
(JRM) Interference Problems in Translating Texts from Arabic into English (and in Writing Directly in English) among EFL Students in Algeria

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Résumé

Interference manifests when the native language influences the use of a second language (Leberman, 2016), so interference is a common phenomenon that occurs in learning and using foreign languages (Hall, 2016). This influence can lead to misinterpretation between writers and readers. The phenomenon of interference can be present at different levels such as phonology, syntax, lexis and pragmatics. This study sheds light on the notion of transfer in pragmatics.

We investigate the issue of pragmatic transfer in translating texts from Arabic into English, or in writing directly in English, among EFL students of Ahmed Zabana university (Relizane, Algeria). We suppose that the roots of this phenomenon are to be found in linguistic pragmatics and in social pragmatics.

We examined the written productions of 40 students who have been studying the English language for two or three years at the English Department of Ahmed Zabana University.

To investigate the way the native language influences the use of a foreign language, a questionnaire was distributed to the students.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part included closed questions on the linguistic profile of the students including the students' level of English. The students had all an intermediate level. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of five tests: a discourse completion test, a translation activity, a test on the use of English idioms, a phonetic transcription and an activity in intonation. Results show that 100% of them were influenced by the Arabic language when writing in English, but only 40% (24 students) were aware of the interferences.

By analysing the collected data from the given questionnaire, we also notice that interferences occur because the students lack knowledge and awareness not only of the English language, but also of their native language, Arabic. This presentation will detail the preliminary study and outline the methodology we intend to adopt for our doctoral thesis, to examine further the phenomenon of pragmatic transfer in written production in order to develop Algerian students' pragmatic competencies to avoid this phenomenon.

*Intervenant

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