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**The Impact of EFL Learners' Use of Mother Tongue on Their
Speaking Skill:**

**The Case Study of First Year LMD English Students of Naama
University Centre**

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial
Fulfillment for the Degree of "Master " in Linguistics**

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Dedications

I would like first to thank Allah for all of his blessings

I dedicate this work to:

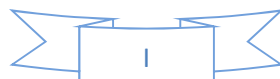
My precious lovely parents for their: love, patience and unhesitating support.

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Abstract

Speaking English language fluently is the students' main aim in EFL classes; however, students always face a big challenge which is the interference of mother tongue in speaking any foreign language. Actually, the Algerian society is considered as multilingual community because of its richness with many languages (Arabic, Tamazight and French), so switching between languages is a systematic behavior for them. Obviously, EFL learners have the tendency to use their first language. Therefore, the main objective of the present study is to investigate the influence of mother tongue on the foreign language learners' speaking skill. To carry out this research and confirm our hypothesis, the researcher administered two questionnaires, one for first year LMD students and another one for oral expression teachers in the English Department of Naama University Centre. The analysis of the results revealed that the English language is strongly influenced by the learners' first language and unfortunately that influence is a negative one, because it impacts the learners' speaking skill negatively. Thus the obtained results enabled the investigator to suggest some solutions and pedagogical recommendations.



List of Abbreviations

LMD: License, Master, Doctorate

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

MT: Mother Tongue

NL: Native Language

TL: Target Language

L₁: First Language

L₂: Second Language

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General Introduction

As English language is international, global and universal language, therefore government takes into consideration the English language teaching policy. English is being taught in order to enable students communicating in English fluently in different situation i.e. for communicative purposes, but when EFL learners start speaking in English, they initially use sounds from their mother tongue; thus, they have mother tongue influence.

For that reason, this work attempts to investigate one of the most world spread phenomena that face EFL learners, and affects their learning process which is the use of mother tongue and its impact on their speaking skill achievement at Salhi Ahmad University Centre, in order to shed light on the causes of this phenomenon and takes it into consideration, while teaching and try to get some solutions to avoid it.

In the light of the previous lines, the present study endeavors to find answers to the following questions:

- What is the main difficulty that face student when speaking English?
- Are EFL aware of the cultural differences?
- What solutions and strategies should be used by English teachers to help learners to overcome their difficulties and enhance their speaking skill?

From the above mentioned questions, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- The main difficulty that may face EFL learners in speaking English fluently is the interference of mother tongue.
- EFL learners are aware of the cultural differences between their mother tongue and the target language.
- If teachers design appropriate classroom activities. Then, students' speaking skill will be enhanced, and the appearance of mother tongue will be limited.

In order to collect data and to test the validity of the proposed hypotheses, the researcher has used two instruments as research tools which are students' and teachers' questionnaires. The collected data from EFL first year students and their teachers at Centre University of Naama have been analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

General Introduction

The research work consists of two chapters. The first chapter presents the literature review of the main theoretical aspects and it deals with three main points; In chapter one, we are going to deal with some theoretical issues related to the nature of the speaking skill; different definitions of speaking, the importance of speaking skill, as well as the characteristics of speaking performance and various classroom activities. Furthermore, handing out some difficulties faced by first year EFL learners in the speaking skill. Secondly, defining the terme “mother tongue”. Thirdly giving information about language transfer, its different definitions and origins, its theoretical background and its types. Finally the researcher discussed the relation ship between foreign languages and mother tongue transfer. Then second chapter contains data analysis of both learners' and teachers' questionnaires. It allows us to see whether the results confirm or disconfirm our hypothesis.

1.1. Introduction

Speaking a foreign language fluently is considered as a very hard task to do because it is different from the learner's native language. In fact, the difference between the two languages .i.e. the target and the native language, makes the learners face a big challenge in learning and applying the rules while speaking that language. It is known that the EFL learners always try to use their mother tongue in learning a foreign language that may push them to commit a number of errors while speaking.

1.2.1. Speaking Skill Definition

Speaking is considered as the most important skill among the other foreign language skills, that is why it takes a big concentration from EFL learners. According to Ur (1984:120), "**Many if not most foreign language learners are interested in learning to speak.**"

Speaking is the process of exchanging information either verbally or non-verbally, and makes a connection between what is learnt and what is already known and apply it in oral classes. In this respect, Mc Namara (2000) states that "**the speaking skill is the ability to use a language. It comprises two points: first, being knowledgeable of the aspects of the language; second, being able to practice these aspects in real life communication successfully** "

Furthermore, Bygate (1987:1) points out that:

Speaking is the vehicle par excellence of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional advancement and of business.it is also the medium through which much language is learnt, and which for many is particularly conducive for learning .Perhaps, then, the teaching of speaking merits more thought.

1.2.2. Importance of Speaking Skill

Speaking skill was neglected in the traditional approaches of language learning and teaching where the only focus was on reading and writing skills; the grammar translation method can be taken as an example. However, with the rising of the communicative approach, speaking and oral communication become the most important aim and method of teaching foreign languages that focuses only on how learners interact with others verbally. Ur (2000:12) points out that,

of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as "speakers" of the language as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing.

Nowadays, the most asked question for EFL learners is: do you speak English? And not do you write English? Because of its importance for learners who see that knowing a language is synonym of speaking; Celce-Murcia (2001:103) mentions that for most people **“the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication.”** The importance of speaking jumps with the integration of other language skills because through speaking we can display different functions of language. In this respect, Kingen (2000:218) explains twelve different purposes of speaking which are as follows:

-) **Personal** - expressing personal feelings, opinions, beliefs and ideas.
-) **Descriptive**- describing someone or something, real or imagined.
-) **Narrative**-creating and telling stories or chronologically sequenced events.
-) **Instructive**-giving instructions or providing directions designed to produce an outcome.
-) **Questioning**-asking questions to obtain information.
-) **Comparative**-comparing two or more objects, people, ideas, or opinions to make judgments about them.
-) **Imaginative**-expressing mental images of people, places, events, and objects.

-) **Predictive**-predicting possible future events.
-) **Interpretative**-exploring meanings, creating hypothetical deductions, and considering inferences.
-) **Persuasive**-changing others' opinions, attitudes, or points of view, or influencing the behavior of others in some way.
-) **Explanatory**-explaining, clarifying, and supporting ideas and opinions.
-) **Informative**-sharing information with others
-) Furthermore, speaking skill can help students to develop their grammar, vocabulary and also improving their writing skill.

1.2.3. Characteristics of Speaking Performance

The main goal in teaching speaking is to accomplish well oral production and this can be defined as **“the ability to express oneself intelligibly, reasonably, accurately without too much hesitation otherwise communication may break down because the listener loses interest or get impatient ”** Byrne (1986).The two main important goals that the speaker seeks to achieve are accuracy (clear, articulate, grammatically and phonologically correct) language and fluency (flowing, natural) language. Also, Richards and Rodgers (2001:157) mention that: fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: Accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context then, learners should develop a communicative competence through classroom practice. However, they should know simultaneously how the language system works in a correct and appropriate way.

1.2.3.1. Fluency

The main goal teachers wish to achieve in teaching the productive skill of speaking is oral fluency because it is considered as the main characteristics of the speaker performance. Hughes (2002) defines fluency as the ability to express oneself in an intelligible, reasonable and accurate way without too much hesitation; otherwise the communication will break down because listeners will lose their interest. Furthermore, Hedge (2000:54) adds that **“The term fluency relates to the production and it is normally reserved for speech.it is the ability to link units of**

speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation.”

To sum up, fluency refers to the learners ability to talk with normal level of continuity (speed),rate and effort to link both ideas and language together to form coherent connected speech(Hughes,2002),..Its two key indicators are:

-Speech rate.

-Speech continuity.

1.2.3.2. Accuracy

Nowadays, learners focus on being fluent speakers without paying attention to correctness and completeness of language form and they forget to be accurate while speaking so that interlocutors will not understand. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005:139) define the term accuracy as referring **“to how well the target language is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language ”**. Hence learners should pay attention that correctness and completeness of language form is of more importance for oral proficiency. Therefore, learners should take into consideration a number of issues in their production of the spoken language as the grammatical structure, vocabulary and pronunciation as well.

1.2.3.2.1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation refers to the ability to produce comprehensible speech. English language learners face difficulties in learning that language because of its pronunciation. According to Harris (1994)

“Pronunciation is the most difficult to assess, the central reason is the lack of general agreement on what good pronunciation of second language means: is comprehensibility to be the sole basis of judgment, or must we demand a high degree of phonetics and allophonic accuracy and can we be certain that two or more speakers will find the utterance of a foreign speaker equally comprehensible ”

Hence, to develop the speaking skill in English language, learners should practice pronunciation overall.

1.2.3.2.2. Grammar

The grammatical accuracy refers to the range and the appropriate use of the learners. According to Hughes (2002), the grammatical accuracy refers to the range and the appropriate use of the learners' grammatical structure that involves the length and the complexity of the utterances in addition to the ability to use the subordinating clauses.

1.2.3.2.3. Vocabulary

Achieving accuracy in terms of vocabulary refers to the proper choice of words and implies using ordinary collection of words and fixed phrases during speaking. Students usually find difficulties when they try to express their ideas; they lack the appropriate vocabulary and they sometimes use words incorrectly like in the case of synonyms which do not carry the same meaning in all contexts. Students then, have to be able to use words and expressions accurately. According to Harmer (2001), the knowledge of the word classes also allows speakers to perform well formed Utterances.

1.2.4. Classroom Speaking Activities

Listening plays a big role in practicing the speaking skill outside the classroom. Being in foreign country can facilitate the task for EFL learners because they will hear the spoken language frequency so that without conscious efforts learners will imitate and perform their own utterances on the basis of what they heard and with time they will come at point where can speak like native speakers. However, in the mother country, EFL learners need to practice the language regularly inside the classroom through performing different activities. O'Malley and Pierce (1996:59) suggest that **“different kinds of speaking activities (and consequently assessment task) are appropriate at different levels of proficiency.”** So, FL teachers should provide their learners speaking activities to develop their

communicative competence and attempt to create interaction by exchanging information and expressing ideas with attention to the use of correct grammar accuracy, suitable vocabulary and normal fluency as well as good pronunciation. Scievener (2005:152) makes the important point that **“the aim of communicative activity in class is to get learners to use the language they are learning to interact in realistic and meaningful ways. Usually involving exchanges of information or opinion.”**

Among these activities are the following ones:

1.2.4.1. Communication games

Teachers design such games to encourage and involve the students in a verbal interaction. According to Bygate (1987), such activities include first, “Describe and Draw” in which one student describes a given picture and the other one draws it. Second, “Describe and Arrange”; one student describes a particular structure using oral language and the other reconstructs it without seeing the original one. Third, “Find the difference”, two students have two similar pictures but with some differences, they must extract these differences through describing their pictures, i.e. without seeing each other’s pictures. O’Malley and Pierce (1996) call these activities “information gap activities”; they define them as **“the ability of one person to give information to another. An information gap is an activity where one student is provided with information that is kept from a partner.”**

One of the most interesting activities is gap activity; for example, the teacher provides his learners with an unfinished story and it depends on the rest of the class to guess and discuss the way it ends. In another gap activity, students are given incomplete dialogue and they have to complete it such as the following example:

A: Good morning, can I help you?

B:

A: I'll see what I can do.

B: Yes

1.2.4.2. Drama and Role Plays

More precisely, Ur (1996:131) comes to define it as follows:

“Role plays [...] is used to refer to all sorts of activities where learners imagine themselves in a situation outside the classroom [...], sometimes playing the role of someone other than themselves, and using the language appropriate to this new Context ”

This special speaking activity is said to have many positive impacts on learners in classroom:

- It gives them empathy as they examine others' ideas, feeling and points of views.
- It is a chance to practice their oral skills and interpretations as they use the foreign language to describe perceptions, emotions and reactions.
- It provides them with the opportunity to practice decision –making and Problem
- Solving skills as they gain experience in an independent thinking and cooperative learning.
- It develops both speaking and listening activities.

Doff (1988:240) presents those advantages saying that;

“Role play gives a chance to use language in new contexts and for new topics [...], because they are 'acting out' a situation .Role play encourages students to use natural expressions and intonation, as well as gesture”

1.2.4.3. Discussion Activities

Discussion is considered as one among the best ways of presenting speech and it is an interesting form of oral practice in the classroom. According to Harmer(1998:46)**“it can provide some of enjoyable and productive speaking in language classroom ”**, such activities generally help FL learners to develop their communicative abilities since they give them practice in expressing ideas orally in

an organized manner and enable them to arrive at conclusions , to clarify or modify ideas , resolve differences and find alternative solution. In this light, Lindsay and Knight (2006) point out that in such activities, students are supposed to give their opinions or receive others opinions, they can speak freely without being told what to say or not by the teacher, the students should be only informed what to talk about and given the enough time to structure what they wish to say.

1.2.4.4. Storytelling Based Activities

This type of activities has always been one of the main means of practicing speaking in classroom. It functions as a clear tool towards autonomy and takes many forms;

a) Guess the lie

In this activity learners tell each other three short personal anecdotes, where two among them are true and the third one is untrue and it depends on the others to guess the lie and to find the untrue anecdote so they argue their guesses. They can be allowed to ask a limited number of questions after the story have been told by their colleague (Thornbury, 1998: 96).

Example:

Think about a lucky or unlucky experience you have had .You are going to tell your Partners about it, choose from the list below the things you want to talk about .think about what you will say and what language you will need.

- Was it a lucky or unlucky experience?
- When did it happen?
- Where were you?
- What happened?

b) Insert the Word

Each student is given a card in which an unusual word or expression is written and has to be kept secret. The student has to tell his colleague an anecdote in which he /she incorporates 'the secret item ' as unobtrusively as possible, by the end, the students have to guess the secret word.

1.2.5. Speaking Difficulties in Foreign Language Learning

There are several difficulties that may face EFL learners while learning foreign language among them:

1.2.5.1. Inhibition

This problem refers to the feeling of fear of making mistakes and getting embarrassment in front of the others using the target language. For Ur (1984), **“it is too easy for a foreign language classroom to create inhibition anxiety ”**, some people choose death then speaking front public as Jerry Seinfeld stats **“According to most studies, peoples number one fear is public speaking, number two is death. Death is number two. Does that sound right ”**, such factors can occurs between learners because of; their feeling of linguistic inferiority and their inability to develop their communicative skills, and being shamed about making errors while talking for this purposes many students prefer to not speak at all.

1.2.5.2. Nothing to Say

"I don't know"," I have nothing to say" and "No comments" are common expressions for EFL learners; these expressions are due to lack of motivation or interest. Littewood (1999) expresses his perspective noticing that unless learners of foreign language are giving full opportunities to express themselves to present their ideas and to communicate and integrate with the world around them (classmates/teacher), they aren't going to improve their speaking performance. Students speaking skills develop better in motivational setting it is important for avoiding inhibition they feel safety comfortable.

1.2.5.3. Poor Listening Practice

Among all of the four simplex skills (listening reading speaking and writing) speaking is considered as the most important one because when we hear someone speaks a language, we refer to him as "speaker" of that language and we think that he has sufficient knowledge, as if speaking include all the rest skills, however there

is a study shown that When we have a conversation, we talk about 50% the time and the other 50% is spent in listening to the other person who is speaking. If you do not understand what the other person speaks about, so it will be difficult to reply. Thus students should be aware of the mount of listening to English native speaker, and not only their teachers, because if they do not listen they will have no suitable words to use or they face miss pronunciation problems.

1.2.5.4. Pronunciation Problems

English words can be difficult to pronounce for no native speakers, that's why it must be taken into consideration that you have to pronounce the word exactly to ensure that people understand the real meaning, because mispronunciation of one sound may lead to a big misunderstanding and change in the meaning for example: instead of saying win time; wine the time.

1.2.5.5. Mother Tongue Use

Sometimes when we speak English, we face the problem that we have a sentence and ideas in mind but in ML so it becomes difficult to express it in SL. According to Baker and Westrup (2003:12), **“barriers to learning can occur if students knowingly or unknowingly transfer the cultural rules from their mother tongue to a foreign language ”** for this reason, EFL learners will not be able to use the foreign language correctly if they keep on being influenced by their mother tongue.

Finally all the above mentioned problems are important one that must be taken in to consideration while teaching; As Kelly state, **"all these problems are very real in our classrooms and worthy of investigation and remedial action in the classroom"**(Kelly, 2000: 12).

1.2. Mother Language

The new born spent months, hearing voices sounds and words, from the surrounded people. Actually, they acquired a language or what became later as what we know as mother language moving through different stages to become more fluent in speaking that language.

1.3.1 Mother Language Definition

Mother tongue or the native language is the language that persons acquired it in their first years to become means of expressing ideas in daily life communication; also it can be considered as heritage. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language define mother tongue as follows: the first language that a person learns and the language used in that person's home country, an example of mother tongue is English for someone born in America. Mother tongue (first language, native language or vernacular) as the language a person learns first. And correspondingly the person is called a native speaker of the language.

1.4. Language Transfer

Discovering the world is in our human nature, when we face a new things we try to deal with, using our previous knowledge; the knowledge that we have learn from something similar to the new one and try to make a comparison between the similarities and differences consciously or unconsciously. This is the case for EFL learner; when he learns or deals with the target language, he tries to make link between his mother tongue and the target language in one way or another.

1.4.1. Language Transfer Definition

Language transfer refers to the influence of mother tongue on the learning of foreign languages. The definition of language transfer differs among linguist. Odlin (1989:411) points out that **“Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired.”**, Odlin (2001:27) offers the working definition of transfer: **“transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired”**

Concerning the similarities and differences between languages, Odlin (1989) states an example about the English verb “ be” when the Arab learner omits it while speaking English language because it does not exist in Arabic language, Lado (1957) thinks that learning a second language can be successful when L1 and L2 are similar and can be unsuccessful if they are different (Al-Sibai, 2004:3).The term transfer is widely used rather than interlanguage, Ellis (1994:710) reports that:

The term has come to be used with different but related meanings (i) to refer to the series of interlocking systems which characterize acquisition, (ii) to refer to the system that is observed at a single stage of development (“an interlanguage”), and (iii) to refer to particular L1/L2 combinations (for example, L1 French/L2 English vs. L1 Japanese/L2 English).

For the purpose of this work, transfer will be considered the same as interference, the appearance of the idea which mentioned that the interference from the native language is the major obstacle to foreign language learning appears from the 1940s till the 60s, in hence this classical statement can prove that:

The basic problem of the foreign language learning arises not out of any essential difficulty in the features of the new language themselves, but primarily out of the special “set ” created by the foreign language habits.

(Ellis, 1999:124)

There are two types of transfer which have been distinguished between the theorists: positive and negative transfer.

1.4.2. Types of Transfer

Transfer is a process using previous knowledge about our first language or mother language to learn a target language, there are two famous types of transfer. According to Ellis (1999), transfer is the process of using knowledge of the first language in learning a second language, it is negative transfer. On the other hand, Ormrod (1990) has a different point of view; he agrees that transfer is part of everyday life: individuals encounter new situations and draw on their previously acquired knowledge and skills to deal with them. in fact; transfer is an essential component of human functioning, so it becomes positive transfer.

Oldin (1989:55-63) claims that positive transfer refers to the transfer that takes place when the L1 grammar accommodate to that of the L2; while negative transfer occurs when the L1 and the L2 are different in terms of linguistic features. In other words, positive transfer helps L2 learning and makes it easier while negative transfer hinders it and causes errors. For instance, English is different from Arabic in various ways and it is expected that when Arabic speakers acquire English as a second language, they will meet difficulties and make mistakes at different linguistic levels.

1.5. Foreign Languages and Mother Tongue Transfer

Language transfer refers to the influence of the mother tongue on the learning of the foreign language. When there are no major differences between L1 and L2, the transfer will be positive, which will make language learning easier. When there are differences, the learner's L1 knowledge may interfere with learning L2, negative transfer will occur, which is called (mother-tongue) interference. Interference affects all levels of language, such as pronunciation grammar, lexis, syntax and so on. The errors arise from the mismatch between the grammatical habits of the learners' mother tongue and the new grammatical patterns that the learners have to acquire in the foreign language. Although mother tongue interference is a very important cause, it is not the only one. The learners fall back on their first language using their mother tongue when they lack a rule in the FL. Learners initiate an utterance using their first language (instead of 'acquired' FL knowledge) and then substitute FL lexical items, also making small repairs to the resulting string by means of the Monitor.

1.6. Conclusion

Through this chapter, we have tried to examine some of the theoretical aspects that concern foreign language Speaking skill that being the most important skill among the other foreign language skills, principally, we define the term mother tongue, also gave a definition to the term language transfer and its types, finally go deeper with the relation between foreign languages and mother tongue transfer. In this regard, the foreign language is strongly influenced by the learners' first language and fortunately that influence is a negative one, because it impacts the learners speaking skill negatively.

2.1. Introduction

The major aim of this research is to investigate to what extent the learner's first language use affects his/her English speaking skill achievement and the linguistic interference from Arabic into English and to make Arab students aware of the differences between Arabic and English and try to find solutions for this problem. To illustrate the mentioned purposes, the researcher designed questionnaires for teachers at the English department and 1st year LMD students in the branch of English at Naama University Centre. This chapter includes a description of the sample chosen and the questionnaires analysis of the teachers' and students' opinions and the results obtained. Moreover, the findings and the results will be carefully analyzed and discussed to reach the mentioned objectives.

2.2. Research Design

In this study, we are searching for the impact of students' native language use on their foreign language speaking skill; it is based on the descriptive method in which both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used when gathering data. The researcher used the descriptive method because of time constraints. This method was of great help to finish the work in the available time. The population of our research is the 1st year LMD students which were selected randomly.

2.3 Students' Questionnaire: Analysis and Discussion

The collected data from students' questionnaire will be analysed as follows:

2.3.1. Student's Sample

In order to collect data the researcher chose a group of 1st year LMD English students, because of the small period of time during which the research was held. These students were selected randomly and without any specific feature so that the results can be as significant as possible.

2.3.1. Description of the Questionnaire

This questionnaire consist of ten 10 questions which are organized in a logical order. They are closed questions requiring from the students to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices, or to choose 'yes' or 'no' answered followed by brief justification whenever necessary.

) **Section I: General Information**

This section deals with the students' general information; such as their age and gender.

) **Section II: Language Learning**

In this section, the researcher attempt to know the students reasons beyond their choice of studying English, also their evaluation of their own level in speaking English.

) **Section III: Socio-Cultural Awareness**

This section is concerned with the students' awareness and importance of culture and its influence in EFL learning.

) **Section IV: Difficulties in speaking English**

For this section, the researcher attempt to know learners difficulties in English classes and what are the strategies used by when face these difficulties in speaking English.

) **Section V: Propose Solution**

Here, to give the opportunity for the learners to propose some solution to avoid the interference of mother tongue.

2.3.3. Analysis of the Questionnaire

Students' age

The following table shows the learners age distribution:

Age	18	19	20	21	29	Average
Respondents	08	06	06	09	01	30
Percentage	26,67	20	20	30	3,33	100%

Table 2.1: Students' Age Distribution

In this table there are (5) age groups in our sample. Students' ages vary between 18 and 29 years old. Out of the total number of the sample that means thirty students. Eighteen Years old (08) students represent (26, 67%). Besides 19 and 20 Years old represents the same percentage (20%). 21 years old nine students represent (30%) and only one student represent (3, 33%). The result from the table above shows great diversity concerning the age of the students in our sample.

Students' gender

The following table shows the learners gender:

Gender	Male	Female	Average
Respondents	11	19	30
Percentage	36.67	63.33	100%

Table 2.2: Students' Gender

The result in the above table shows that, most of the students are girls 63.33%, whereas only 36.67 percent are boys.

Question 01: Did you choose to study English?

This question is intended to see if studying English was student's choice or not, the results are shown in the following table:

Responses	Yes	No	Average
Respondents	29	01	30
Percentage	96.67	3.33	100%

Table 2.3: Students' Choice to Study English

The table illustrated that, ninety six point sixty seven percent that mean the majority of them who chooses to study English and the rest was not their choice.

Question 02: How would you evaluate your speaking skill?

This question is intended to see if is to make students evaluate their speaking skill ability. Based on the following results, we can deduce if they are satisfied or not.

Responses	Good	Average	Low	Average
Respondents	07	20	03	30
Percentage	23,33	66,67	10	100%

Table2.4: Students' Self Evaluation of Their English level

Most of the students (66.67%) consider themselves as medium level English users. Whereas (23.33%) see that their level is good while only ten percent consider their level as a low one.

Question03: How often do you use mother tongue in English class?

This question aims to find out the amount of mother tongue used by learners in English classes.

Responses	Not at all	Sometimes	Often	Always	Average
Respondents	04	21	04	01	30
Percentage	13,33	70	13,33	3,33	100%

Table2.5: The Amount of Mother Tongue Used By EFL Students

As is illustrated by the table, most students (70%) speak their mother language sometimes inside the classroom and only three point thirty three speak English always. Whereas the same percentage (13, 33%) for not at all and often.

Question04: How about your teacher? Does he/she use the mother tongue when teaching?

The main aim of this question is to attempt whether EFL teachers use MT while teaching, the table below shows the found result:

Responses	Not at all	Some times	It depends on	Average
Respondents	07	16	07	30
Percentage	23,33	53,33	23,33	100%

Table2.6: Using Mother Tongue by Teachers

The result illustrated that the majority of teachers (53,33%) use it only sometimes, whereas twenty three point thirty three percent do not use it at all and (23,33%) use the mother tongue only where it necessary.

Question05: Does your mother tongue influence you?

This question is intended to see if the students think that they influenced by their mother tongue or not, the result are shown in the following table:

Responses	Yes	No	Average
Respondents	19	11	30
Percentage	63,33	36,67	100%

Table2.7: The Influence of Mother Language

What we notice through the results that sixty three point thirty three percent agree that they influenced with their first language, and the rest (36, 67%) disagree.

Question06: What do you do when you face difficulties when speaking English?

The purpose of this question is to know the strategies used by learners when facing difficulties while speaking English language,

Responses	Stop the conversation	Try to continue the conversation	Continue the conversation using mother tongue	Average
Respondents	02	21	07	30
Percentage	6,67	70	23,33	100%

Table2.8: What Students Do When Facing Difficulties in Speaking English?

The result shows that 70% of the learners tray to continue the conversation, while (23, 33%) see that the best solution is to continue the conversation using mother tongue and few ones six point sixty seven percent chose to stop the conversation.

Question07: Do you think that learning English using mother tongue is a failure?

This question aims to find out students opinion about learning English using mother tongue.

Responses	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Average
Respondents	16	10	04	30
Percentage	53,33	33,33	13,33	100%

Table2.9: Students' Opinion about Learning English Using Mother Tongue

According to the result of this table more than the half agree that learning English using mother tongue is a failure, (33, 33 %) students disagree whereas the rest choose to be neutral.

Question08: In your opinion, should EFL learners be aware of the cultural differences between their mother tongue and English language?

The purpose of this question is to see whether students are aware of the cultural differences between the NL and the TL and vice-versa. The answers are included in the following table:

Responses	Yes	No	Average
Respondents	20	10	30
Percentage	66,67	33,33	100%

Table2.10: EFL Students' Awareness of the Cultural Differences between the NL and the TL

As we can see in the table above (66,67%) of the students are aware of the cultural differences between their mother tongue and English language, on the other hand only thirty three point thirty three percent does not.

Question09: When a teacher asks a question in which language you think?

This question asked to investigate the students' way of thinking.

Responses	Arabic	French	English	Average
Respondents	13	02	15	30
Percentage	43,33	6,67	50	100%

Table2.11: The Language in Which Students Think

The data shown in the table reflect that the half of the students think in English, 43,33% think in Arabic whereas only six point sixty seven percent think in French.

*This question is related to the previous one, if you know the answer but you cannot express it using English, what would you do?

The majority of students prefer to use their mother tongue or word by word translation, others see that using simple words is best solution or take an advice from their teacher, as it shows below:

- ✓ I'll answer it using my mother tongue.
- ✓ May be I ask my friend or think on Arabic than I translate in English.
- ✓ I try to expressing it using English or I expressed in Arabic.

Question10: As EFL learners, can you suggest some solution to avoid the interference of mother tongue on English classes?

Concerning this question students give many suggestions as:

- ✓ Try to speak English all the time with friends and avoid the use of the mother tongue.
- ✓ Try to think and understand English language in Arabic in your head but don't use it in the classroom.
- ✓ Study English language from the primary school.

2.4. Teachers' Questionnaire: Analysis and Discussion

The collected data from teachers' questionnaire will be analysed ad follows:

2.4.1. Teacher's Sample

Teachers of English at Naama University Centre are the total population. We will deal with sample of nine (09) teachers of oral expression from the whole population of English teachers. The selection of such sample will be based on the consideration that oral expression teachers will benefit us more than other teachers since their module can only be taught orally, and their general goal is to help students develop their speaking performance which is our concern.

2.4.2. Description of the Questionnaire

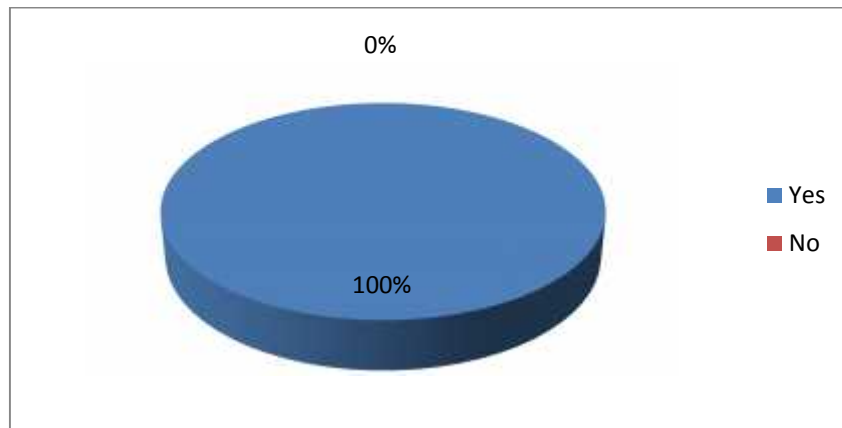
The questionnaire consists of eight (08) questions which are devoted to oral expression teachers at the English department of Naama University Centre. The

eight questions are composed of four closed-ended questions which are number (1, 3, 4 and 5) and four open-ended questions which are (2, 6, 7 and 8).

2.4.3. Analysis of the Questionnaire

Question01: Do first- year students face difficulties in oral expression?

This question is intended to see if EFL teachers face any difficulties in oral sessions.



Pie Chart2.1: Facing EFL Learners' Difficulties in Oral Expression Classes

All of the teachers hundred percent see that EFL learners face difficulties in oral expression classes.

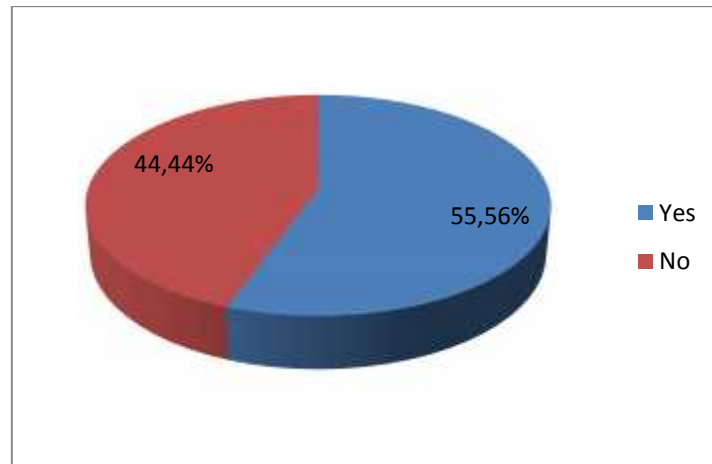
Question02: In your point of view, what is / are the cause (s) of these difficulties?

Most of respondents agree that facing EFL student difficulties in oral classes because of many reasons such as; mother tongue influence, shyness, language problem and weak linguistic levels in English as it shown below:

- ✓ Mother tongue interference/lack of vocabulary.
- ✓ For some of them, it is not their choice or weak linguistic levels in English.
- ✓ Pronunciation, stress and lack of confidence.

Question03: do you think that the interference of mother tongue is the main cause of these difficulties?

Our purpose from this question is to know whether the interference of mother tongue causes speaking difficulties or not.

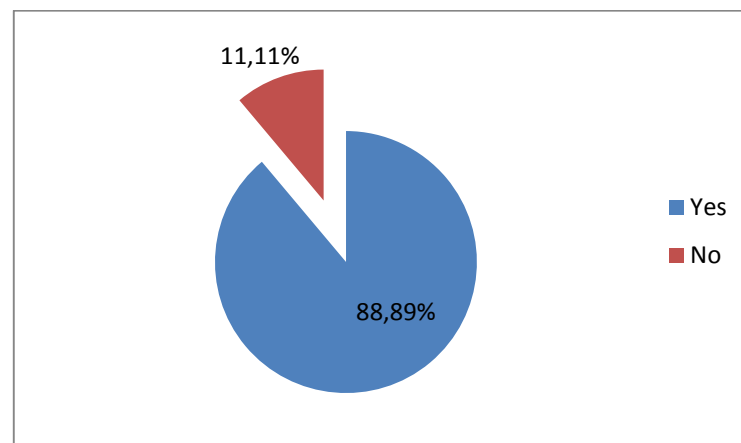


Pie Chart2.2: The Interference of Mother Tongue

The result in the above Pie Chart shows that, 55,56% think that the interference of mother tongue is the main cause of these difficulties and the rest that mean forty four point forty four percent respondent with no.

Question04: Do you think that knowing the reasons behind these difficulties; will make the teaching process easier for you?

The following figure shows teachers' opinion about what makes the learning process easier.

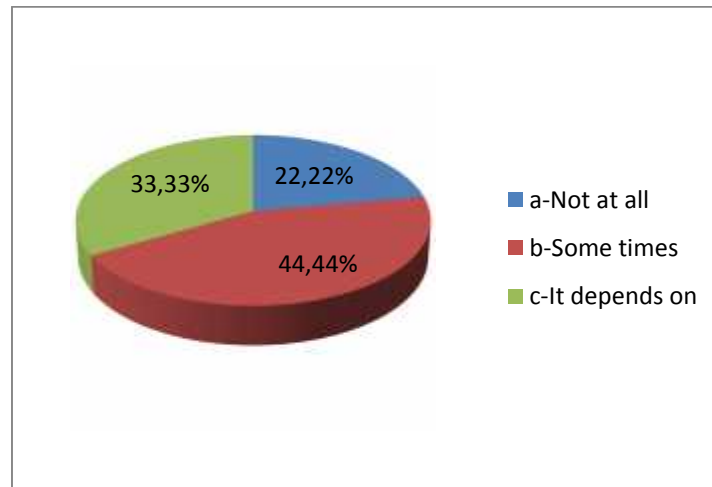


Pie Chart2.3: What Make the Teaching Process Easier for Teachers?

Regarding this question, (88, 89%) most of the informant think that knowing the reasons behind these difficulties; will make the teaching process easier, whereas only 11, 11% see the opposite.

Question05: Do you use the mother tongue when teaching?

This question is intended to see if EFL teachers use the mother tongue while teaching.



Pie Chart2.4: Using Mother Tongue While Teaching

The teachers' answers indicate that 22, 22% do not use the mother tongue when teaching at all, whereas 44, 44% teachers use it sometimes. Thirty three point thirty three percent stated that the use mother tongue depends on the situation.

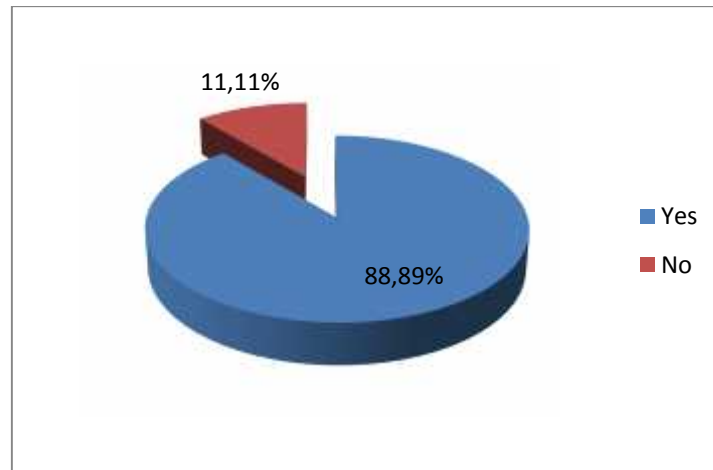
Question06: In your opinion, how can the mother tongue affect first year students' speaking?

Regarding teachers' opinion on this question most of them see that Mother tongue affects negatively students' fluency and accuracy by stating that:

- ✓ The use of mother tongue in the teaching process make students lazy to learn English language
- ✓ If they will depend on it most of the time, AA will decrease their speaking skill and will break down their learning process.

Question07: As an FL teacher, do you give importance to the cultural differences between your students' mother tongue and English language?

The main aim of this question is to attempt whether EFL teachers give importance to the cultural differences between their students' mother tongue and English language



Pie Chart2.5: The Importance of Cultural Differences

As it notice from the above Pie Chart, the majority of teachers (88,89%) indicate that yes for giving importance to the cultural differences, between students' mother tongue and English language. Eleven point eleven percent said no.

Question08: What are the solutions or strategies you can suggest to avoid the influence of mother tongue?

Teachers have proposed different solutions and strategies for students one of the main solutions they suggest is to listen to English language, avoid word by word translation. Furthermore, some suggestion indicates that teachers should make students aware of the influence of mother tongue on speaking English and keep practicing and correcting them to avoid such mistakes.

2.5. The main results

The analysis of students' questionnaire proves that the main difficulty that may face them in speaking English fluently is the interference of mother tongue; in addition to that EFL learners confirm that the majority of them are aware of the cultural differences between their mother tongue and English language. On the other hand, teachers' questionnaire analysis indicates that, first year EFL students face many difficulties when speaking English language among them; the negative influence of their mother tongue, secondly teachers propose that designing

appropriate classroom activities. Then, students' speaking skill will be enhanced, and the appearance of mother tongue will be limited.

2.6. Recommendations

Taking in to consideration the observation of data collected throughout the questionnaire we must consider the following:

- ✓ Native language; when used in teaching English speaking; must only be a tool to describe, explain or simplify English concepts' as they do exist in an English speaking society.
- ✓ Mother tongue should never be allowed to be considered as a starting point to structure or to form English expressions.
- ✓ Teachers should encourage their students to practice speaking activities as much as possible because the more they speak the more they become familiar with English conversations.
- ✓ Students self-confidence should be developed and reduce their anxiety by avoiding direct and harsh comments, because mistakes are part of the learning process
- ✓ Students should be encouraged to read different works in English language because reading a lot enables them to be familiar with English vocabulary and with the correct use of English rules.
- ✓ Students should avoid word by word translation and try to think in English.
- ✓ Learners should practice more the language inside and outside the classroom.
- ✓ Teachers should highlight the cultural differences that exist between English and Arabic to make students aware of these differences and not to mix up the use of them.
- ✓ It is suggested that first year EFL students at Naama University Centre should be taught extra oral classes lessons more and more.

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, the main focus was to find an answer to the asked questions with reference to the aims of this study, which is investigating for the impact of EFL learners' use of mother tongue on their speaking skill, as well as to involve collection of data for finding out the main difficulty that face students when speaking English. After analyzing data, we found that EFL students face difficulties in speaking English language; and the majority of them agree that the main difficulty that may face them is the interference of their mother tongue. Also EFL teachers agree that the cultural differences awareness is main point should deal with.

General Conclusion

The main aims of this research were to check the main difficulty that face student when speaking English, whether EFL aware of the cultural differences and to get some solutions and strategies that should be used by English teachers to help first year LMD learners at Naama University Centre to overcome their difficulties and enhance their speaking skill. Through this study, the researcher hypothesized that the main difficulty that may face EFL learners in speaking English fluently is the interference of their mother tongue. Secondly, EFL learners are aware of the cultural differences between their mother tongue and the target language. Finally, if teachers design appropriate classroom activities then, students' speaking skill will be enhanced, and the appearance of mother tongue will be limited.

The present study is a total of two chapters. The first chapter mainly highlights some of the theoretical issues related to the speaking skill, primary, its definition and the importance. also, the characteristics of the speaking skill, as well as some strategies used by FL teachers. Furthermore, it hand out some difficulties faced by first year EFL learners in the speaking skill. Secondly, defining the terme "mother tongue". Thirdly providing a historical background of the language transfer, principally, its definition and its types. Finally the researcher discussed the relation ship between foreign languages and mother tongue transfer. The second chapter which is the practical part is concerned with analysis of the obtained results gathered from students and the teacher's questionnaire.

After analyzing the collected data of 1st year LMD students' and their oral expression teachers' questionnaires responses, we reached the following conclusions. Firstly, 1st year students are highly motivated to speak and learn English, also they are not satisfied with their level. EF learners have difficulties in understanding, using and speaking English but they challenge their selves when they face difficulties in speaking English like using paralinguistic features or the native language. Secondly, both of EFL teachers and learners are aware of the influence of socio-cultural and language interference in using the language and also of the importance of knowing the foreign language culture. What is important is that they are aware of the importance of knowing the cultural differences between the native language and the target language. Thirdly, students think in Arabic when

General Conclusion

they speak English and they interpret the meaning based on their cultural background knowledge.

The analysis of the questionnaires confirmed our entire hypothesis; firstly one of the main difficulties that may face EFL learners in speaking English fluently is the interference of mother tongue. Concerning the second one; both of teachers and students agree that giving importance to the cultural differences, between students' mother tongue and English language is an important point should deal with. Thirdly, teachers have proposed different solutions and strategies for students; to enhance their speaking skill and overcome their mother tongue interference.


Several limitations can be noticed in the present study due to the limitation of time and the small size of the sample so it cannot be generalized, also one of the limitations this research is based on the fact that it is a case study, and the conclusions found based on the research cannot always be extended more generally. As a final limitation, one can argue that not all the students response on the opened questions. For those reasons, this investigation calls for further research.

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APPENDIX (A)

Students' Questionnaire

Dear Informant,

This questionnaire is designed for the aim of collecting the needed data about the impact of mother tongue on the speaking skill. For this reason you are kindly invited to answer the following questions, by putting a tick on the right answer or expressing your comments where necessary.

Thanks for your collaboration

Part one:

Age:

Sex: Male Female

Part two:

1-Did you choose to study English?

Yes No

2-How would you evaluate your speaking skill?

- a) Good
- b) Average
- c) Low

3-How often do you use mother tongue in English class?

- a) Not at all
- b) Sometimes

c) Often

d) Always

4-How about your teacher? Does he/she use the mother tongue when teaching?

a) Not at all

b) Some times

c) It depends on

5-Does your mother tongue influence you?

Yes

No

6-What do you do when you face difficulties when speaking English?

a) Stop the conversation

b) Try to continue the conversation

c) Continue the conversation using mother tongue

7-Do you think that learning English using mother tongue is a failure?

a) Agree

b) Disagree

c) Neutral

8-In your opinion, should EFL learners be aware of the cultural differences between their mother tongue and English language?

Yes

No

9-When a teacher asks a question in which language you think?

a) Arabic

b) French

c) English

* If you know the answer but you cannot express it using English, what would you do?

.....
.....

10-As EFL learners, can you suggest some solution to avoid the interference of mother tongue on English classes?

.....
.....

Thanks you for answering all this questions



APPENDIX (B)

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is designed for the aim of collecting the needed data about the impact of mother tongue on the speaking skill. For this reason, you are kindly invited to answer the following questions by putting a tick on the right answer or expressing your comments where necessary.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1-Do first- year students face difficulties in oral expression?

Yes

No

2- In your point of view, what is / are the cause (s) of these difficulties?

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

3- Do you think that the interference of mother tongue is the main cause of these difficulties ?

Yes

No

4- Do you think that knowing the reasons behind these difficulties; will make the teaching process easier for you?

Yes

No

5-Do you use the mother tongue when teaching?

- a) Not at all
- b) Some times
- c) It depends on

6-In your opinion, how can the mother tongue affect first year students' speaking?

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

7- As an FL teacher, do you give importance to the cultural differences between your students' mother tongue and English language?

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

8- What are the solutions or strategies you can suggest to avoid the influence of mother tongue?

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

Thank you