners were asked about their age, it was clear that the majority of the learners 80% were 18 years old and only 20% of the learners were between 16 and 17.

Section two: Dictation Strategy and Learners' Writing Weaknesses

Table 2.10: Learners' Level in English Language

	Excellent	Good	Average	Weak
Learners' number	0	3	7	0
Percentage	0%	30%	70%	0%

Figure 2.7

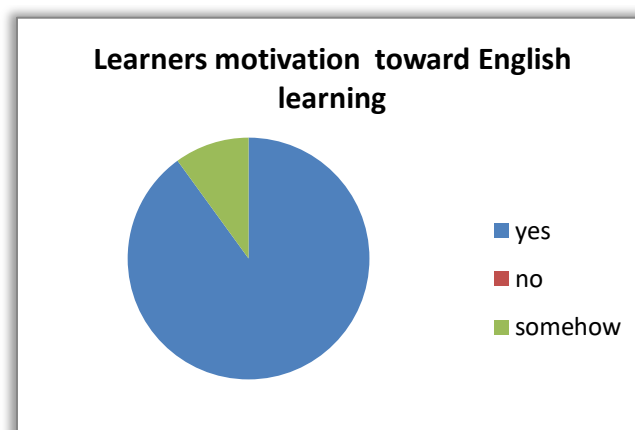


This figure illustrates the results of the third question, the learners were asked about their level in English language, it is clear that the majority 70% reported to be average and 30% reported to be good, 0% reported to be excellent and 0% weak.

Table 2.11 Learners motivation toward English learning

	yes	No	Somehow
Learners' number	9	0	1
Percentage	90%	0%	10%

Figure 2.8

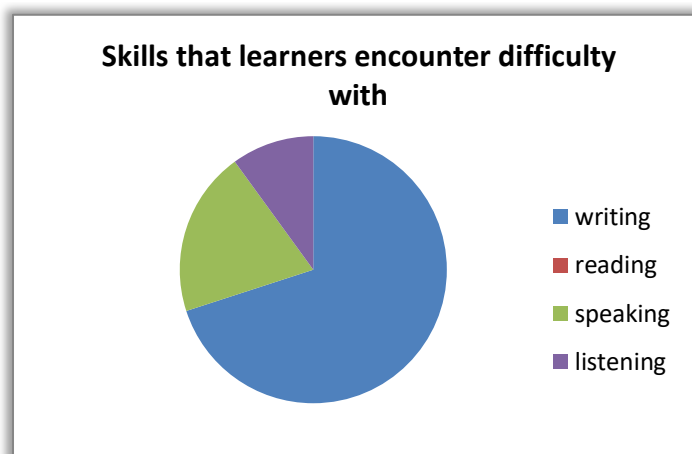


This figure demonstrates the results of the fourth question, the learners were asked about their motivation toward English learning, it is clear that the majority 90% reported yes, 10% only reported somehow and 0% no.

Table 2.12: skills that learners encounter difficulty with:

	writing	Reading	Speaking	Listening
Learners' number	7	0	2	1
Percentage	70%	0%	20%	10%

Figure 2.9

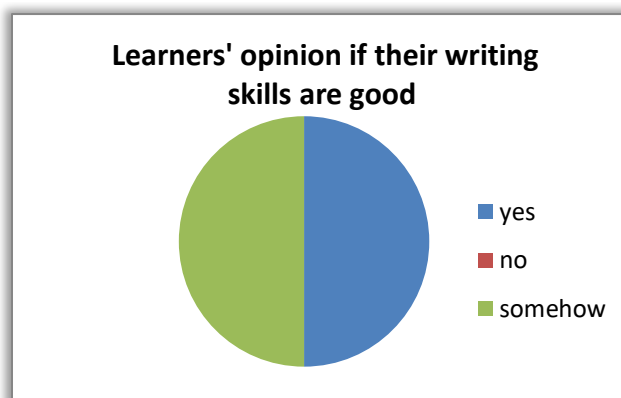


This figure shows the results of the first question, the learners were asked about the skills that they encounter difficulty with, it is clear that the majority 70% reported that they have difficulty with writing, 20% with listening and only 10% with speaking and 0% with reading.

Table 2.13 The learners' opinion if their writing skills are good

	Yes	No	Somehow
Learners' number	5	0	5
Percentage	50%	0%	50%

Figure 2.10

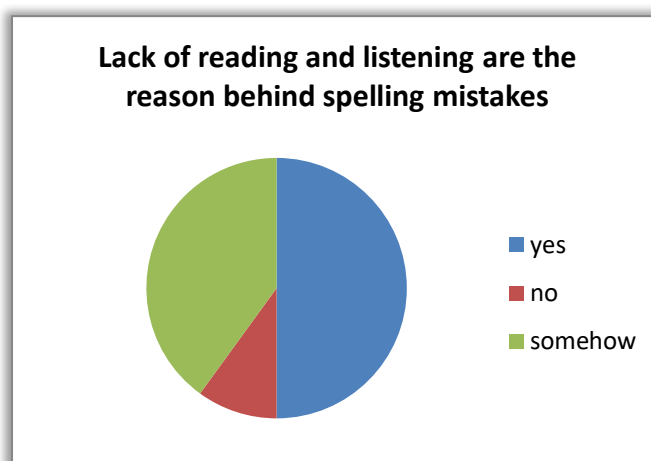


This figure illustrates the results of the second question, the learners were asked if their writing skills are good, it is clear that 50% reported yes, and 50% reported somehow and 0% no.

Table 2.14 : Lack of reading and listening are the reason behind their spelling mistakes

	Yes	No	Somehow
Learners' number	5	1	4
Percentage	50%	10%	40%

Graph 2.11

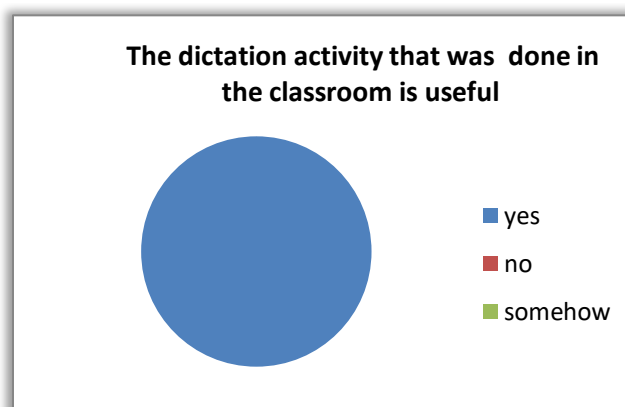


The above figure represents the results of the third question, the learners were asked if lack of reading and listening are the reason behind their spelling mistakes it is clear that 50% reported yes, 40% somehow, and 10% said no.

Table 2.15: Learners' opinion if the dictation activity that was done in the classroom is useful

	Yes	No	Somehow
Learners' number	10	0	0
Percentage	100%	0%	0%

Figure 2.12

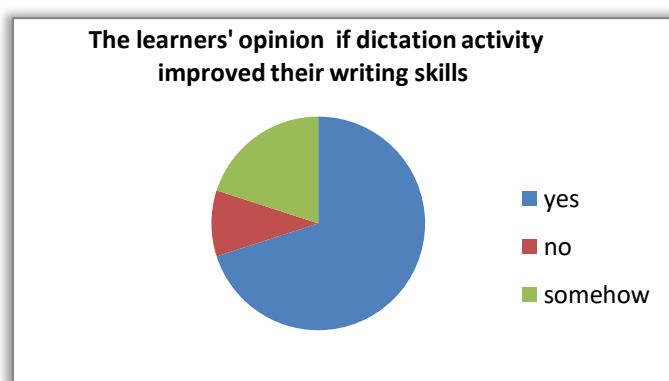


This figure demonstrates the results of the fourth question, the learners were asked if the dictation hat was done in the classroom was useful, it is clear that all the participants, 100% reported yes.

Table 2.16 : Learners’ opinion about the dictation activity if it improved their writing skills

	Yes	No	Somehow
Learners’ number	7	1	2
Percentage	70%	10%	20%

Figure 2.13



This figure illustrates the results of the fifth question, the learners were asked if the dictation activity improved their writing skills, it is clear from the graph that the majority 70% reported yes 20% reported somehow and 10% reported no.

Learners’ suggestion to Improve their Writing Skills

This last open ended question aimed at knowing unexpected answers the learners may provide, the learners were asked to provide their own suggestions to improve their writing skills, out of 10 learners 5 learners provided answers like watching TV programs, movies in English language, listening to English music, and others suggested employing English in daily live in home and with classmates and also business others suggested freedom of speech for the learners, reading books and analyzing difficult texts, translating all what is said by the teachers.

2.8.2 Discussion of the Questionnaire Results

The results of the questionnaire would help the researcher to understand the 2ND year secondary school learners’ attitudes and opinions toward their level, writing skills and dictation as a strategy to improve their writing skills at secondary school .

From the learners' responses to question (1) learners' gender it is clear that the majority of the respondent 70% of the learners were females, and 30% were males, this was observed in the classroom observation where the majority of the participants were girls, the majority of the respondents in the second question reported that they were 18 years old and only two were between 16 and 17 years old when they were asked about their age.

The majority of learners reported that their level in English language was average with 70% and only 30% reported to be good, however when they were asked about their motivation toward English language they responded positively with 90% yes and 10% somehow.

Concerning the second section of the questionnaire learners answered the first question about the skills that they encounter difficulty with and they apparently responded writing with 70%, speaking with 20% , listening with 10% and no one 0% with the reading, in the second question they were asked if their writing skills were good 50% responded yes and 50% somehow.

In addition, learners in the third question 50% responded yes that lack of reading and listening are the reason behind their spelling mistakes 40% reported somehow and only 10% responded no.

It is also apparent that learners responded positively 100% to the fourth question when they were asked about their opinion if dictation Activity was useful.

However, concerning the first hypothesis, it was assumed that even if teachers supplied dictation texts, secondary school learners writing skills would not improve it can be noticed that learners' responses to the questionnaire did not support this assumption, this can be proved from the fifth question when they were asked if dictation improved their writing skills, the majority 70% responded yes and 20% no.

Apparently, learners wish to improve their writing skills, their response to the sixth question revealed their own suggestions to improve their writing skills, they proposed watching TV programs, movies in English language, listening to English music, and others suggested employing English in daily live in home and with classmates and business, others suggested, reading books and analyzing difficult texts...

2.8.3 The Interview Results

The interview that was designed for two teachers included 8 questions (see appendix c). The questions are based on what had been observed, therefore the aim was to find more data that could not be directly observed. For instance learners' writing skills weaknesses and their opinions about dictation as a writing strategy.

1ST section: personal information

Question1: Teachers' gender

The first teacher was a female and the second teacher was a male

Question2: How long you have been teaching ?

Both of the teachers answered more than five years

2nd Section: Writing Skills Weaknesses and Dictation

Question 1 which of the following skills learners encounter hindrances?

The answer of the first teacher was that writing and listening , the second teacher was listening mainly and the latter impact their writing skills.

Question 2: if it is writing it is due to what ?

The first teacher answered that was due to the lack of self confidence and lack of concentration , the second teacher was also the same

Question 3: learners' types of writing difficulties ?

The first teacher answered spelling and punctuation , the second teacher answer was mainly grammar and spelling

Question 4: what do you usually do to improve their writing?

The first teacher responded that to improve their writing usually more activities ,written expressions and more homework were done the second teacher answer was approximately the same

Question 5: do you agree that dictation is a beneficial strategy to improve their writing skills?

Both of the teachers responded with neutral

Question 6: Why dictation is not included in the program?

Both teachers answered that was due to the intensive program and it suits middle school learners more than secondary school learners.

2.8.3.1 Discussion of the Interview Results

The interview helped to know the teachers of English in secondary school awareness about the importance dictation as a writing strategy to improve learners' writing skills.

Concerning the interview two teachers were interviewed, one of them was a female and the other was a male and both of them got more than 5 years of teaching experience.

Apparently, both teachers answered the first question that the skills that learners encounter hindrances with are writing skills mostly and listening skills and it seemed due to the lack of concentration and lack of self confidence this can be seen in their response to question 2 when they were asked about the reason behind the writing weaknesses.

In addition to their responses to question 3 and when they were asked about which types of writing difficulties exactly both teachers responded spelling mostly, this may prove the dictation activity that was done where most of their mistakes were in spelling .

Besides the fifth question when both teachers responded negatively toward dictation when they were asked if dictation is a beneficial strategy to improve their writing skills and this answer proved the first hypothesis which assumed that even if teachers supplied dictation texts, secondary school learners writing skills would not improve.

It is also apparent from the question (4and 6) that teachers of secondary school are attached only with content of the syllabus when they were asked about what do they usually do improve their writing skills they replied activities, written expression and homework, this means that the teachers do not employ innovative teaching methods which interests them mostly and this can be seen in their response to the sixth question when they were asked why dictation is not included in the program they replied due to the intensive program and it suits more middle school learners according to one of the teachers responses.

Both teachers, nevertheless, tend to be attached with the program only does not mean that they are not aware of the available teaching techniques that suits the learners, in fact they are well aware of them , they both believed that this teaching is accessible, but the program is learner centered and focuses on the learners competencies (CBA) and dictation is a teacher centered technique.

2.9 Discussion of The findings

The current study examined dictation as a writing strategy to improve secondary school LFL branch learners' writing skills in EL-Bayadh, Brizinna district. Two components were measured after dictation activity which are spelling and punctuation.

Apparently, from the results the majority of learners' mistakes in the three attempts were spelling ones, in the second attempt and as it clear from the red graphs learners' mistakes decreased, however in the last attempt they failed to improve their performance .Moreover, it was found that there were several variables that constrained the spelling abilities of the learners. For instance, learners performances

in this study showed words like silent letters, homophones were spelt wrongly by the learners . For example, “neighbour” was spelt as “naber”, “coat” was spelt as “cot” . Hence, those findings further supports the study by Delattre and Barry (2006) which showed that during dictation tasks learners spell more regular words than irregular ones it was concluded that learners did not know the spelling of the word they just prefer to write what they hear, in addition to other words which were spelt in French language as it was mentioned before, and this due to the transfer interference because there was no contrast or difference between two languages such as “floods” was spelt as “flads” because they could not distinguish English from French vowels and “busy” was spelt as “pusy” and this because of intra-lingual interference which means the ignorance of rule restrictions, this error occurred due to the lack of knowledge of correct English sound pattern.

In addition to punctuation, although it was not done by the majority of learners, but the mistakes that was done was repetitive in the three attempts of dictation activity and this could be due to lack of listening such as “the indentation” “comma”, “full stop” though they were provided with “Intonation and Pause” and this revealed the second research question which was the effect of dictation on punctuation component seemed to have no main performance by the learners.

In the view of the above, the first hypothesis has been assumed that even if teachers supplied dictation texts, secondary school learners writing skills would not improve, the obtained results from the dictation activity and the teacher interview supported the assumption.

However the learners’ questionnaire did not supported it, since they agree with dictation as a strategy to improve their writing skills, this means that learners should be given the opportunity to take responsibility of their learning, in this case teachers of English, in particular secondary school are compelled to help their learners to improve their writing skills and enjoy it through innovative ways of teaching, as they agreed with dictation.

Yet, dictation is a teacher centered technique and the obtained results from the teachers interview revealed that this has to do with the time that seems insufficient to deal with different methods of teaching due to the intensive program.

Briefly speaking, what was obtained from the data collection revealed that dictation as a strategy seemed to have no significant impact on writing skills components such as spelling and punctuation on 2ND year secondary school LFL branch learners, this has to do mainly with the intensive program and the time fixed for each lesson. Therefore learners interests should be taken into consideration rather than the ways of teaching .

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented the data collection and the results obtained from the dictation activity learners' questionnaire, classroom observation and teachers' interview. Later; it explained primarily the aim of the research, the methodology, participants and the research instruments. It presented mainly the obtained results from the classroom observation and then the dictation activity results, learners' questionnaire, which are presented by numbers and percentages and the teachers' interview, which were presented qualitatively. Finally, it discussed the main findings obtained from all the results of the research instruments.

Chapter three

Chapter three

Suggestion and Recommendations

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the final section of the study which is enumerating relevant recommendation and suggestions for further studies based on the findings of this research, due to the overloaded program and lack of time to cover dictation as a teaching technique, another type of dictation was recommended, in addition to a brief summary of the study.

3.2 Summary

The objective of the study was to improve that dictation is an efficient strategy which improve secondary school learners' writing skills , among the specific aims of the study was to find the impact of dictation on two components of the writing skills which include spelling and punctuation.

The study has two research questions and two hypotheses which focused on :

- a. The impact of dictation on spelling component of learners' writing skills in secondary school.
- b. The impact of dictation on punctuation component of learners' writing skills in secondary school.

Fifteen of LFL branch secondary school learners were the population of this study out of which twelve 12 learners were sampled for data collection, they conducted a dictation activity in three sessions which include three reading passages selected from their textbook, the activity was administered to examine the impact of dictation on learners' writing skills, moreover, the major findings from the data analyses showed that:

- a. Even if teachers supplied dictation texts, secondary school learners writing skills would not improve.
- b. Secondary school learners would strengthen their productive competences, if intensive dictation sessions were planned and set up.

3.3 Recommendations

Based on the results founded in this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Ministry of Education in Algeria should include dictation activities in the curriculum which may improve the learning and teaching process by integrating dictation with the language skills.
2. Learners should be exposed to dictation activities earlier in the middle school.
3. Learners' spelling mistakes should be taken into consideration, since it is an increasing serious problem.
4. Despite of the intensive program and time fixed for each lesson, teachers should dictate at least a sentence at the end of each session for the learners to be familiar with it.
5. Collective correction if it is possible and this may lead to their recognition of their mistakes to avoid them in the future.
6. Adaptation of new dictation strategies such as "Dicto-comp" which encourage them to rewrite in their own style.

3.4 Limitation of the study

There were some limitation for the study especially during the data correction, It was observed that the dictation activity that was done was not enough due to the fact that further excess could lead to exceeding the normal fixed time for each lesson, in addition to certain difficulties faced in this study hat only 15 learners were sampled for the study and only two teachers and this due to LFL branch absence in the other secondary school and during the dictation activity when some learners demanded for excessive repetition for some expressions.

3.5 Suggestions for Further Research

Based on the results of the study, the following suggestions were offered to be taken into consideration to minimize the learners' errors in dictation as a writing strategy to improve their writing skills

1. The English teachers of EL-Bayadh, Brizinna district should know the results. of the study to anticipate and take steps to anticipate the errors in the future.
2. To minimize the learners errors, English teachers should employ other methods in their ways of teaching.
3. The learners should be given more dictation activities.
4. Employing other types of dictation to detect the learners weaknesses and try to adjust them.

3.6 Conclusion

It is possible to conclude that dictation strategy in this study seemed to have no main impact on writing skills components spelling and punctuation, in the view of the present findings, it was remarked that poor writing performance is more and more becoming a phenomenon in our schools especially spelling, in this chapter recommendations and suggestions for further research were presented.

General conclusion

There are several ways to know learners' proficiency in English language and dictation as a strategy experienced a sort of revival in the field of language teaching and learning, although, spelling and punctuation are sub-skills in the language, they are significant in the written skills of language teaching and learning, this research work discussed in the first chapter how English is taught in Algeria and how dictation as a teaching technique improve learners' skills especially written ones, in the second chapter data was collected and analyzed and the final chapter recommendations and suggestions were presented.

In the field of work , fifteen 15 of LFL branch secondary school learners were the population of this study out of which twelve 12 learners were sampled for data collection, they conducted a dictation activity in three sessions which include three reading passages selected from their textbook, the activity was administered to examine the impact of dictation on learners' writing skills, basically the aim of the study was to improve that dictation is an efficient strategy which improve secondary school learners' writing skills , among the specific aims of the study was to find the impact of dictation on two components of the writing skills which include spelling and punctuation. The study has two research questions: the impact of dictation on spelling component of learners' writing skills in secondary school; the impact of dictation on punctuation component of learners' writing skills in secondary school.

Furthermore, the major findings from the data analyses showed that the majority of learners' mistakes in the dictation activity were in spelling such as omission of silent letters and difficulty in distinguishing between English sounds patterns and other languages sounds patterns due to many reasons "intra-lingual and the transfer", besides that learners prefer only to write what they hear, pronunciation of most English words are not spelled the way they are pronounced because there is no correspondences between the sounds (phonic) and letters(graphic symbols). Such differences made the 2ND year secondary school LFL branch learners unable to comprehend easily the language being learned, they have to be trained in both written and oral activities, moreover the punctuation mistakes despite that they were provided with "Intonation and Pauses" the mistakes were done frequently for example "Indentation" "comma" "full stop" "Quotation mark" as a result the following hypotheses were assumed : Even if teachers supplied dictation texts, secondary school learners writing skills would not improve.

Secondary school learners would strengthen their productive competences, if intensive dictation sessions were planned and set up.

General conclusion

In addition, to a combination of quantitative and qualitative data was used in order to support the results assumed in the research hypotheses, this included a learner questionnaire, and teachers' interview and classroom observation.

Based on the findings of the research, some recommendations and suggestions for the improvements of learners' writing skills were provided.

First, it was suggested that Learners' spelling mistakes should be taken into consideration, since it is an increasing serious problem and most importantly Adaptation of new dictation strategies such as "Dicto-comp" which encourage them to rewrite in their own style, in addition, learners should be exposed to dictation activities earlier in the middle school.

Finally, it should be noted that apart from the recommendations and suggestions the number of the participants is also considered necessary factors in conducting any research. Yet, limitation of this research lies in the fact that only 15 learners and two teachers were used as the main research method, which makes unwisely to generalize the findings

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Glossary

Dicto – Comp -	A dictation strategy in which pair or group of learners practice language items or structures and attempt to write their own composition after the dictation lesson .
Dicto-Gloss -	A dictation technique for teaching grammar and textual cohesion in which students work in small groups to produce their written version of a text.
Item Dictation -	A dictation strategy proposed for teaching Learners sound recognition that enable them to transfer information into written form.
Key Word Dictation -	A technique of teaching dictation lesson which assigns students to only take note of the spelling of target words.
N- gram	in the field of computational linguistics probability , an n-gram is a contiguous sequence of n items from a given text sample of text or speech. The items can be phonemes, syllables, letters, words or base pairs according to the application. the n-grams typically are collected

from text or speech corpus.

Viterbi Algorithm -

is an algorithm for analyzing a series of hidden states called the Viterbi path, The viterbi Algorithm looks at a set of objects according to certain properties, and tries to demonstrate how those properties could affect others, it is useful in technologies such as speech recognition software, keyword spotting programs.

Appendices

APPENDIX « A »

Classroom observation cheklist

session	Precenc Rate	Teacher		Learner		learner motivation		Teacher feedback	
		With dictation	without dictation	Write	Do not write	Ask question	Do not ask question	Answer question positively	Answer question negatively
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									

Appendix « B »

Learners' Questionnaire

Please fill out the provided questionnaire, by putting on the most appropriate answer, you should know that you are meant to be anonymous, and your information will be kept confidential, and thank you for your time and cooperation.

Section one: Personnel Information

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age:

3. How is your level in English language ?

Excellent good average weak

4. Are you motivated toward English learning ?

Yes No somehow

Section two: dictation and writing weaknesses

1. Which of the following skills you encounter difficulty?

Writing reading speaking listening

2. Do you think your writing skills are good?

Yes No somehow

3. The majority of your mistakes are in spelling, Do you think lack of reading and listening are the reason behind this?

Yes No somehow

4. Do you think the dictation activity that was done in the classroom is useful?

Yes No somehow

5. Do you think dictation activity improved your writing skills?

Yes No somehow

If no why?

.....
.....

6. Suggest any other solutions to improve your writing skills

.....
.....

Appendix « C »

Teachers' Interview

I'm conducting a research paper on dictation a writing strategy to improve secondary school writing skills, please answer the following questions, you should know that your information will be kept confidential and thank you for your time and cooperation.

Section one : Personnel questions

1. Gender:

Male

Female

2. How long have you been teaching?

5 years

15 years

more than

Section two :

1. Which of the following skills learners encounter hindrances?

Writing

reading

listening

speaking

2. If it is writing is it due to

Lack of listening

lack of concentration

Lack of self confidence

3. Learners' writing difficulties are:

Spelling

punctuation

grammar

4 What do you usually do to improve their writing?

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

5. Do you agree that dictation is a beneficial strategy to improve their writing skills?

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral

Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. Why dictation is not included in the program?

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

Appendix « D »

Learners' dictation activity

Before dictation

Passage “1”

Great calamities can show the best in man. For instance, while I was covering, for my news paper, the earthquake in Boumerdes, I met a group a group of woman, carrying plates of “kouskous”. Where are they going all together all together like that? I asked Rafik , my Algerian friend and translator. They're taking food to their neighbours, who have lost their homes he replied. (P. 129)

Passage “2”

The traditional method of raising money is to organize a flag day, volunteers stand in busy streets asking members of the public to put money on a collecting tin. In exchange they are given a sticker to be put on coat lapels. (P. 136)

Passage “3”

During the past decade there has been a considerable increase in the number of natural disasters which has caused hardship and suffering in many countries. Disasters are not confined to particular regions nor do they discriminate between developing and developed countries. For the past year alone, widespread floods in France, Hungary ,Italy , Switzerland, Algeria.(P.134)

After dictation

Details for dictation activity

Dictation activity checklist

Table 1

Spelling mistakes	Correction
1:	
2 :	
3 :	
4:	
5:	
6:	
7:	
8:	
9:	
10:	

Table 2

Punctuation mistakes	Correction
1:	
2 :	
3:	
4:	