

The Issue of Spelling Confusion in Teaching EFL Literary Texts

مسألة الخلط الإملائي في تدريس
النصوص الأدبية باللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

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Abstract:

The present research is intended to investigate the causes of spelling confusion and to find out whether teaching spelling lessons may improve the understanding of literary texts. A review of the related literature has been undertaken and an experimentation conducted. The experimentation consisted of evaluating learners' background knowledge using a pre-test, administrating a treatment period and assessing the impact of the latter on the learners' spelling abilities via a post-treatment test. The study revealed that the learners do commit spelling errors due to various reasons, such as a lack of knowledge about the grammatical rules, a limited vocabulary, or the complexity of the English spelling system. The study also revealed that teaching spelling rules can contribute to improve the learners' semantic acquisition and understanding of literary texts.

Keywords: Spelling Confusion – Teaching Spelling - Writing Skill – Literary Text

الملخص:

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى التحقيق في أسباب الارتباك الإملائي ومعرفة ما إذا كان تدريس دروس الإملاء قد يحسن فهم النصوص الأدبية. تم إجراء مراجعة للأدبيات ذات الصلة وأجريت تجربة. تتألف التجربة من تقييم المعرفة الخلفية للمتعلمين باستخدام اختبار مسبق ، وإدارة فترة العلاج وتقييم تأثير هذا الأخير على القدرات الإملائية للمتعلمين من خلال اختبار ما بعد العلاج. كشفت الدراسة أن المتعلمين يرتكبون أخطاء إملائية لأسباب مختلفة ، مثل نقص المعرفة بالقواعد النحوية ، أو محدودية المفردات ، أو تعقيد نظام التهجئة باللغة الإنجليزية. كشفت الدراسة أيضًا أن تدريس قواعد الإملاء يمكن أن يساهم في تحسين اكتساب المتعلمين الدلالي وفهمهم للنصوص الأدبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ارتباك إملائي - تدريس الإملاء - مهارة كتابية - نص أدبي

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1.Introduction

English nowadays is spoken all around the world; it has become the world's lingua franca, the language for international trade and exchange for science, education and cultural opening. In the same world communication has never been more essential, therefore, it is necessary and primordial for any individual to master the world's community language and so to be able to communicate via the written form, especially that the latter holds a central role in worldwide exchange.

A significant aspect of the use of language resides in the correctness of spelling, as the proper use language requires more than the learning of the linguistic structure and the grammatical rules (Zourgui, 2018: 288); thus meaning can be altered by the addition, the misplacement or the omission of a lone letter. Nonetheless, due to the several historical periods the English language went through, its spelling evolved into an irregular form which seriously disrupts the writing and the reading skill acquisition of the English as a Foreign Language (E.F.L.) learners.

This is particularly the case for the Algerian E.F.L. learners, since English, as a foreign language, remains an unknown subject for the Algerian pupils until the age of 12 years; besides, due to the difference between the mother tongue and English, the issue of spelling develops into an obstacle slowing down the acquisition process, or even, when associated to an unawareness about the language features, the confusion affects the quality of the written product and the efficiency semantic acquisition.

In such a context, the Algerian E.F.L. learners are confronted with the issue at different stages of their studies, especially at university level where assessment is undertaken mainly through written works. Accordingly, the topic of confusion within the literary reading activities and the writing skill acquisition process constitutes a subject of research; therefore, the present research aims at developing the subject of the spelling issue in the English language around these two research questions:

- What might be the main causes of spelling confusion for the 1st year E.F.L. students?
- Does the teaching of spelling rules positively affect E.F.L. students writing and performance and literary perception?

In order to find out answers to these questions, the study was built around and meant to verify the relevance of these two hypotheses:

- The causes of spelling confusion might be the lack of literary reading, the differences between the sounding and the spelling of the words, the confusing words or simply the situation of English as a foreign language.
- Teaching some spelling rules might positively affect the written product of E.F.L. learners and their semantic apprehension of literary reading.

Accordingly, the present study aims at answering the research questions and verifying the consequent theories while shedding the light on spelling as a function of the reading skill, for such reasons, the study was divided into three different sections; a first section dedicated to a description of the overall background and context of the study, a second section as an

investigation about the literature related to the topic and a final section that consists of analyzing and interpreting the data gathered.

2. Situational Analysis

2.1 The English Section of the Foreign Languages Department

Since its opening in 1982, the Department of English – formerly the English Section of the Foreign Languages Department – in the Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes, is providing students holding the Baccalaureate with the pedagogical training to be graduates in English and to become teachers of English. It was first through a four years curriculum during the classical system period and since 2004 through a three years curriculum after the transition to the L.M.D system. After their graduation, the students have also the opportunity to undergo post-graduate studies.

During their curriculum, the learners are trained to master the four basic skills of the language (listening, reading, writing and speaking) and to acquire a wide variety of English related topics such as British, American and African Civilization And Literature, Linguistics and Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, Phonology, Phonetics and Grammar, in addition to Cultural Studies and Arabic Language and Literature, (Mokkedem, 2008 :10). The learners are also required to present a work of at least 40 pages about the topics of their choice as a graduation dissertation which can be considered as an introduction to scientific research.

Up to now, more than a thousand E.F.L. students have graduated from this department and integrated the professional world as teachers in middle and secondary school or joined different institutes for occupational purposes. In fact, the English Department is contributing to the development of the society by providing it with English graduates that could improve commercial, touristic and several other economic sectors (ibid: 13).

2.2 The Teaching of Written Expression and Literary Reading

While E.F.L. students are taught various aspects of the English language and culture in several modules, the evaluation of the acquired knowledge is, except for the Oral Expression module, completed through written tests, and so writing is a valuable skill for the E.F.L. student's development and success during the curriculum. Thus, the mastery of the writing skill is as important to the written product as eloquence is to speech. In addition to that, university graduates are likely to be hired professionally on the basis of their knowledge concerning the language, such as teachers or in other fields, and likewise correct writing and efficient understanding are central necessities.

Therefore, the mastery of the basic language skills is a fundamental requirement for the student's achievement and success, thus, during the 1st year, E.F.L. students are taught written expression for three hours a week in two different sessions, while the reading module is taught during a weekly session of 90 minutes. The reading program consists of study of different pieces of writing such as short stories or summaries of major literary works, a part of the activities included in the module requires learners to produce conclusions and reports based on their own understanding, on the other hand, the written expression program they are

delivered consists of learning the basic features of the written product such as simple, compound and complex sentence structure, words order in a sentence, capitalisation and punctuation in addition to the construction of different types of paragraphs.

However, according to a written expression teacher interviewed for the sake of the study, writing in a foreign language is a skill that cannot be mastered without enough practice outside the classroom. According to the same source, the students demonstrate an attitude characterized by motivation and involvement towards the written expression module despite the fact that spelling constitutes an issue since the students are facing distinction problems concerning homophones, silent letters and choice between single and double consonants.

When the students were questioned about their perspective on spelling while writing, 55% of them admitted that they always care about the spelling and 35% usually do, 80% of them considered that learning spelling is important for them, but 20% affirmed that they always commit spelling mistakes and 65% sometimes do. They related the causes to such frequency in committing spelling errors to the lack of concentration and practice especially in cases where the pronunciation differs from the spelling or to their limited vocabulary, the new words and the confusion between two words.

3. Review of the Related Literature

3.1 English Spelling Complexity as a Cause of Spelling Errors

Mastering the English writing system is an intricate undertaking, it is a complex, illogical and an irregular system, and therefore, difficult to learn (Treiman, 1993: 21); as a domain, spelling is considered vast; it incorporates knowledge of orthographic patterns, homophones, compounds and morphological constructions (Moats, 1994: 95). Due to the complexity of the English spelling system, scholars have sorted causes of confusion for E.F.L. learners in numerous lists, each categorized on the basis of different criteria. The following section constitutes a selection of the most notable.

3.2 Spelling Errors According to Areas of Confusion

Joy presented a classification in which the phonemic awareness is a secondary criterion (2010: 107), and focused on confusion about the shape of letters as a category of primitive errors, confusion about vowels and consonant whether silent, omitted or substituted by the learner. The classification also contained errors of homophonous transfer in addition to the last category in which errors of phonemic awareness are mentioned caused by wrong transcription of pronounced words or reversals of phonemes.

Solati et. al. submitted a classification in which errors caused by lack of attention are advanced (2014: 3). The selection included spelling errors of addition and deletion in which graphemes are added to or omitted from a word, other spelling errors involving substitution of graphemes by others relating to the same phonemes as well as errors of transposition reporting situations of mistaken letter order within a word.

Krishnalalitha listed three categories of causes of errors (2010: 171) the list included errors of competence and performance caused respectively by wrong application of rules and

repetitive mistakes due to non-correspondence between spelling and pronunciation, as well as errors caused by incorrect pronunciation or interference with the mother tongue.

Nyamasyo compiled an exhaustive list of causes of spelling errors (1994:171). Such categories containing causes of errors related to phonemic awareness are linked to the purpose of the present study, and are mentioned as follows: confusion with homophones explained by lack of awareness about homophonic pairs such as (their / there) or (two / too / to); the pluralistic relation of phonemes and graphemes is mentioned as a cause of confusion, and the existence of silent letters within the spelling system.

3.3 Causes of Confusion in Spelling lose, Open, or Hyphenated

Causes of spelling errors are, as studies show, numerous and rooted to different factors. However in order to comply with the purpose of the study, the present paper focuses on the complexity of the English spelling system as a cause of spelling errors and accordingly, typographical and orthographical features of the language are object of focus.

3.3.1 Confusion with Close, Open, or Hyphenated Pairs of Words

According to Stilman (1997: 24), correct spelling involves more than letter order and placement. It also implicates spacing between words, in accordance: words are considered to be misspelled in cases of omission, insertion or misplacement of a space or a hyphen, particularly to link compounds, affixes and numerals. Stilman (2010: 47) advanced the absence of a spelling rule covering all situations and mentioned, as a factor adding to the complexity of linking words, the mandatory or optional occurrences of hyphens as well as the merging words without its use.

Cases of groups of words containing two or more words, and denoting one referent are regarded among the repeatedly misspelled words in the English language (Rozakis, 2003: 151). Such a situation is due to the different forms of compound, namely closed as in (Whiteboard), opened as in (Tennis club) or hyphenated as in (well-informed) (Stilman, 1997). McCaskill (1998: 14) provided a differing classification mentioning temporary and permanent compound words, the latter being determined by practice or usage and found in dictionaries

3.3.2 Confusion with Homophones

The English spelling system contains a form of one-to-many relations between phonemes and graphemes; a grapheme may refer to more than one phoneme and vice versa (Treiman, 1992 : 224). The correspondence between phonemes and graphemes is seen as unpredictable (Lass, 1997: 48). Furthermore the variability of the language spelling is mentioned as the most common cause of spelling mistakes (Al Jarf, 2010; 1). Al-Hassan stated that the measurement of the complexity of the English spelling usually begins with, and ends by observing the different spellings of a given sound in different words (2010: 3); such statement leads the inclusion homophones and homophonous compounds.

Homophones are words distinct in meaning though identical in pronunciation, their spelling may be the same or distinguished (Algeo 2010 : 7), also identified as strings of

identical phoneme. Accordingly, speakers have to cope with such distinctions in the writing system (Cook and Des Ryan 2016).

3.3.3 Confusion with Numbers and Symbols

Numbers are also a source of confusion in spelling and writing especially that a sole number can be written in numerous forms. The confusion also arises when learners hesitate in transcribing the numbers in letters or figures.. Baugh (1993: 101) explained the cause of such spelling errors as principally due to learners' negligence of size of the figure and the types of texts in which they occur.

3.3.4 Confusion with Apostrophes

The apostrophe constitutes nonetheless an additional cause of confusion, as it is employed for numerous purposes; its proper use requires knowledge of the appropriate grammar rules, misunderstanding of the latter causes omission, addition or misplacement (Stilman 2010: 279). The confusion related to apostrophes is due to the fact that the symbol is linked to three independent uses, namely indicating omission in contracted words, possessives and plurals (ibid). The apostrophe requires formal teaching as it represents the coding of complex information, especially in situation indicating possessive and plurals simultaneously or simplification resulting from current practice (Carney, 1997:84).

Therefore, the scope of the study narrows the range of causes of spelling errors, to the phonological aspect taking into consideration, compound words, homophones and homophonous compounds.

3.4 Literary Reading and Language Acquisition

Reading and writing as target skills in language acquisition are closely linked, as reading provides a source of vocabulary and proffers mental images of words, hence the building of the writing skills relies on reading as basis, Fay (1971: 2) stated "poor readers are also poor spellers", the same author explained that the relationship between reading and writing resides in the exposition to the forms of words and their recognition which consequently leads to grasping their meaning (ibid).

Literary reading goes along with the acquisition of language; Belal and Ouahmiche assert that literature remains central in language teaching (2021: 331), the authors state literature as a continuous companion to language teaching, and affirm the necessity of studying literature in the process of learning a foreign language as literature serves language learning as a medium of demonstration of the features of language (ibid).

Literary texts exert a positive effect on the mastery of language skills, literature enhances semantic awareness due to the different levels of connotations it proffers, it also provides learners with opportunities to express personal opinions on specific topics and situations (Abdelalim and Hanafi 2022: 716)

4. Research Design, Instruments and Population of Research

4.1 Research Design

The problem of confusing words in the Written Expression activity was chosen as a topic of study and identified as being a serious issue for E.F.L. learners; the hypotheses were built to find out whether teaching spelling rules to E.F.L. learners would help avoid spelling errors and whether it is sufficient to overcome the students' writing difficulties. Thus, an experimental research was undertaken and designed as follows:

- A selection of a group of 1st year E.F.L students as a sample of study.
- A period of data collection about the students' profile and background knowledge through a questionnaire and a pre-test.
- The data analysis and interpretation of the first collection period.

(The conclusion about the students' lacks and needs at this level of the experience shaped the content of the treatment period.)

- A treatment period in which each of the selected areas of confusion were introduced, explained and simplified to the students and
- A second period of data collection about the students' response to the treatment period and the effect the latter had on their written production.
- The analysis of the gathered data through the post test.
(The conclusion determines the general result of the study.)
- The synthesis of the general conclusion and suggestions.

4.2 Research Instruments

4.2.1 Description of the Pre-test

The pre-test was used as a tool to evaluate the participants' knowledge and to collect data about their competency concerning the spelling of some commonly misspelled words in order to direct the course of the study and to adjust the treatment period according to their needs and deficiencies. The test was composed of fifteen sentences; each sentence contained a pair or a string of confusing words with different spellings and the participants were required to select one of the two spelling options, according to context and meaning.

The fifteen sentences of the pre-test were partitioned according to the targeted group of confusing words into three sections:

- The 1st section (sentences 1 to 5) concerned the appropriate spelling of homophones (aisle/isle, whether/weather).
- The 2nd section (sentences 6 to 10) presented five pairs of easily confused words, words with a slight difference in sounding and spelling (farther / further, raise / rise) except the pair (recieved / received) in which the first proposition is incorrectly spelled.
- The 3rd section (sentences 11 to 15) presented five pairs of homophonous combinations: a contraction (you're/ your) or a sequence of two words forming the homophone of a second word but differing in meaning (all right/ alright).

4.2.2 Description of the Treatment Period

The treatment period is the central step of the present research. The elaboration of its content relies on both the results of the pre-test and the gathered theory, i.e. its form is based on the patterns of misspelling noticed in the results of the pre-test and organized according to the areas of spelling deficits targeted by the study.

The treatment period is meant to introduce the participants to the areas of confusion in question and constitutes an opening to discuss recurring mistakes; it is also an opportunity to investigate causes of errors according to the participants and to see to a remedial: thus, via the presentation of strategies aiming at avoiding spelling errors.

The secondary purpose of the treatment period is to raise awareness about the errors noticed in the pre-test, through theoretical explanation and group tasks and examples; it tackles the areas of confusion, such as morphological and semantic relationships, knowledge in vocabulary and orthography as well as phonological awareness.

During this period, learners are acquainted with spelling rules and semantic comparisons in addition to demonstration about linguistic deficits; the latter are treated through the improvement of other language skills, such as reading and listening or else via the development of a personal repertoire.

4.2.3 Description of the Post-Test

The post-test was addressed to the participants in order to assess their response to the treatment period and evaluate the effect the same treatment exerted on their awareness in spelling. It resembled the pre-test in terms of form and partition of sentences.

After the analysis of the gathered data through this test, its interpretation and comparison with the pre-test's data interpretation allow the researcher to evaluate the treatment's period efficiency: the same interpretation determines the results of the study.

4.3 Population and Sample of the Study

The population sampled in the present study consists of 20 students enrolled in E.F.L. 1st year classes in the Department of English at the Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes, they constitute the group of on whom the research was undertaken. The choice of this restricted sample of study has been delineated by the fact that the Written Expression module, which is the main operating field of this study, is taught only to 1st and 2nd year E.F.L. students, in addition to that the 1st year E.F.L. students are at the beginning of their curriculum at university and are more subject to face spelling difficulties, due to the lack of experience in producing English writing.

The questionnaire addressed to the students at the beginning of the study provided the researcher with useful information to establish a profile of the population. The participants' age varies between 18 and 27 years old, they originate from diverse backgrounds. The participants asserted having studied English for 3 to 9 years and obtaining marks varying from 04 to 18 on 20 at the Baccalaureate English exam. As a result, the participants constitute a heterogeneous sample of study. Concerning their motivation toward learning the English language and involvement in extracurricular activities including English, 70% of the participants certified that English was their first choice as a field of study at university level and that they have chosen English due to its importance at the global scale, for international

communication also for vocational purposes; yet, a minority consists of participants learning English to be used as a tool to facilitating research in another fields of study. Though the participants express eagerness to learn English, 45% of them confirmed initiating activities involving English outside the classroom and 25% affirmed their extracurricular reading activities involved reading literary works.

5. Data Collection and Analysis

5.1. Pre-Test Results and Analysis

5.1.1. Pre-Test Results

Table 01: Pre-Test Results

	Statements	Correct Choice	Wrong Answer	No Answer	Correct Answer	Correct Answer %
1	My bag is bigger then / than yours	than	01	-	19	95%
2	Don't put your baggage in the aisle /isle.	isle	07	02	11	55%
3	I am waiting for the weather / whether forecast.	weather	05	01	14	70%
4	What weight / wait can you lift?	weight	06	01	13	65%
5	Which / Witch car is yours?	Which	03	-	17	85%
6	The sun rises / raises every morning.	rises	03	-	17	85%
7	Yesterday I received / recieved a package.	received	05	-	15	%75
8	The cake was quite / quiet delicious.	quite	08	-	12	60%
9	Beside / Besides Ahmed, all the pupils were	Besides	06	-	14	70%
10	How much farther / further do we have to go?	farther	14	02	04	20%
11	Your / you're a smart kid	you're	01	-	19	95%
a.12	There/their/they're bus is over there/their/they're.	their	03	01	16	80%
b.12	There/their/they're bus is over there/their/they're.	There	05	04	11	55%
13	The children were already / all ready for the	all ready	09	-	11	55%
14	They travelled to faraway/ far away places.	Faraway	15	-	05	25%
15	The teacher may be / maybe absent tomorrow.	may be	7	-	13	65%

5.1.2. Analysis of the Pre-Test Results

The proportion of right spelling choices in the pre-test was above 55% in almost all the sentences; the scores were above average. However, no answer was free from wrong spelling choices. Some of the mistakes were committed in seemingly common words, for instance; (their), (there) and (they're). The pairs (quiet / quite) and (beside / besides) with percentages of correct answers of respectively 60% and 70% demonstrate the necessity of clarifying the difference among participants. Additionally, the pairs (already / all ready), (faraway / far away) and (maybe / may be) illustrate cases of confusion particularly in the 14th utterance. Such results reveal that the participants are in need of explanation about spelling rules, grammatical rules and enhancement of their vocabulary. Those requirements were the starting point of the elaboration of the treatment period.

5.2. Analysis of the Treatment Period

The treatment period was dispensed to the group of students that formed the population of the study. It was included into the Written Expression module during the ordinary sessions of the group; the participants were aware that the experiment was extracurricular and expressed motivation in participating in the research.

Once the pre-test dispensed and the analysis of the gathered data completed, a remedial work was prepared in order to introduce the topic of confusing words to the participants and treat the most recurrent mistakes. The remedial work was elaborated in the form of a treatment period, and the latter consisted of three parts taught similarly but different in content.

The first part tackled the subject of homophones and included the explanation and correction of the related sentences of the pre-test; it also provided the participants with additional examples in order to vulgarize the concept and highlight the fact that practice is likely to be an adequate manner for enhancing proficiency in language.

The second part dealt with easily confused words; such words were introduced as pairs approximately similar in pronunciation yet different in meaning. Sentences 5 to 10 were explained and corrected. A special note was addressed to sentence 7 as it required the application of a spelling rule. Additional examples were given to the participants in order to support the explanation given and to emphasize the fact that beside few exceptions, no rule exists to avoid confusion with this kind of words.

The third part was similar in procedure to the previous ones and tackled the rest of the sentences; however, it was time consuming due to the explanation of the differences and introduction of the exposed grammatical features.

5.3. Post-Test Results and Analysis

5.3.1. Post-Test Results

Table 02: Post-Test Results

Statments	Correct Choice	Wrong Answer	No Answer	Correct Answer	Correct Answer %
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1	You are aloud / allowed to talk freely	allowed	07	-	14	70%
2	We barely arrived than / then it was time to leave.	then	02	-	18	90%
3	House prices soared / sored a further 20 percent.	soared	08	01	11	55%
4	The robbers planned to steel /steal a painting.	steal	05	-	15	75%
5	Thelma writes so many letters that she buys new stationery / stationary every month.	Stationery	06	-	14	70%
6	You can sit / set those dirty dishes in the sink.	set	06	-	14	70%
7	The latter / later is better than the former.	latter	03	-	17	85%
8	Sometimes understanding has a better effect /affect	effect	03	-	17	85%
9	The ceiling /ceiling is too high.	Ceiling	00	-	20	100%
10	How much farther / further do we have to go?	farther	14	-	06	30%
11	All the students should correct their / there / they're	Their	00	-	20	100%
12	His situation is altogether / all together different	altogether	12	-	08	40%
13	They travelled to faraway/ far away places.	Faraway	03	-	17	85%
14	Who's /whose going to the museum?	Who's	01	-	19	95%
15	Someone / some one arrived late to the meeting.	Someone	04	-	16	80%

5.3.2. Analysis of the Post-Test Results

Though the participants admitted that the treatment period was enriching and did avoid certain errors in the post-test, the overall results of the latter did not reach the expectations of the researcher. The results revealed that to some extent the post-test demonstrated more lacks in the participants' answers than supposed after the analysis of the pre-test results.

The results of the learners in some sentences showed a high rate of correct answers; 100% in sentence 11 and 95% in sentence 14, which is likely to be explained by the fact that the differences in the pairs (whose / who's) and (there / their / they're) are basic. In fact, concerning such cases, the treatment period was a review and a revision of some mixed background knowledge.

Concerning example 9, the rate of correct answers was of 100% whereas for the equivalent example in the pre-test (sentence 07) a fourth of the participants could not identify the spelling error; in such an area of confusion, the treatment period is suitable to improve the participants' writing product since it raises awareness about the rules and the appropriate application.

The results obtained in sentences 10, 12, 13 and 15 lead to a similar deduction, as raising consciousness about the grammar rules is an appropriate manner to avoid confusion with homophonous word combinations, such as (faraway) and (far away) or (all ready) and

(already). Accordingly, the participants revealed a lack of knowledge about grammatical rules as well as a lack of semantic mastery which renders the treatment period as obsolete in such a case.

Both of sentences 7 and 8 showed a proportion of 85% of right answers; this score is explained by the fact that most of the participants already knew the difference between (latter) and (later) and dealt with the pair (effect / affect) in previous Written Expression sessions. Thus the words already constituted a part of their background knowledge.

In contrast, the sentences 1 to 6 showed higher proportions of wrong spelling choices, especially sentences 2 and 5: in sentence 2, the participants were not aware about the use of the conjunction (then) to link two consecutive actions while in sentence 5, the word (stationery) was unknown to the participants, which suggests that the lack of linguistic knowledge is a cause of confusion. The rate of right answers in sentences 1, 3, 4 and 6 was also below average; such proportions of wrong spelling choices are explained by the fact that the participants are not aware of the existence of the words (sored), (steel) and (stationary) and their spelling, accordingly. All of the sentences portrayed the participants' lack of vocabulary.

The overall results of the post-test proved that the treatment period was a fruitful attempt to improve the participants writing product; however, it also confirms to be limited to some extent. As for the grammatical deficiency and vocabulary lacks, the treatment period revealed to be insufficient to enhance the participants' competence.

5.4. Comparative of the Pre-Test and the Post-Test Results

5.4.1. Pre-Test and the Post-Test Results

Table 03: Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

Type of pairs	Pre-test Results		Post-test Results	
	Correct Choice	Correct Answer %	Correct Answer	Correct Answer %
Homophones	aisle /isle.	55%	allowed / aloud	70%
	then / than	95%	then / than	90%
	weather / whether	70%	soared / sored	55%
	weight / wait	65%	steal / steel	75%
	Which / Witch	85%	Stationary/stationery	70%
Homophonous	raises / rises	85%	set / sit	70%
	Besides /Beside	70%	latter / later	85%

Pairs	quite / quiet	60%	effect / affect	85%
	received / recieved	75%	ceiling / cieling	100%
	farther / further	20%	farther / further	30%
Easily used conf words	you're / your	95%	Who's / whose	95%
	their / there / they're	80%	their / there / they're	100%
	their / there / they're	55%		
	already / all ready	55%	altogether/all together	40%
	faraway/ far away	25%	faraway/ far away	85%
	may be / maybe	65%	Someone / Some one	80%

5.4.2 Comparative Analysis of the Pre-Test and the Post-Test Results

The analysis of the results underlines that the occurrence of certain errors diminished, while other errors on the contrary were repeated. The errors were recurrent in each of the types of words targeted by the study. Yet, the results suggest that the experiment was to some extent fruitful. However, concerning certain areas of confusion the present approach concluded to be less adequate: in fact, errors requiring knowledge of grammatical or orthographical rules were less recurrent than errors involving mastery of the language.

By the end of the experiment, learners' knowledge about the targeted types of errors increased, however, their efficiency in using the language improved to a limited extent. The learners could avoid errors related to contractions efficiently once the rule was introduced. By contrast, they admitted identifying the homophones (sored / soared) and (steal / steel). Nevertheless, they were unable to recognise the appropriate choice. Other pairs showed differing results, and demonstrated the non-effectiveness of the treatment period; such errors involved the learners' linguistic deficiencies.

Concerning homophones, the results of the first group of words targeted by the study, indicate deficits in vocabulary, as the results show percentages of correct choices slightly above average , and an absence of noticeable improvement between the numbers of two tests; a situation in which the treatment period is not fructuous, unless it serves the purpose of raising awareness about enriching personal lexicon, an exception among this group of words; example containing the pair (then / than) in which results approached 100%, is possibly explained by the frequency of use of both words, hence confirming the necessity of knowledge broadening and vocabulary enhancement.

The second group of words contained homophonous pairs of words, results related to such a group of words resembled to some extent the ones obtained with the first group, accordingly revealing errors due to vocabulary deficit and unawareness about semantic relationships; the exception in the present group of words resides in acknowledging the order of letters (i) and (e) and the results concerning the case reached 100% after the presentation of the spelling rule.

The last group of words was constituted of examples linked to easily confused words, situations involving the use of apostrophes in contraction of pronouns and verbs, revealed high percentages of correct choices. Such results are likely to be explained by the frequency of use of the verb to be and the simplicity of the spelling rules in relation. Nevertheless cases involving semantic contrasts showed lower percentages of correct choices, hence, highlighting deficit in knowledge about language features and lack of reading outcome, such results come along with Wade-woolley (1997: 5) demonstration in which it is mentioned that, poor reader whether native speakers or E.F.L. learners demonstrate unrestricted linguistic deficits.

6. Suggestions and Recommendations

Once the analysis completed, the researcher gathered a list of deductions along with suggestions intended to develop the learners' spelling consciousness and to raise awareness about the complexity of the English spelling system. The suggestions are presented in a form of strategies and techniques, such as dedicating time to spelling rules and techniques during Written Expression sessions, introducing spelling notions and rules within reading sessions or linking the listening and the writing activities through the practice of dictations.

Accordingly, the first suggestion solicits action during the written expression session, it is a proposition to introduce spelling notions that can be remembered by learning a rule, for instance, advancing the vowel (i) before the vowel (e) with an exception after the consonant (c), thus in addition to raising learners' awareness about the existence of language features such as homonyms, contractions and silent letters.

Secondly, during oral expression sessions, other spelling notions can be learned phonetically, by focusing on the pronunciation of targeted words, or by separating the words into syllables or clusters; hence, analyzing the spoken form of words contributes to strengthen learners' ability to memorize phonetically through a phonemic awareness.

Action during reading session is also likely to render positive results on the learners' spelling aptitude, through fostering learners to pay attention to the morphological aspect of the written material; a mental representation of the previously read words is created. Accordingly, the mental orthographic image of the words is stored in the learners' long term memory (Glenn & Hurley 1993: 8).

To link the listening and the writing activities by practicing dictations can train the students to identify the transcription of the sounds they hear and pronounce the words they are transcribe. Besides, to link the reading and writing activities help students develop a visual memory of the words' orthography, creating mental orthographic images MOIs (Ehri and Wilce, 1982: 226).

Increasing learners' motivation in learning the language and improving the written product, can be achieved by encouraging extensive reading and undertaking further research as well as promoting the creation of personal spelling lists to be implement by new words, grammatical rules and exceptions, and thus throughout the curriculum, the lists develop into a personal repertoire.

ImPLY learners into active participation within the process of language acquisition, thus by promoting interest into literature and exploiting the latter through intensive reading.

Applying such approach in learning via the active use of literature multiplies learners' opportunities to explore and interact with literary materials and stimulate their contributions (Kara Mostefa-Boussena 2018: 303).

7. Conclusion

This study was about the issue of spelling errors and the areas of confusion for E.F.L. learners; it was intended to investigate the causes spelling confusion for E.F.L. learners, it was also meant to verify the benefit of teaching spelling rules on literary understanding as well as on the written product of E.F.L. learners. It provided an insight into the issue of spelling among E.F.L. learners, thus, through the evaluation of the linguistic knowledge of the population of the study, and the study of the development of the learners' spelling skills.

The results unveiled that the causes of confusion varied according specific types of linguistic deficits, such as the participants' unawareness about certain grammatical and spelling rules, relatively limited vocabulary as well as deficient knowledge about morphological and semantic relationships. The results also determined that the treatment period had a beneficial effect on enhancing the orthographical accuracy of the semantic acquisition and the written product though it was insufficient to mend to all causes of confusion.

While comparing the obtained results with the given statements, the first hypothesis prove to be relevant; the nature of the confusion was indeed the lack of practice of the language and a mere mastery of the basic skills. The second hypothesis was partly accurate, as the teaching of spelling rules exerted a beneficial effect on the participants' spelling abilities. However, this effect was to some extent limited and the treatment period appeared non-efficient in cases treating homophones and homophonous word combinations due to the large number of pairs existing within the language.

The present study leads to conclude with suggestions, such as including the teaching of spelling rules within the written expression module, in order to raise learners' awareness about the existence of language peculiarities, such as homonyms, contractions, silent letters and spelling differences between British and American English. According to the researcher these suggestions might improve the students' spelling aptitude and contribute to the elaboration of the spelling consciousness necessary to every user of the English languages. It also paved the way to further researches about the topic of spelling difficulties faced by E.F.L. learners, such as treating other areas of confusion caused by silent letters and sounds conveying to different spellings and vice versa or treating the impact of the mother tongue on the English language written product or dealing with the spelling differences between British English and American English.

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