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Fossilization in EFL Acquisition.
The Case of: Middle and Secondary School.

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of the Requirements for the Master's Degree in Didactics**

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my dear mother, peace upon her soul, my father, my supportive brothers, my sweet nephews, and my close friends

Hakim

I dedicate the following work to my beloved mother and father, I also dedicate this work to my sisters, and my friends.

Amine

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Abstract

Non native language learners are almost generally bound to pass by a stage of interlanguage which stands at midway between total ignorance and perfect mastery of the target language. However, the most prominent feature of interlanguage is fossilization, which is the acquisition of faulty language with certain steadfastness. This research aims at investigating the impacts of fossilization on EFL learning in their language acquisition. It is meant to explore the various ways in which fossilization hinders the learners' acquisition and fluency in the target language. The methodology deployed in this work is qualitative and quantitative include: A questionnaire administered to English language learners in the middle and secondary schools of Tiaret in Algeria, in addition, and an interview with teachers from the previously mentioned schools. The research findings make evidence of fossilization effects on foreign language acquisition in its different systems; that it obstructs the learners' foreign language acquisition process. The research findings also confirm the possibility of helping the learners in surpassing fossilization through considerate strategies which necessitates adequate teaching instructions to insure the correct foreign language acquisition.

Keywords: Fossilization, EFL learners, Target Language, Language acquisition, Fluency.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as a foreign language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

TL : Target Language

IL : Interlanguage

SLA : Second Language Acquisition

FL : Foreign language

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General Introduction

General Introduction

Foreign language learning is by far a sensitive process in which learners, despite their age or mental capacities, have to go through an adequate and faultless course of evolution in order to ensure the success of language acquisition and to achieve a certain level of fluency, both receptivity and productivity. The process is a challenging yet a rewarding experience. However, there is an essential fact that must be taken into consideration whenever exposed to a language for the very first time. This involves the fact that the target foreign language, like any language, consists of a number of systems each of which monitors the correct production and the unfailing function of the language, besides the cultural system that ensures its conventional use just as its native speakers do. The efficient learning of the target language conventionally means the pertinent mastery and the adept manipulation of those systems.

Foreign language education has been compartmentalized into a set of skills for the sake of easing learning: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each skill is generally developed on the basis of consented design and implementation of rational and intuitive principles. Nevertheless, the actual process of foreign language learning can by no means be a completely flawless journey. The exposition of learners to unauthentic material, and by non-native speakers generally results in errors at the level of structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, or contextual conformity by learners. By dint of repeating the same errors with a belief in their correctness, those errors get stored in the learner's memory with some relative strength and tend to get defiant to attempts of change. This is what education experts call fossilization.

Our research is concerned with a phenomenon that ranges within the contour of didactics. It bears on language acquisition and crystallizes one of most thwarts that may hamper its normal course: fossilization. We aim to bring the phenomenon of fossilization under light, unfold its essence, display its factors and consequences and the way it impinges on language

learning in order to clarify it and to create awareness among learners of its impact on language acquisition and find out about the ways it can be averted.

The core problem taken up in the present research paper can be formulated in the following question: How does fossilization impede the learner's way toward the acquisition of fluency and accuracy in a foreign language?

For the sake of coherent pursuit of the investigation, this research problem has been divided up into three research questions:

1. At the level of which system of the foreign language does fossilization occur?
2. How does fossilization impact EFL learners' language?
3. What instructional strategies can alleviate fossilization in foreign language learning?

The following hypotheses have been put forth as anticipated answers for the research questions raised after the research problem.

1. Fossilization occurs at the level of all the systems of the foreign language: the grammatical, the lexical, the phonological, the morphological, and the underlying cultural system.
2. Errors persist in the learners' language and impede their progress on language learning.
3. A number of instructional insightful strategies such as teachers' monitoring and constructive feedback can alleviate fossilization in foreign language learning.

In this research, quantitative and qualitative research tools have been adopted for the collection of data. The use of the two means is mainly meant to approach the two main partners of the educational activity who are the most directly concerned with the phenomenon under investigation: the learner and the teacher, the research tools consist of a questionnaire

and an interview. The data was collected from both English teachers and learners. The questionnaire was submitted to a total of 40 learners, divided into 20 samples from the 1st to 4th grade of middle school and 20 samples from the 1st to 3rd grade of secondary school. In addition to the interview conducted with 3 English language teachers.

The learners are asked clear and understandable questions; their English teachers are asked questions concerning the target phenomenon among their learners and the way fossilization affects the normal course of instruction.

As for the general layout of this research, it consists of three chapters; the first one serves a theoretical account of the phenomenon of fossilization; it is divided into five sections: the first section tracks back the advent of the notion of fossilization in the field of language learning; the second explores the way fossilization relates to foreign language acquisition; the third enlists the categories of fossilization; the fourth lays out the different forms of fossilization; and the fifth details the major causes of fossilization.

The second chapter is concerned with the empirical study of the phenomenon of fossilization among young learners of English in the Algerian Middle and Secondary Schools. Two categories of informants have been addressed using two research tools: a questionnaire has been designed for Middle and Secondary School pupils and an interview has been conducted with their teachers of English. The data collected have been thoroughly scrutinized, illustrated, commented, and prepared for interpretation, the concern of the third chapter.

The third, and final, chapter takes up the interpretation of the findings reaped in the previous chapter i.e. field work and the inference of informed recommendations which are supposedly likely to contribute some insights about the phenomenon

CHAPTER ONE:

Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

EFL instruction is, supposedly, a process intended for the acquisition of fluency in the language both in receptive and productive skills. The utmost aim is native-like fluency. The problem is that the language is being learnt in a context which lacks native teachers, speech community, opportunities of practice, and reliable authentic material, and the elements which are required to make the aim realizable. Efforts are deliberately made by non-native teachers as well as learners to deal with the situation; nonetheless, to approximate native-like fluency in the target remains not that feasible in such a context. There are several phenomena which crop up on the course of learning in the FL classroom

It can be observed in an EFL classroom where learners demonstrate a strong passion towards the English language and show great determination to fully engage themselves in the language learning process to communicate fluently in a foreign language, learners deliberately engage in lively conversations with one another and with their instructor. However, as the learners' progress along the journey of acquiring the target language, they inevitably make multiple errors. These errors are a natural outcome of limited exposure to authentic TL sources and interference from their native language. As time passes, the learners unintentionally nurture these errors through unconscious repetition, leading them to become deeply embedded in their linguistic repertoire. This state of stableness transforms them into a captivating instance of fossilization. If the instructors are well-versed and aware of the complexities of language acquisition, they will be capable of recognizing the phenomenon of fossilization. Such demotivating problem will cause their TL to be stuck and unlikely to improve. Making recurring errors and mistakes that prevent further progress towards the native-like fluency in the TL, causing them to become "fossilized".

Section One: The Advent of the term “Fossilization”

1.2 The Notion of Fossilization

According to the linguist Larry Selinker (1972), fossilization is the result of a learners' language acquisition process which is influenced by their L1 and the TL input as well as by other cognitive, social, and affective factors. Fossilized learners' progress on the learning course is crippled by their recurring errors as they become unable to improve their language. When this happens, the learner will start making errors which, if not corrected, will develop into incorrect language structures difficult to remove.

Many researchers took up the terminology with the intent to study its essence and repercussions based on Selinker's theory of Interlanguage that introduced this concept. In fact, the causes standing behind fossilization are complex and multifactorial, and may include cognitive, affective, social, and educational characteristics.

1.2.1 Selinker's Neologism

Selinker describes fossilization as a process that occurs in language learning, where certain errors or patterns become permanently ingrained and difficult to change. This term is also used metaphorically to describe a similar phenomenon in the latent psychological structure, where certain behaviors, or thoughts become fixed and resistant to change. Selinker gives an overview on what sort of psychological structure defines the mechanism of fossilization, he states the following:

Fossilizable linguistic phenomena are linguistic items, rules, and speakers of a particular NL subsystems will tend to keep in their IL relative to a particular TL, no matter what the age of the learner or amount of explanation and instruction he receives in the TL.
(Selinker, 1972, p. 215)

It can be inferred that the concept of “fossilizable” linguistic phenomena refers to the linguistic items, rules, and habits that are deeply ingrained in the internal language IL subsystems of a speaker of a particular NL. These phenomena tend to persist in the IL of a speaker relative to a particular target language TL, regardless of the age or instructional level of the language learner. According to Selinker’s statement, those rules and items are what paves the way to the learner’s language improvement. However, during a certain period of time they become unable to progress in their language acquisition despite receiving additional instruction and practice, as Selinker suggested. It is assumable that this latent psychological structure can reach out to different linguistic domains such as pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax despite the age of the learners, or how much instructions and exposure to the target language they receive.

A common illustration is the retention of a first language L1 accent when speaking a second language L2 among non-native learners. Even with extensive exposure to the L2 and instruction in pronunciation, some learners may continue to use the intonation, stress, or rhythm patterns of their L1, leading to a distinctive accent in their L2 speech. This can be referred to as mentioned earlier, a latency or utterance in the pronunciation and accent.

Selinker references that French speakers tend to use a uvular /r/ sound in their internal English language system, while American English speakers tend to use a retroflex /r/ sound in their internal French language system. English rhythm is also present in the internal language system of Spanish speakers. Similarly, German speakers tend to use the time place order after the verb in their internal English language system, among other phenomena. (Selinker, 1972, p. 215). More clearly, English rhythm may be retained in the internal language system of Spanish speakers, even when speaking in another language. For example, German speakers may use the Germanic time place order (time, manner, and place) after the verb in their internal English language system, even though the typical English syntax is subject-verb-object.

1.2.2 Definition by Lenneberg

According to the German linguist Eric Lenneberg (1967): **“each individual is born with a physical structure in the brain which enables them to learn language.”** (Lenneberg 1967). This biological structure refers to the “Broca Area” a region in the dominant hemisphere, usually in the frontal lobe of the left human brain, with functions that are related to the production of language and language processing. Having achieved a certain degree of competences and aptitudes through a curriculum process of using the vocabulary creatively and keeping the brain exposed to the target language in order to accustom it with the language. The process of learning can happen in a generalized manner, however each person's brain is different, hence the process will be different for each person. Traditional words and grammar teachings can cause a language learner's brain to become fossilized, leading to a 95% failure rate when trying to learn English or any other language. This often leaves them feeling tongue-tied and unable to translate what they hear or say in their heads.

Learning involves making connections between nerve cells, and this process can make the neurons in the brain will function progressively. The brain also produces different frequencies of energy called brain waves, consequently if the learner does not stimulate this part of the brain, as Selinker theorized, will form the latent psychological structure, slowly initializing fossilization.

1.2.3 Zhaohong Han Terminology of Fossilization

Han stated in her work *Fossilization in Adult Second Language* that **“Language fossilization is a phenomenon in second language acquisition where learners reach a stage of persistent interlanguage errors and non-native-like features that resist further development despite continued exposure to the target language.”** (Han, 2004, p. 23). It seems that the language of the learner stops evolving at certain systems (grammatical vocabulary phonological and discourse) and learners will keep committing the same errors,

despite the continuous learning of the second language. Han highlights the complexities and challenges involved in achieving native-like proficiency in a second language. Fossilization can be frustrating for learners, as it represents a barrier to further improvement despite continued exposure and practice.

Furthermore, it can be deduced that the acquisition of second language for non-native speakers can be a very challenging process to achieve. This phenomenon occurs when EFL learners are unable to utilize their language skills due to limited opportunities. Even though learners may have attained a certain level of proficiency, their progress halts as they do not have sufficient chances to actively engage in the language. Consequently, without regular practice, their L2 maintains fossilized elements.

Han & Olin (2006) described fossilization as: **“a process where learning ceases due to a lack of motivation to learn, insufficient exposure to input, and limited opportunities for communicative practice”** (Han & Odlin, 2006, p. 10). The following conclusions can be driven from the statement: First, a lack of motivation can greatly impede the progress of language learners, this lack of motivation hinders their willingness to engage with the language, explore new vocabulary, and practice their skills, learning ceases, and the learner's language proficiency become fossilized at a particular stage. Secondly, insufficient exposure to input will hinder the acquisition process of new words and phrases that expand the learners' linguistic knowledge, and without regular access to native speakers or a variety of language resources, learners may struggle to acquire new vocabulary, grasp complex grammatical structures, and develop accurate pronunciation. Lastly, limited opportunities for communicative practice obstruct the development of language skills, because language proficiency is not solely dependent on passive understanding; it also requires active engagement through speaking and writing. If the learners lack opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations, discussions, or written interactions, their ability to apply the language in real-life contexts become restricted.

Han states:” **Fossilization is not an end-point or failure but a natural outcome of the language learning process. It represents a stable system that learners construct to facilitate communication, even if it deviates from the native-like target language norms.**”

(Han, 2012). Language fossilization can be seen as a practical adaptation that allows the learner to communicate, even when they do not achieve the needed accuracy fluency, even if they do not achieve perfect accuracy or fluency. It is a way for learners to navigate the complexities of language and still convey their ideas, despite persisting errors or patterns in their speech.

1.2.4 Other Views of Fossilization

Brown says: **”Fossilization refers to the stabilization, crystallization, and ossification of learner language at any of several levels, including phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, and discourse”** (Brown, 2007, p. 281).

As language learners acquire new skills and knowledge, they often make mistakes that most of the time get fixed by getting exposure to the target language, but if learners tend to keep the same mistakes despite corrective feedback, the language features then become “fossilized”. This process can occur at various stages of language systems, including structure and organization of discourse of the four systems; grammar, phonology, vocabulary and pronunciation

Vigil and Oller say: **”Fossilization occurs when learners' interlanguage development stops short of attaining the norms of the target language”** (Vigil and Oller, 1976, p. 264).

The statement suggests that fossilization represents a phase where learners' interlanguage development decreases before reaching the native-like norms of the target language, suggesting that it is a limitation or obstacle in the learning process, preventing learners from fully mastering and performing the correct use of language, this perspective recognizes that fossilization can manifest differently across various aspects of language, such as phonology, morphology,

syntax, vocabulary, and discourse. Some learners may be fossilized in specific areas while maintaining higher proficiency in others. Lightbown and Spada (2013) say in their definition:

Fossilization happens when the learner has satisfied the need for communication and/or integration in the target language community, but this is a complicated area, and the reasons for fossilization are very difficult to determine with any certainty. Recently, there has been some evidence that the interlanguage systems which tend to fossilize are those which are based on the three-way convergence of some general – possibly universal – patterns in language and some rule or rules of the target language and the native language. (Lightbown, 2006, p. 82)

Lightbown and Spada emphasize the importance of providing learners with ample opportunities for meaningful and communicative language use in order to minimize the likelihood of fossilization (Lightbown & Spada, 2013).

As it seems Lightbown and Spada shows their concerns that the communicative approach may lead to early language fossilization of errors without adequate correction and explicit instruction, this suggests that Lightbown and Spada support the idea that a communicative approach may help prevent early fossilization errors during expose via written and oral format in formal and informal sources of the target language.

Skehan discusses the two psycholinguistic forms: rule-based frameworks and exemplar-based systems. In the case of the former, what is learned is based on inferred rules that have been derived from input and are used for generalization and exchange. In contrast, learning in exemplar-based systems is seen as the accumulation of chunks or conventional or similar items, rather than relying on rules and analysis (Skehan, 1998, p. 61).

Skehan, in his definition of language fossilization, says:

... as an error produced by a rule-based framework that becomes a model, but one that can be replaced if the underlying rule-based framework evolves enough. In other

words, fossilization can be an error of a rule that a learner has not yet overcome through the accumulation of well-formed conventional items. (Skehan, 1998, p. 61)

Skehan suggests the error can be founded from learner commitment to a special ruled based framework that the learner itself not updated and began to produce sentences and grammatical structures that are uncompleted this flaws can turn to fossilization language and the learner start to fail to overcome and remedy this error and continue to produce the language in non-standard manner. Rod Ellis defines fossilization in language by stating: **“Fossilization is a natural outcome of the language learning process. It represents the learner's approximation of the target language system and can serve as a stepping stone towards further language development.”** (Ellis, 1994, p. 193)

Based on Ellis’s statement, fossilization is a natural outcome of language learning process and it happens when the nonnative learner reaches a cretin linguistic error or form that can become optical to further improvements, and various factors such as individual differences, limited exposure, or lack of targeted feedback, certain linguistic features or errors may become fossilized and persist in the learner's interlanguage.

William Labov place it as an inevitable result from lack of practice on target language in really occasions he says: **“Fossilization occurs when learners encounter limited opportunities for meaningful communication in the target language. It is a result of inadequate exposure to natural, authentic language use and interaction.”** (Labov, 1972, p. 67). From the provided definition it seems that fossilization is something that can be avoided if learners have limited opportunities for practicing in meaningful communication in target language and when the non-native learners do not have sufficient exposure to natural and authentic sources of language, it can be the reason for not being able to memorize the right aspects of foreign language and fossilization can be a consequence of insufficient input, as learners may struggle to grasp the nuances of the language over time. Meaningful

communication plays a crucial role in language acquisition, as it allows learners to engage with native speakers, understand cultural contexts, and practice using the language in authentic situations (Labov, 1972, p. 67).

Section Two: Fossilization and language acquisition

1.3 Language Acquisition

“Language acquisition refers to the process by which individuals acquire a first or second Language. It is based on the neuro-psychological processes” (Maslo, 2007, p. 27).

Language acquisition is the cognitive process through which learners adopt a first or second language, which relies on neuro-psychological mechanisms, also it is the process by which humans acquire the ability to understand and produce language. It typically begins in early childhood, although it can also occur later in life. The process of language acquisition involves a complex interplay of cognitive, social, and environmental factors. A complex process that involves the development of linguistic, cognitive, social, and emotional skills. In first language acquisition, children learn their native language through exposure to language input in their environment, typically from their parents or others. This process is thought to involve innate language abilities that allow children to develop language skills rapidly and naturally (Chomsky 1965).

Robins says: **“language acquisition is considered an overall aspect the system of all languages”** (Robins, 2007, p. 49) Language acquisition is seen as a general feature of the broader system of all languages. Learning process must remain an open question to be answered as a result of the exploration of second language acquisition (Ellis, 1994).

1.4 Interlanguage

Interlanguage is the process in which learners move from their L1 to learning the very basics of the L2, (Shahzad Karim, 2022). During this process, the learners construct their own

mental grammar of the target language, in which the learners will likely make errors and mistakes, leading to the buildup of these errors in the interlanguage process, and will become embalmed on the learners' mind if they are not monitored or taught the basic structures of the L2 properly. It is a continuous systematic process towards the target language in progressive and effective coherence so that the acquired language is identical or almost identical to the target language. Nevertheless, during the interlanguage process, learners will encounter difficulties acquiring the correct structures of a second language, consequently placing the learner into a state of detention. It is strongly affirmed that when the progress towards a target language is in a state of constant hiatus and slow progression, fossilization occurs.

Fossilization, as a part of interlanguage is likely to happen despite the actions taken or attempts done to prevent it, because those grammatical systems and sub-systems, rules and structures of the L2 that learners retain in their interlanguage are altered. Corder (1981) stated that: "Fossilization is the point at which a learner's interlanguage has ceased developing and has become a permanent system of its own." Based on this statement, fossilization occurs when a learner's interlanguage stops progressing and becomes a fixed and permanent system of its own.

1.5 Characteristics of Interlanguage

There are four primary characteristics that can be deduced in interlanguage, representing its present state. First is stability, it appears consistently for using certain rules or norms over time within the IL learning, stability can be seen and function in utilizing the same frame twice by L2 learners. Tarone contends that it is not clear that an unused dialect theory is required for more clarification around the human propensity to keep making the same errors or mistakes, and to memorize things steadily. Tarone chose to distinguish between two sorts of IL learners. Sort one is related with those whose IL is recognized by stability, while the other sort is characterized by precariousness. (Al-khresheh, 2015, p. 127). The next characteristic is the

systematicity, in which IL takes place after a specific framework of rules which makes it systematic. In spite of the rules that are not basically similar as the rules of the TL, IL in any case incorporates a particular set of rules and norms. (Al-khresheh, 2015, p. 128). The third element is described as mutual intelligibility; this characteristic of interlanguage can be utilized for the purpose of communication among speakers. They can share distinctive capacities of communication within other languages. According to (Adjemian, 1976, p. 300), interlanguages have the capacity to serve as a means of communication among their users. They can fulfill various communication functions similar to those found in natural languages. From a linguistic perspective, mutual intelligibility refers to the ability of speakers of different dialects or languages to understand each other to some degree without significant effort. It is important to note that the level of intelligibility between languages can vary and may not necessarily be symmetrical (Bent and Bradlow, 2003; Bent et al, 2008). (Al-khresheh, 2015, p. 128). Lastly, there is backsliding, it implies the linguistic authority of certain frame within the TL, non-use or abuse of the frame, Selinker contends that backsliding is neither without a purpose nor towards the speaker's NL but is toward an IL standard. (Al-khresheh, 2015, p. 128).

In language fossilization, the TL remains accessible to the learner, and there is always an alternative rule that can be chosen. However, due to various contextual and affective factors, learners struggle to apply the appropriate alternative rule.

1.7 Fossilization of Interlanguage

Fossilization in interlanguage can have an impact on the learners' future performance in the L2, Selinker stated:

Interlanguage fossilization refers to the persistent errors, patterns, or other features of an interlanguage system that result from the learner's overgeneralization of target language rules, transfer of features from the learner's first language, or failure to acquire certain aspects of the target language. (Selinker, 1972, p. 209)

Interlanguage fossilization is characterized by persistent errors, patterns, or other features in a learner's interlanguage system, resulting from overgeneralization of target language rules, transfer from the learner's first language, or incomplete acquisition of certain aspects of the target language.

1.8 The Process of Fossilization in Interlanguage

Selinker says: **“I consider the following to be processes central to the second language learning: first, learning transfer; second, transfer of training; third, strategies of second language learning; fourth, strategies of second language communication; and fifth, overgeneralization of TL linguistic material”** (Selinker, 1972, p. 215). Selinker proposed that interlanguage formation is influenced by five cognitive processes: first language transfer, training transfer, second language learning strategies, L2 communication strategies and overgeneralization. Selinker and Lamendella pointed out that fossilization represents a permanent arrest in language acquisition that occurs before learners have fully mastered the target language. (Han, Y. Wei, Y. Xu, H. Zhi, L, 2021, p. 583).

Language fossilization has a variety of causes that can affect the learner. If the L2 is not properly transferred to the learner with all its appropriate aspects (lexical, pragmatic, phonological, and morphological), it can lead to long-term language fossilization.

1.8.1 Transfer of Language

Absence of practice and guideline can lead to the transfer of incorrect language forms, resulting in the development of idiosyncratic languages, with rules that often differ from standard English. This idea is supported by the notion that formal instruction can provide learners with the necessary linguistic and pragmatic knowledge, as well as correct language forms, to achieve fluency in a second language. However, when learners are exposed only to the target language through naturalistic means, such as immersion in a community or exposure

to media, they may not have access to the appropriate linguistic and pragmatic knowledge and may rely on their own linguistic resources, leading to the development of idiosyncratic languages.

By providing learners with the necessary linguistic and systematic knowledge, formal instruction can help them achieve fluency in the target language and avoid the emergence of fossilization (Wei, 2010).

1.8.2 The Learning Strategies

Adopted learning strategies address the application of methods and tools in second language acquisition can have both positive and negative effects on language development. On one hand, appropriate use of learning strategies can help process target language input and improve second language learning quality. On the other hand, overgeneralization, simplification, incomplete rule application, and inadequate declarative knowledge of L2 can result from an excessive reliance on learning strategies. The researcher is emphasizing the importance of using learning strategies in a balanced and appropriate manner.

Learners ought to be aware of their learning strategies and to use them in a way that supports and enhances their L2 development. Eventually, the researcher highlights the significance of learning strategies in second language acquisition and how these strategies contribute in language development.

1.8.3 Communicative Strategies

Wei states:

The learner inclines to simplify the target language, especially to simplify the grammatical rules, for instance, the use of the articles, plural forms and the use of tenses.

And this reflects the unsatisfactory effect of communicative teaching methods. If the learner pays too much attention to the fluency but neglects the accuracy, some language

errors can be easily fossilized. If the learner only stresses the cultivation of communicative competence but neglects the language competence, his/her language competence can also be easily fossilized. (Wei, 2008, p. 129-130)

In actual communication, learners may employ communication strategies as a structured approach to overcome challenges in expressing themselves and maintain the flow of communication. However, it is unfortunate that the effective utilization of these strategies can hinder language acquisition, as noted by Ellis (2002). This occurs when learners become overly proficient in compensating for their lack of linguistic knowledge through the application of different communication strategies, such as avoidance or paraphrasing.

1.8.4 Overgeneralization

Overgeneralization happens when the learner generalizes all the rules in all target language structures, which is the process of utilizing existing second language (L2) knowledge and applying it to unfamiliar interlanguage (IL) structures is referred to as "extension." and use it in all situation fall in whether in class or in formal oceans or in communication. (Wei, 2008).

1.8.5 Training Transfer

The absence of formal English instruction is identified as a primary factor contributing to the persistence of incorrect language forms, also known as fossilization. This scholar asserted that relying solely on language exposure without structured teaching has led many students to develop their own interlanguages (IL) or idiosyncratic linguistic systems, which often deviate significantly from the rules of Standard English. (Wei, 2008, p. 129)

In order to attain native-like proficiency, Selinker argued that fossilization represents the ultimate achievement in second language acquisition. He also contended that adult learners are unable to reach the same level of competence as native speakers. Han and Selinker further categorized the study of fossilization based on experimental methods, identifying five main

approaches: longitudinal studies, typical error analysis, advanced-learner research, corrective feedback investigation, and length-of-residence analysis. While Selinker's definition is influential, early scholars such as Vigil and Oller, also discussed the concept and proposed considering both correct and erroneous forms when examining this phenomenon. (Han, Y. Wei, Y. Xu, H. Zhi, L, 2021, p. 584).

Section Three: Selinker's Categorization of fossilization

1.9 Selinker's Precept in the Categorization of Fossilization

Selinker's Precept is a principle in second language acquisition research that states: **"interlanguage is a fossilization of incomplete and evolving competence."** (Selinker, 1972, p. 231). His theory behind this definition is that second language learners develop a distinct linguistic system that is not merely a replica of their native language or the desired target language. Instead, it is a dynamic and evolving system that mirrors the learner's continuous efforts to grasp the target language. The concept of fossilization pertains to the occurrence wherein certain elements of the learner's interlanguage become resistant to modification and persist at a level of precision that falls short of native proficiency, even with ongoing exposure to the target language.

According to Selinker, interlanguage, it is a process of language development that includes fossilization, or the stabilization of linguistic forms and structures. This stabilization can occur at various points in the acquisition process, and the result is an interlanguage system that reflects the learner's incomplete and evolving competence in the target language.

The idea of fossilization is central to Selinker's view of second language acquisition, and it suggests that even highly motivated and successful language learners may never fully achieve native-like competence in the target language. Instead, their interlanguage may persist as a permanent, although incomplete, representation of their language abilities. Based on

Selinker's review, fossilization can occur in a certain group of persons, or simply one individual, divided into two categories group fossilization and individual fossilization.

1.9.1 Individual vs. Group Fossilization

Individual and Group fossilization of language are both sub-concepts related to the process of the range of impact that fossilization can have on learners in SLA. However, they refer to different levels of language learning and development.

1.9.1.1 Individual Fossilization

It refers to the phenomenon where one single learner of a second language reaches a stage where the learner is no longer able to progress beyond a certain point and becomes stuck in their own interlanguage. In other words, the learner's L2 interlanguage system becomes stabilized and no longer evolves. This stabilization is considered a form of fossilization, which can be noticeable and easy to deal with, as it only occurs in one case. Result of the learner's incomplete competence in the L2, is shown when the learner is surrounded by a group of learners with a background and familiarity with the L2. Such case is more likely to be found when a learner is not given much attention, this is common situation that certain teachers tend focus on the large competent and more active group of learners, neglecting timid and reserved ones, having the thought this particular learner cannot participate in classroom activities because they do not have the answers.

This leads the particular learner to reach a point where they become frustrated and lack interest in the language, thus their learning process gets interrupted and they slowly start developing signs of latent competences in the language, which is what Larry Selinker described as: "**Fossilizable linguistic phenomena**" (Selinker, 1972, p. 215).

Swain (1985) proposed the output Hypothesis, which states that language learners need opportunities to use the target language in meaningful ways to make progress in acquiring the

language. According to the Output Hypothesis, lack of output opportunities can result in fossilization of language skills. Furthermore, other studies have investigated the factors that contribute to individual fossilization of language, such as learner's aptitude, motivation, the feedback a learner can receive from the instructor.

Individual fossilization is seen as a result of various factors, including limited exposure to the L2, lack of opportunities for interaction with the teachers, and the learner's own psychological characteristics, such as stress, and fear of committing mistakes.

1.9.1.2 Group Fossilization

It refers to a phenomenon in which a group of language learners, despite exposure to target language input, persist in using their own interlanguage instead of converging towards the target language, this can occur when the group becomes isolated from the target language community and lacks exposure to native speakers and foreign elements, or when the group's interlanguage becomes the primary means of communication within the group.

As a result, the group's interlanguage becomes "fossilized" or entrenched, and it becomes increasingly difficult for its members to make progress in acquiring the target language. Group fossilization is often observed in situations where a group of individuals, such as expatriates or immigrants, are living in a country where the language spoken is different from their native language. In such cases, the group may develop its own version of the target language, which incorporates elements from both the target language and their native language, and may resist change over time. This can result in a situation where the group members are unable to effectively communicate with native speakers of the target language and are limited in their ability to participate fully in the target language community.

1.9.2 Temporary vs. Permanent Fossilization

Temporary language fossilization refers to the preservation of a language or linguistic feature for a relatively short period of time that the learner keeps in the process of interlanguage when in the most parts, the learner constructs new ideas and features that will be incorporate in the target language, as well as errors and mistakes This can happens when the structures of a L2 are replaced by the systematic structures of the L1.

Noam Chomsky, suggested regulations to prevent such phenomena, his theory of generative grammar, which posits that the ability to use language is innate and that the structure of language can be explained through a set of global rules (Chomsky, 2002).

1.9.2.1 Temporary Fossilization

Temporary language fossilization was also referred to as stabilization (Wei, 2008, p. 127). It is suggested that fossilization in interlanguage compresses learning plateaus where a number of L2 systematic features are hindered and fixed, for shorter periods of time (Sims, 1989). Which is temporary preservation of certain linguistic features or elements in a language learning, that may later disappear or change over time due to consistent correction and reconstruction of the false rules and systems, and enough exposure to the TL, in addition to continuous feedback and observation from the instructor.

1.9.2.2 Permanent Fossilization

“Permanent fossilization takes place as a result of social, psychological and interactive variables. Researchers that temporarily arrested IL development can be susceptible to defossilization. It has also been referred to by Sims as soft fossilization or jellification”. (Wei, 2008, p. 128).

Permanent language fossilization is a term used to describe a situation where a language learner has reached a point where their language abilities have become stagnant and frozen,

with little hope of further improvement. This is often characterized by the persistent use of grammatical structures, vocabulary or pronunciation that is deemed incorrect or outdated. Permanent language fossilization is more common in second language learners who started learning the language as adults, as opposed to those who learned it as children. This is because younger learners are generally more adaptable and are still developing their language skills, whereas adult learners have already established certain language patterns and habits. (Wei, 2008).

Section Four: Forms of Fossilization

1.10 Multi-faceted nature of Fossilization

The multi-faceted nature of language fossilization means that it can affect different systems of the TL, and can have different effects on those elements. This has been extensively studied by Larry Selinker, followed by scholars and researchers in the field of second language acquisition, whom have documented the various ways in which language fossilization can manifest in learners. Such forms of fossilization are as follows:

1.10.1 Phonological

Phonological fossilization can result from a lack of exposure to target language sounds, difficulty in perceiving and producing these sounds, or a lack of attention to pronunciation in language instruction (Selinker & Long, 1983). Phonology is considered to be the largest difference between languages, the continuous repetition of phonological mistakes as a result of a misunderstood explanation or perhaps an incorrect acquisition in the pronunciation of the L2. Which is affected by the L1.

Currently, many non-native speakers tend to display mistakes in the pronunciation of the L2, this might be the cause of various factors such as the interference of the native language (Senowarsito, Sukna 2019), a concrete example can be driven from the different tone used to

express words in English, where many learners with Arabic as their L1 will automatically face difficulties to reach fluent pronunciation of words. Voice tone can place during language acquisition; one specific behavior is noticeable when learners communicate but keep the same sounds of and tone of their L1. This can be viewed among Japanese learners too, since their L2 does not contain the “L” sound as in English, EFL Japanese learners will pronounce it “R”, this pathology will remain in their L2, affecting its phonological structure. Thus, developing phonological fossilization, unable to reach a degree of a correct L2 fluency. Learners should not only focus on their grammar and vocabulary but also in their way of producing sounds.

The occurrence of phonological fossilization is a result of the learner's L1 phonological system becoming entrenched and difficult to modify. According to (Flege,1995), the "Perceptual Assimilation Model" suggests that learners use their L1 categories to perceive and produce sounds in the target language, and that the degree of overlap between L1 and target language categories can affect the ease with which a learner can acquire new phonological distinctions.

Another theory suggests that phonological fossilization occurs when learners reach a certain level of proficiency and starts to focus more on meaning and communication than on pronunciation (Eckman, 1994). As a result, they develop habits in their pronunciation that are not accurate to the L2, but are still effective in communicating their intended message.

1.10.2 Morphological

Morphology is the study of the internal structure of words. William Dressler, defines morphology as: **“the study of the internal structure of words, and of the rules by which words are formed from smaller units”** (Dressler, 2011, p. 1).

Fossilization is likely to occur in a morphological state. According to Larry Selinker, he states:” **morphological fossilization is self-explanatory, as it causes the cessation of**

acquiring grammatical morphemes" (Selinker, 1972, p. 219). The learner will be unable to understand or develop these structures because they lack a basic understanding of the morphological rules of the target language.

Comrie (1989) says: **"the failure of the acquisition process to proceed beyond a certain point, leaving some aspects of the morphological system of the target language incompletely acquired"** (Comrie, 1989, p. 89). It can be deduced that during the acquisition of the morphological systems of language will reach a stage where it no longer progresses, resulting in a faulty and incomplete acquisition of certain features of the L2, and the morphological system remains fossilized.

(Mohd. Yasin Sharif, n.d.) has identified inflectional morphemes and the third-person singular "s" as the two primary aspects that commonly result in fossilization in the morphological system. The third-person singular "s" is a marker of syntactic agreement, which is suffixed to lexical verbs and auxiliaries like "has." Nonetheless, there are other markers for the third-person singular, such as "buses," "crises," and "criteria." Such linguistic phenomena do not exist in Chinese, making it difficult for Chinese students to remember the transformation or to use the form correctly.

Furthermore, articles also pose a problem for Chinese students, since there are no corresponding words or expressions in Chinese. The correct placement of articles remains a mystery for many learners, even those with higher proficiency. This can lead to confusion and errors in writing and speaking. As a result, Chinese learners need to pay extra attention to the usage of articles in English and try to learn them in context.

1.10.3 Syntactic

Syntactic fossilization refers to the phenomenon where learners of a second language have difficulty developing and improving their grammar, despite continued exposure and

language instruction. This can result in persistent errors in their use of syntax in the second language. Syntactic fossilization in second language acquisition that refers to the inability of language learners to overcome persistent errors in their use of syntax, even with continued exposure and language instruction.

The concept was first introduced by Rod Ellis in 1994, who suggested that fossilization is a normal aspect of SLA and occurs when learners develop internalized linguistic systems that are resistant to change (Ellis, 1994). The concept refers to the persistent use of incorrect or non-target-like grammatical structures by second language learners, despite continued exposure to the target language and language instruction. This can result in learners becoming "stuck" in their language development, with their grammatical ability remaining at a relatively low level. Several theories have been put forward to explain the phenomenon of syntactic fossilization, including the influence of transfer from the learner's first language, negative evidence in the form of corrected errors, and the difficulty of unlearning previously acquired incorrect structures (Wei, 2008, p. 128).

1.10.4 Pragmatic

Pragmatic fossilization in second language acquisition is where learners persist in using the social norms and language use patterns of their L1, even after extended exposure and instruction in the target language. This can lead to miscommunication and negative perceptions of their language ability by native speakers. Factors that contribute to pragmatic fossilization include the learner's first language and cultural background, their motivation for learning the target language, and their level of intercultural competence (Kasper & Rose, 2002).

"Pragmatic fossilization refers to the persistence of a learner's first language pragmatic norms in the target language, leading to inappropriate or impolite use of the target language." (Kasper & Rose, 2002, p. 61). According to this statement, it is clear that learners retain their pragmatic system from the L1 will likely interfere with the pragmatically rules of

the L2. Kasper & Rose state: "**The learner's first language and culture, motivation, and intercultural competence all play a role in pragmatic fossilization.**" (Kasper & Rose, 2002, p. 63).

In addition, Fossilization in pragmatics and semantics occurs when the learner uses language in a way that deviates from the norms and pragmatical concepts of the L2. This can lead to a breakdown in communication and result in various negative consequences such as misunderstandings, embarrassment, or even offense. Pragmatic deviances, or pragmatic failures, are particularly prevalent in cross-cultural communication, where cultural differences and language barriers can cause difficulty in accurately interpreting the intended meaning behind an utterance. The concept of pragmatic failure was first introduced by Thomas (1983), who defined it as the inability to understand the intended meaning behind an utterance.

Section Five: Major Causes of Fossilization

1.11 Major Causes of Language Fossilization

Almost all errors have the potential to contribute to the occurrence of fossilization, more specifically the inability of FL learners to acquire both the functional and formal aspects of language through natural language interaction. (Han, 2013, p. 18).

Factors can be divided into two types; external and internal.

1.11.1 External Causes

External causes of language fossilization refer to factors that originate outside of the language learning environment and has an impact on the learner's language development. Some common external causes of language fossilization include;

1.11.1.1 Interaction with Non-native Speakers

when learners interact primarily with non-native speakers of the target language, they may not receive the correct language inputs, systematical structures necessary for language development (Lenneberg 1976).

1.11.1.2 Lack of Opportunity to use the Language

When learners do not have opportunities to use their L2 in authentic and meaningful context, their language development may be latent (Lenneberg 1976).

1.11.1.3 Limited Access to Resources

Learners who do not have access to resources such as language classes, language-rich environments, or materials, may experience difficulty in developing their target language (Lenneberg 1976).

1.11.1.4 Age

Age is another external factor that can affect language development. Children and adult are generally better equipped to learn new languages than adults, and older adults may face greater difficulties in language development (Lenneberg 1976).

1.11.1.5 Interference from Learners' L1

During the journey of acquiring a second language, learners often encounter interference from their native tongue, leading to the production of errors. These interferences primarily manifest in pronunciation, commonly referred to as "foreignese." It is observed that the majority of foreign language learners struggle to overcome the foreignese influenced by their mother tongue. Consequently, this inability to overcome native language interference hinders the development of learners' second language competence, ultimately resulting in fossilization. (Han, 2013, p. 19).

1.11.1.6 Cultural Background

Cultural background can have a significant impact on second language acquisition and can contribute to the fossilization of certain language elements.

Learners who originated from cultures with a similar linguistic and cultural background similar to the L2, may find it easier to pick up certain language elements, while learners from different backgrounds may struggle with them.

Learners' attitudes and beliefs about language and culture can also impact their motivation to learn and their ability to adapt to the target language. For example, learners who has different religious beliefs have a harder time accepting and adopting the culture and mindsets of the L2.

Cognitive style can also be influenced by cultural background. Learners from different cultural backgrounds may have different learning styles and strategies that affect their ability to acquire a second language, some cultures may place a greater emphasis on memorization when learning, while others may value more analytical and communicative approaches. (Garcia & Baker, 2014).

1.11.1.7 Historical Factors

(Fishman, 1991) argues that political and social factors, such as government policies, can play a significant role in language fossilization. For example, policies that restrict the use of a particular language or that promote the use of another language can result in the fossilization of the original language, similarly after the Algerian independence, the French colonialism left the legacy of the French language and over time the French language and Algerian dialect language were combined to become the formal language of the state which lead to new dialect “darija”.

1.11.2 Internal Causes

A negative transfer of language causes the use of incorrect language without a tutor or teacher to guide the learner, might result in a permanent fossilization state, even if the trainer is not a native nor experienced speaker, due to internal factors that affect the learners, such as stress, lack of concentration, public fear.

1.11.2.1 Psychological Factors

Psychological factors have been observed to contribute significantly to the occurrence of language fossilization. This phenomenon describes the preservation of outdated language forms, even as a language continues to evolve over time.

The language learning strategies adopted by learners and teachers can significantly influence their ability to acquire new language features and determine whether they are likely to fossilize certain language forms. For instance, learners who depend heavily on memorization may find it challenging to break away from outdated language patterns, even when they are exposed to more contemporary and widely-used forms.

1.11.2.2 Speech Disorder

A speech disorder can cause fossilization of language among learners by creating persistent errors or patterns in their speech that become ingrained and difficult to correct. Furthermore, the development of fossilized patterns of speech can have a domino effect on other aspects of language learning.

Articulation disorders are another frequently encountered type, which make it challenging for children to enunciate certain sounds or letters, like /s/, /z/, or /th/. If a learner has a speech disorder, such as a phonological or articulation disorder, they may struggle to produce certain sounds or sound combinations correctly. For example, a learner may consistently substitute one sound for another or omit certain sounds altogether. These errors

can become habitual and difficult to break, especially if they have been reinforced over time through negative feedback or lack of correction. which can also lead to difficulty in distinguishing between similar-sounding words or phrases. This, in turn, can affect their listening comprehension and ability to communicate effectively in the target language.

1.11.2.3 Expressive Language Disorders

language disorders may first manifest in children at an early age, but may become more conspicuous as they attempt to employ more intricate language structures. Expressive language disorders can have an impact on how children articulate their thoughts, ideas, and opinions. It is common for children with these disorders to know precisely what they want to convey, but encounter difficulty in constructing coherent phrases or sentences when communicating verbally. This may entail using words in a sentence in the wrong order, repeating words, confusing verb tenses, or omitting words entirely.

The effects of such disorders can be observed in classroom interactions, impeding children's ability to engage in conversations, ask or answer questions, narrate stories, and express their emotions.

1.11.2.4 Receptive Language Disorder

Learners who have receptive language disorders may experience difficulties in comprehending and interpreting language despite using words appropriately. Essentially, they struggle with the ability to extract and decipher meaning from spoken and written words. Such a challenge may have a significant impact on their understanding of new concepts or lessons, attentiveness in listening, ability to follow instructions, and acquisition of new vocabulary, especially in a classroom setting.

Articulation disorders are another frequently encountered type, which make it challenging for learners to enunciate certain sounds or letters, like /s/, /z/, or /th/, typically due to incorrect tongue placement or a lisp.

1.11.1.5 Learners' Emotions

During the process of acquiring a foreign language, learners are susceptible to the influence of emotional factors such as motivation, interest, and others. Krashen identifies three specific emotions that have an impact on second language acquisition: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. These factors can significantly affect the progress and outcomes of language learning. If these factors manifest in a negative manner, interlanguage fossilization is likely to occur at the initial stages of language learning. (Han, 2013, p. 18).

1.12 Conclusion

Language fossilization is a complex process that can negatively impact language learning and development. However, by understanding the causes and effects of language fossilization, both language learners and teachers can take steps to minimize its impact. For language learners, this may involve seeking out more opportunities for input and practice in the target language, developing more effective learning strategies, and addressing any affective factors that may be affecting their language learning.

For language teachers, this may involve creating a supportive and engaging learning environment, providing targeted feedback and instruction, and encouraging learners to use the target language in meaningful and communicative ways. thus, a combination of individual and collective effort is necessary to help language learners overcome language fossilization and achieve their language learning goals.

CHAPTER TWO:

FIELD WORK

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is providing clarity on the research design and methodology used in the research in order to test the hypotheses of the problem. It will include the sampling that contributed to the study and the data collection tools employed, that were deemed suitable for this study. Moreover, it centers around the statistical analysis of the research findings.

It contains detailed information about the questionnaire submitted to the middle and secondary school learners, as well as the interview conducted with the teachers. The need of the research was to investigate the presence of the psychological structure known as fossilization among EFL learners, and the influence it has on their second language acquisition process.

2.2 Research Methodology

According to Kothari (2004), research involves making an innovative contribution to the existing body of knowledge in order to facilitate its progress. Additionally, research encompasses a methodical process of drawing conclusions and formulating theories.

A combination of method approaches has been chosen to collect comprehensive data that can either prove or disapprove the previously formulated hypotheses; Quantitative and qualitative questions were designed, closed and open, in a questionnaire and interview for 20 students from the middle school and 20 students from secondary school, and an interview with language 3 teachers from both levels. The current study aims to display the obstacles that fossilization poses to EFL learners in attaining fluency and accuracy in a foreign language, and how it influences their future language performances.

2.2.1 Hypotheses

The research questions raised after identifying the research problem have generated several hypotheses that are proposed as potential answers. These hypotheses serve as

anticipated responses and provide a framework for further investigation and analysis. By formulating these hypotheses. Supposedly:

- fossilization occurs at the level of each system of the foreign language: the grammatical, the lexical, the phonological, the morphological, and the underlying cultural system.
- errors persist in the learners' language and thwart his progress on language learning.
- a number of instructional insightful strategies can alleviate fossilization in foreign language learning.

These anticipated answers serve as a starting point for empirical research, where data collection and analysis are conducted to validate or refute these hypotheses.

2.2.2 Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to delve into the psychological phenomena known as fossilization that occurs within the language acquisition process among EFL learners. The study aims to investigate and understand the different ways in which fossilization acts as a hindrance to learners' progress in acquiring and achieving fluency in the target language. By examining the impact and manifestations of fossilization, the research seeks to shed light on the challenges faced by EFL learners and contribute to the broader understanding of language acquisition processes. In addition to developing instructional strategies dedicated to overcome the psycholinguistic phenomena.

2.3 Research Setting

This research was applied in two different educational institutions; 01 November 1954 middle school – Mahdia, and Mohamed ibn Abdel-Karim secondary school in Tiaret, the field work was selected willingly under specific reasons (time & geographical circumstances), the

subjects were available and cooperative, thus the following data was provided to prove or disapprove the hypotheses.

2.4 Sampling Strategies and Population Model

The population models are students from both levels, middle and secondary school. The number of students subjected to the experiment composed of 40 subjects divided equally between the two levels, the subjects were asked to elicit their classroom experiences when acquiring the second language, to detect if they exhibit patterns that are related to language fossilization.

The samples model was selected randomly to give the study more reliable data outcome through a variety of answers provided by both “learners & teachers “to insure the process of data analysis that will reflect the research hypothesis.

2.5 Data Collection Tools

This study seeks to address how does fossilization hinder the EFL learner’s way towards the acquisition of fluency in a foreign language, the intention is to locate which level of language system does fossilization occurs and its influence on EFL learners’ future performance, and to suggest alternatives to alleviate such condition. In order to achieve the purpose of this study, data was gathered from both English teachers and learners. A questionnaire was submitted to a total of 40 learners, divided into 20 samples from the 1st to 4th grade of middle school and 20 samples from the 1st to 3rd grade of secondary school. In addition to an interview with 3 English language teachers.

2.6 Data Analysis

Different methods have been applied at this stage to examine the data both quantitatively and qualitatively with the aim of addressing the research objectives.

The quantitative analysis comprised statistical examinations of numerical data based upon the learners' responses to detect patterns of fossilized language among the subjects. This encompassed the utilization of graphical elements composed of statistics to summarize the findings, to test hypotheses of the research problem.

The qualitative analysis involved a thorough investigation of non-numerical data, such the interview conducted with the teachers. This entailed categorizing the data, identifying the presence of fossilized features in second language systems among the students, and extracting the impact it has on their language acquisition process. Techniques such teachers' response analysis, were employed to gain a deeper comprehension of the learners' performances in the target language.

2.7 The Students-addressed Questionnaire

This assessment, consists of a questionnaire submitted to first and second year learners of 01 November 1954 Middle-School of Mahdia and Mohamed ibn Abdel-Karim High-School of Tiaret. It includes 17 close-ended questions in total, in addition to an interview for the teachers. the questions are divided into four sections. The first one titled "demographic information' offers a general background information about the subjects, the second section "language system" serves as an investigation to determine which systems of the foreign language are affected by fossilization. In the third section, "language impact" contains questions that aim to understand how can fossilization impact the learners' language performance. In the final section "learning strategies" pursue to develop alternatives as a tool to alleviate the risks of becoming fossilized when acquiring a foreign language.

The assessment questions incorporate a group of multiple-choice questions to which learners will have to answer with suitable responses, while the part of questions provide open-ended questions to which they must answer with "yes" or "no".

The questionnaire was outlined as follows:

Section One: Demographic Information

Gender:

Level:

Section Two: Language System

Q:1 What is more difficult for you when learning English?

Grammar Vocabulary Pronunciation communication

Q:2 Do you happen to make mistakes when talking or writing in English?

yes, very often sometimes rarely never

Q:3 What sort of mistakes recurs in your oral or written performance?

Grammatical Vocabulary Pronunciation communication

Q:4 The same mistakes recur in your speech and writing

when you do not monitor on your performance

even when you focus on your performance

Q:5 Do you happen to figure out that you have made mistakes when speaking or writing?

Yes sometimes never

Section Three: Language Impact

Q:6 Are there mistakes which recur even after your teacher's correction?

Many few none

Q:7 Mistakes recur with you:

spontaneously deliberately

Q:8 Does the thought of having made a recurrent mistake affect your further performance?

yes a little not at all

Q:9 What do you generally feel when you make a recurrent mistake in your speech or writing?

indifference malaise frustration

Q:10 How do you feel at one of your peer's negative feedback at a recurrent mistake?

embarrassed indifferent satisfied

Q:11 When you receive a negative feedback on a recurrent mistake from your teacher or a peer, do you

keep participating in the class open activities?

stop participating in class open activity?

Section Four: Learning Strategies

Q:12 Does your teacher refer you back to your mistakes?

yes, very often sometimes rarely never

Q:13 Do you correct your mistakes on the spot or let them to later time.

on the spot later

Q:14 Do you find difficulty to get rid of them once and for all?

Yes not really no

Q:15 When you figure out that you have made a recurrent mistake, do you generally

concentrate on the mistake you have made

just drop it and concentrate on your further performance

Q:16 In case of negative feelings, do you keep motivated for further learning activity?

yes no

Q:17 How do you feel at your teacher's negative feedback on a recurrent mistake?

embarrassed indifferent satisfied

2.7.1 Analysis of the Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire was successfully distributed to the EFL learners of middle and secondary school with the purpose of investigating the difficulties they encounter when learning English, and the impact of these obstacles on their language performance. The research aimed to gain insights into the areas of language in which fossilization mostly occurs, and the effect it has on their output, as well as to explore potential strategies to help learners overcome this challenge, based on the learners' responses and perspectives.

The questionnaire covered various aspects divided into four sections, the first section covered information about the samples, the second dealt with questions related to language systems. The third section was related to impacts on the language. The final one contained questions that will contribute to develop instructional strategies based on the learners' responses. Moreover, the subjects were asked very simple and understandable questions in a friendly environment and comfortable atmosphere, the questions posed to the subjects were designed to be easily understood and approachable. The aim was to ensure that the participants felt at ease and confident in their responses. The simplicity of the questions allowed for clear and concise answers, enabling the researchers to gather valuable insights without overwhelming the participants.

Section One: Demographic Information

Level:

Middle school				
Level	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year
Participant	5	5	5	5

Table 2.1: Level of the Middle School Participants

The table represent the number of subjects from 01 November 1945 middle school-Mahdia, who participated in the study. A total of (20) subject, consisting of (05) randomly selected students from each level; 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year.

Secondary school			
Level	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year
Participant	6	7	7

Table 2.2: Level of the Secondary School Participants

The chart displays the number of candidates who agreed to engage in the study. A total of (20) learners from different level; 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year from Mohamed ibn Abdel-Karim secondary school-Tiaret.

Gender:

Middle school students		
Gender	Female	Male
Participants	14	06
Percentage	70%	30%

Table 2.3: Gender of The Middle School Participants

This table shows which gender participated in the research study, the majority of the subjects were female middle school students, with a number of (14) making up for (70%). Whereas a number (06) male students making up for (30%).

Secondary school students		
Gender	Female	Male
Participants	16	04
Percentage	80%	20%

Table 2.4: Gender of the Secondary School Participants

This table reveals which gender participated in the research study, the majority of the secondary school subjects were female students, with a number of (16) making up for (80%). In addition to (04) male students making up for (20%).

Section Two: Language System**Q:1 What is more difficult for you when learning English?**

Grammar Vocabulary Pronunciation communication

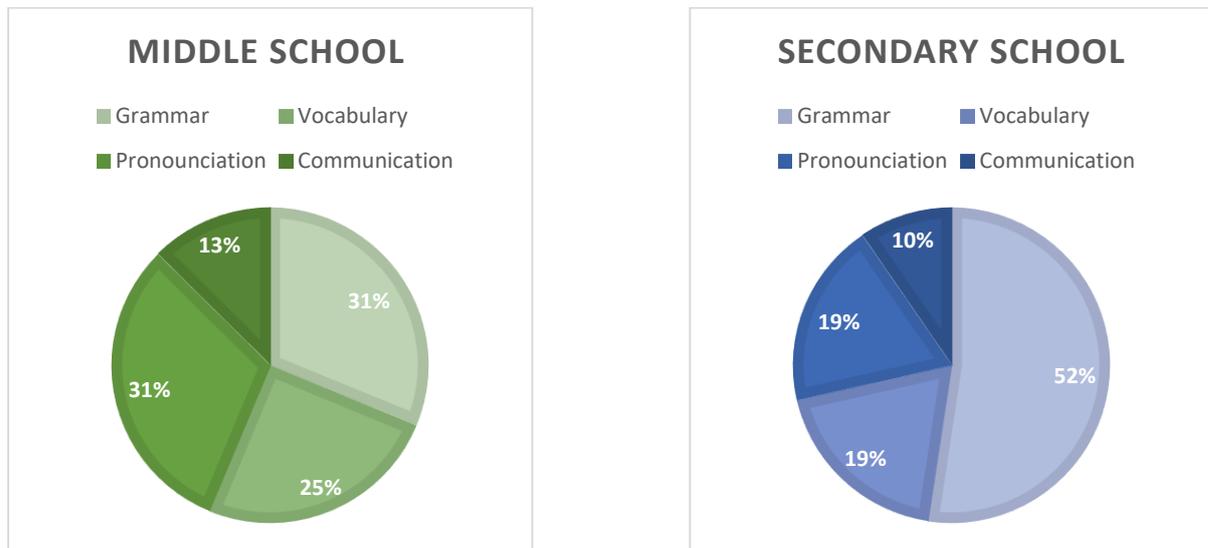


Figure 2.1: Language System Difficulties

Middle school: the responses show that the learners find grammar and pronunciation to be difficult when learning English, (25%) each.

While the largest number of (35%) learners find communication more difficult when learning English, and only (20%) find that vocabulary more difficult when learning English.

Secondary school: the results of the survey indicate that (52%) of 20 subjects from secondary school find grammar to be the most challenging aspect of learning the language.

The relatively equal percentage of respondents who chose pronunciation and vocabulary is (19%), only (10%) of the respondents chose communication as the most challenging aspect of learning English.

Q:2 Do you happen to make mistakes when talking or writing in English in class?

yes, very often sometimes rarely never

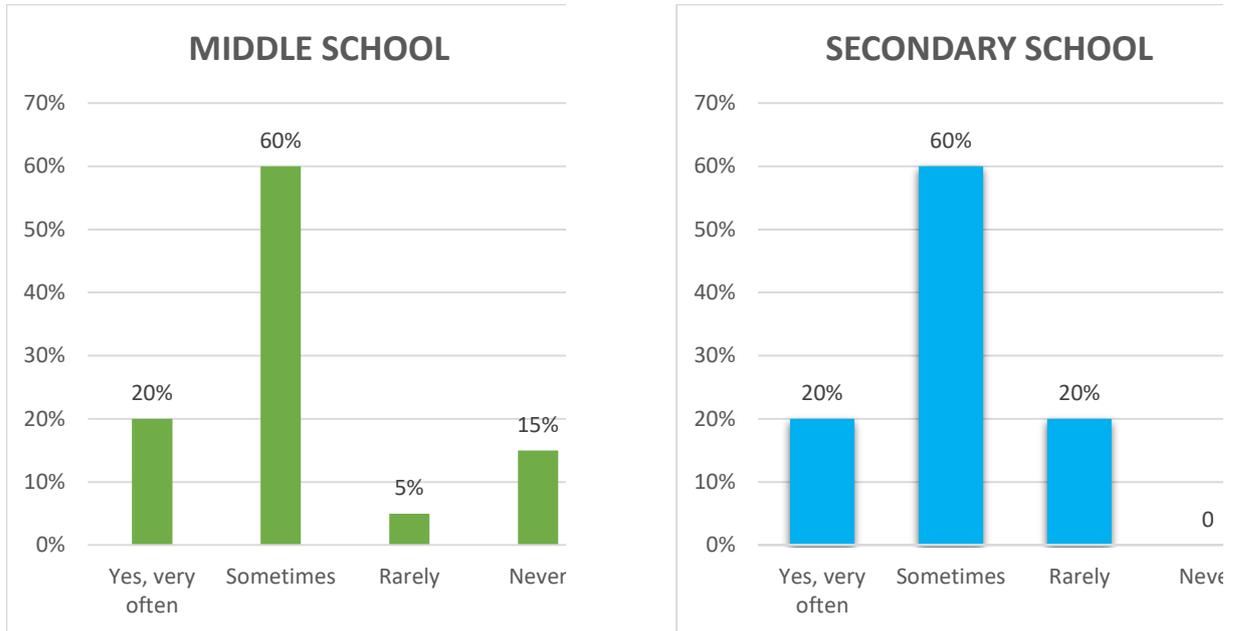


Figure 2.2: Writing and Oral Mistakes in The Classroom

Middle school: the bar graph indicates that (20%) of students make mistakes very often when speaking or writing in English in class, while (60%) sometimes make mistakes, (5%) rarely make mistakes, and (15%) never make mistakes.

Secondary school: the majority of secondary school students (60%) out of 20 subjects make mistakes when talking or writing in English. (20%) of students selected "rarely," suggesting that some students may have a good grasp of English. (20%) of students selected "very often," indicating that some students may struggle more with English. It is seen that no one selected "never,".

Q:3 What sort of mistakes recurs in your oral or written performance?

Grammatical Vocabulary Pronunciation communication

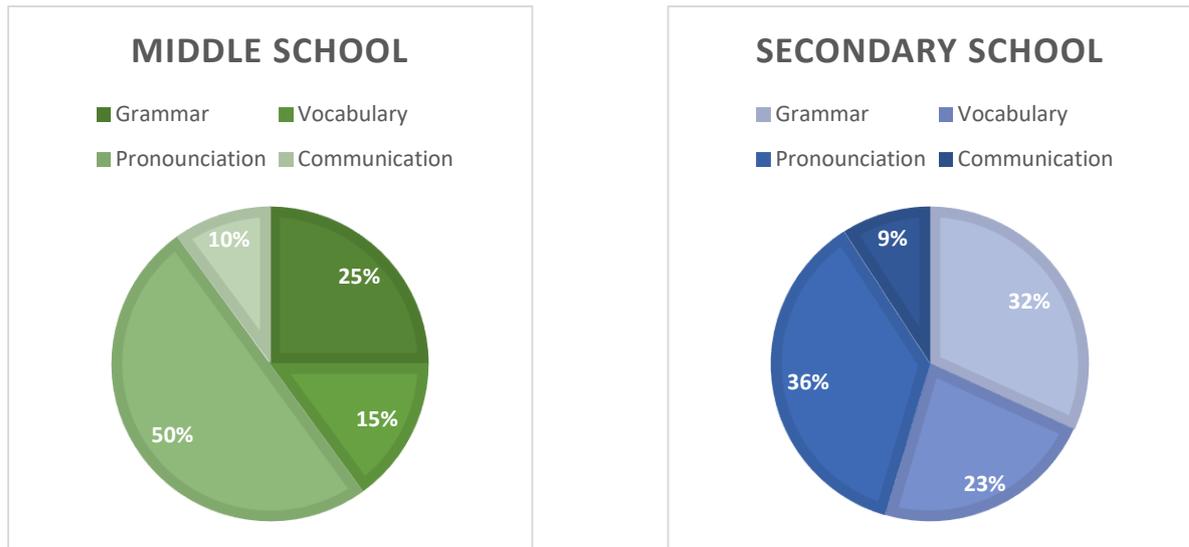


Figure 2.3: Mistakes Recurrence in Oral and Written Performance

Middle school: the chart indicates that (50%) of the respondents make recurring mistakes in pronunciation during their written and spoken performance. (25%) make grammatical recurring mistakes. a number of (15%) make vocabulary recurring mistakes. only (10%) make recurring mistakes in communication.

Secondary school: judging by the results, most of the respondents, (36%) identified pronunciation as the most recurring type of mistake in their oral or written performance. nearly a quarter of respondents (23%) identified vocabulary as a recurring issue. Grammar was identified as a recurring issue by (32%) of respondents. Finally, (9%) of respondents selected "communication" as the most recurring type of mistake.

Q:4 The same mistakes recur in your speech and writing

when you do not monitor on your performance

even when you focus on your performance

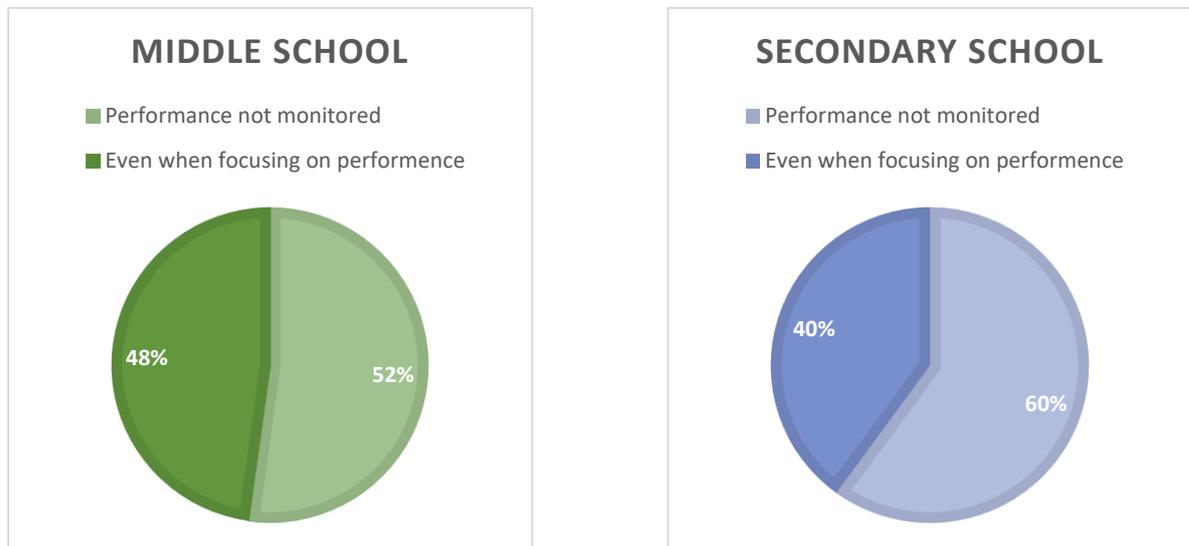


Figure 2.4: Recurring Language Errors: The Importance of Monitoring Speech and Writing Performance

Middle school: a number (52%) of the subjects make recurring when their performance is not monitored, whereas (48%) make recurring mistakes even when focusing on their performance.

Secondary school: the figure above shows that a total of (60%) of the respondents make the same mistakes when speaking and writing when they are not monitored, whereas (40%) recur the same mistakes even when they focus on their performances.

Q:5 Do you happen to figure out that you have made mistakes when speaking or writing?

Yes sometimes never

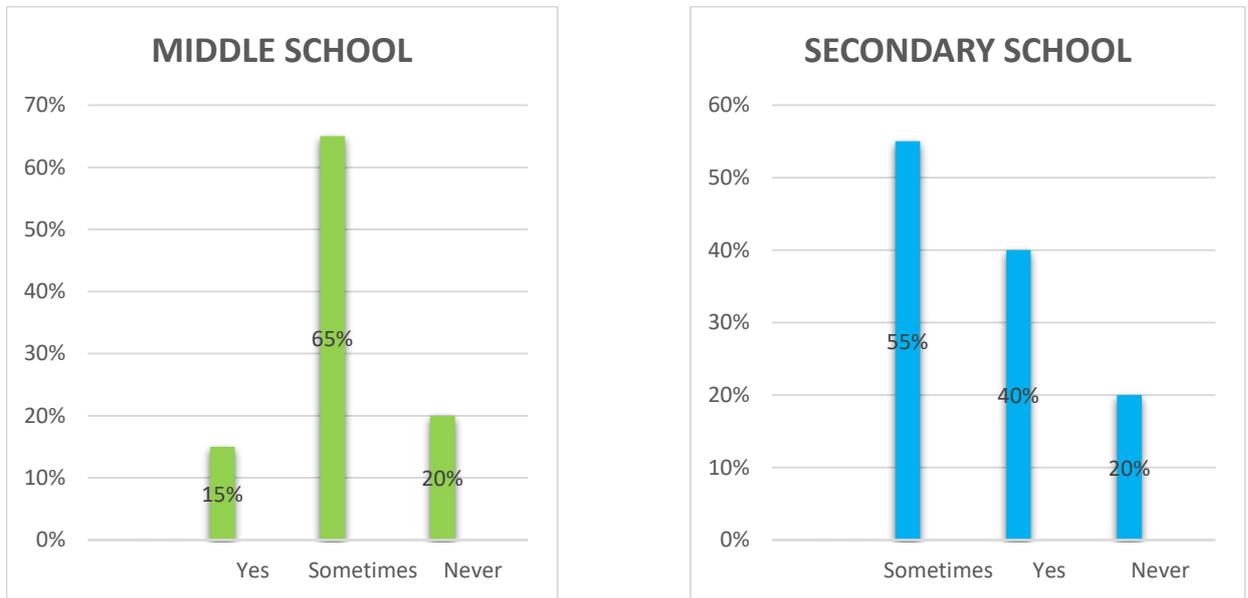


Figure 2.5: Error Awareness in Language

Middle school: (65%) reported they sometimes figure out they have made mistakes during their oral and written performance. While (15%) said they always notice their errors. (20%) never notice their mistakes.

Secondary school: it is shown that the majority of the respondents (55%) are sometimes aware of their writing and speaking mistakes, the (40%) answered with yes, meaning they are fully aware of those mistakes, and only (5%) are never able to do so.

Section Three: Language Impact

Q:6 Are there mistakes which recur even after your teacher's correction?

Many few none

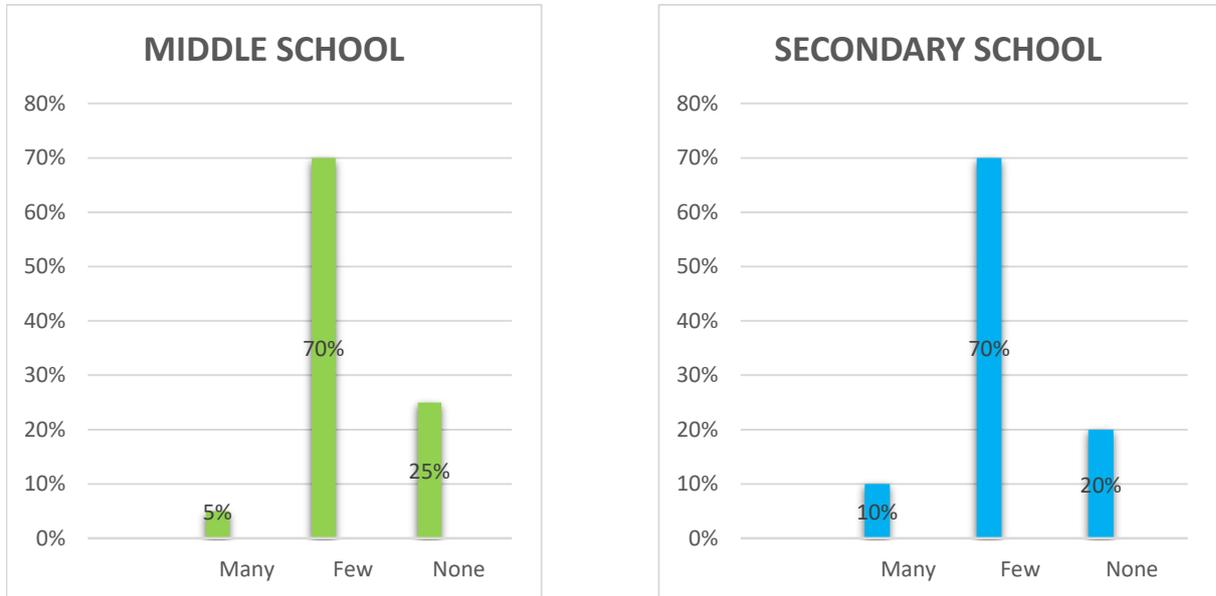


Figure 2.6: Mistake Recurrences after Teacher's Correction

Middle school: (70%) of the learners stated that they make few recurring mistakes after their teacher's correction. (25%) make no mistakes. only (5%) make many recurring mistakes after their teacher's correction.

Secondary school: according to the results, (70%) of the respondents show that a few number of mistakes recur after the being corrected by the teacher, while (20%) have none recurrent mistakes. Only (10%) have shown that many mistakes reoccur even after being corrected.

Q:7 Mistakes recur with you:

Spontaneously deliberately



Figure 2.7: Recurring Mistakes: Spontaneous or Deliberate

Middle school: the chart indicates that the total of the subjects (100%) make mistakes spontaneously.

Secondary school: a total of (95%) respondents make recurring mistakes spontaneously, possibly done without planning or by external influence. The other (5%) claim to perform those mistakes deliberately.

Q:8 Does the thought of having made a recurrent mistake affect your further performance?

yes a little not at all

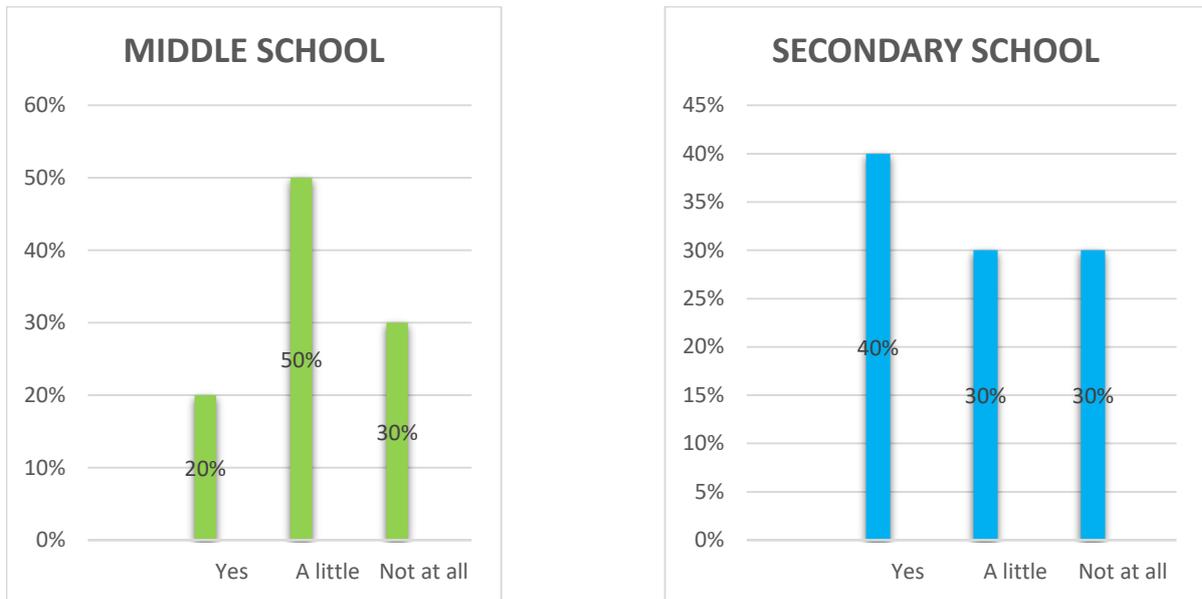


Figure 2.8: The Impact of Recurrent Mistakes on Learning Performance

Middle school: (50%) of the respondents are a little bit affected when making recurring mistakes. (30%) do not affect their performances. Only (20%) claimed that it affects their future performances.

Secondary school: a significant portion of the participants are affected by the thought of having made a recurrent mistake. Out of these, (40%) reported that it affects their performance to a great extent, while the remaining (30%) indicated a moderate impact. On the other hand, (30%) of the participants reported that the thought of making a recurrent mistake has no effect on their further performance.

Q:9 What do you generally feel when you make a recurrent mistake in your speech or writing?

indifference malaise frustration

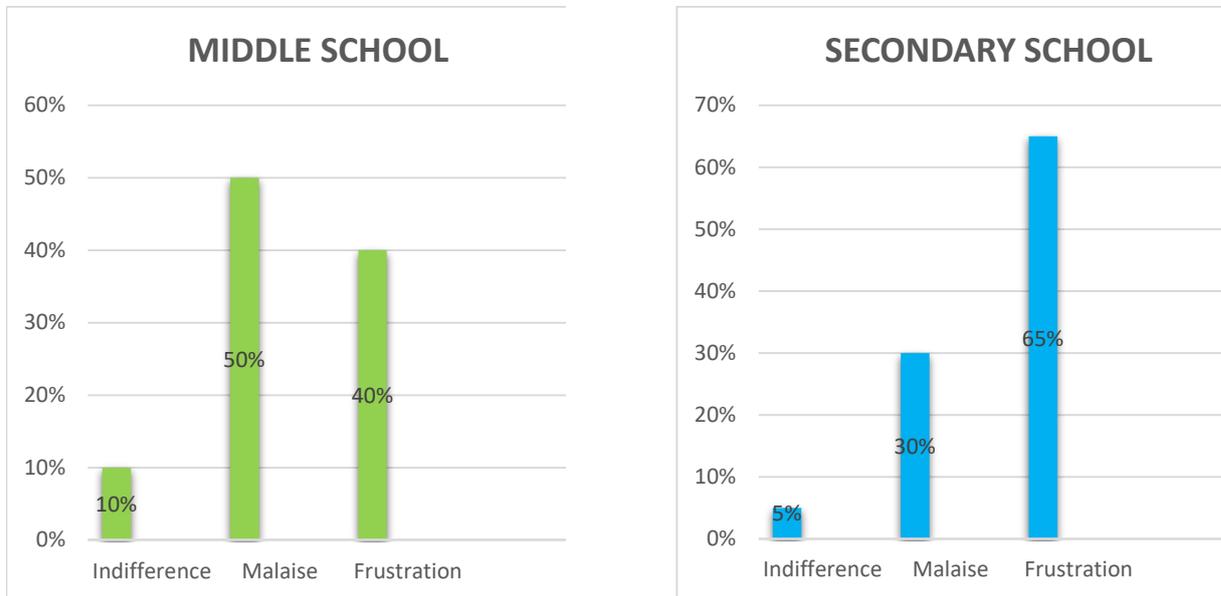


Figure 2.9: Attitudes Towards Recurrent Mistakes

Middle school: (50%) of the respondents feel a malaise when making recurring mistakes in their performance. (40%) feel frustrated and in their performances. (10%) show a feeling of indifference.

Secondary school: (65%) of the respondents have a high level of frustration when recurring a mistake in their performance. (30%) feel a malaise and in their performances, the rest (5%) proportion has a general feeling of indifference.

Q:10 How do you feel at one of your peers' negative feedback at a recurrent mistake?

Embarrassed Indifferent Satisfied

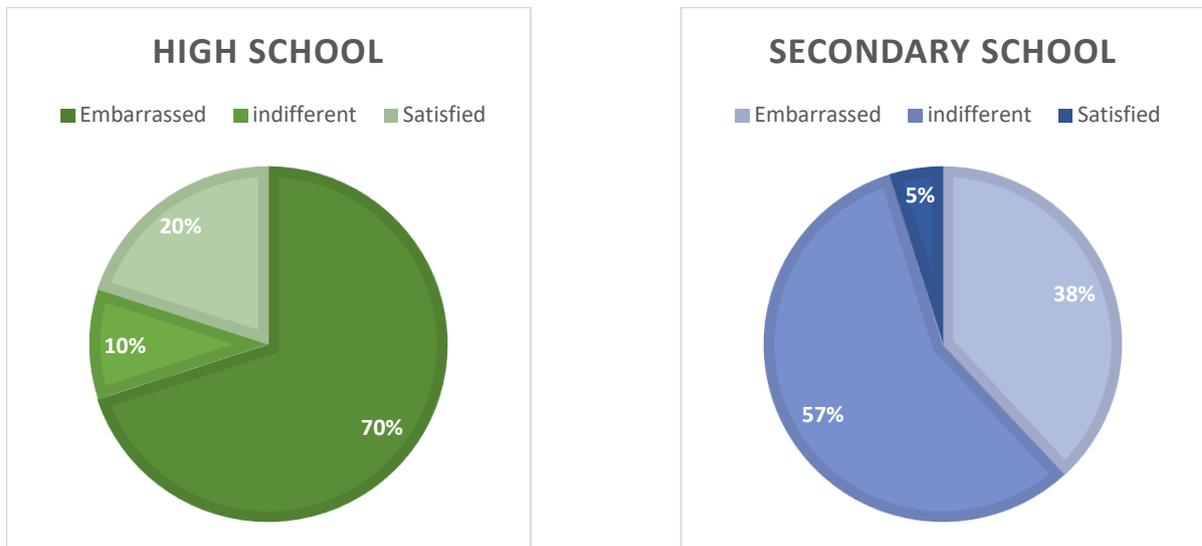


Figure 2.10: Attitudes Towards Peers' Negative Feedback

Middle school: the figure shows that the majority of the learners (70%) who receive a negative feedback from their peers feel embarrassed. (20%) feel satisfied. And (10%) feel indifferent.

Secondary school: a large number of the learners (57%) express a feeling of indifference. The other respondents consist of (38%) feeling embarrassed. Lastly, only a group of (5%) feel satisfied towards their peers' negative feedback.

Q:11 When you receive a negative feedback on a recurrent mistake from your teacher or a peer, do you

Keep participating in the class open activities?

Stop participating in class open activity?

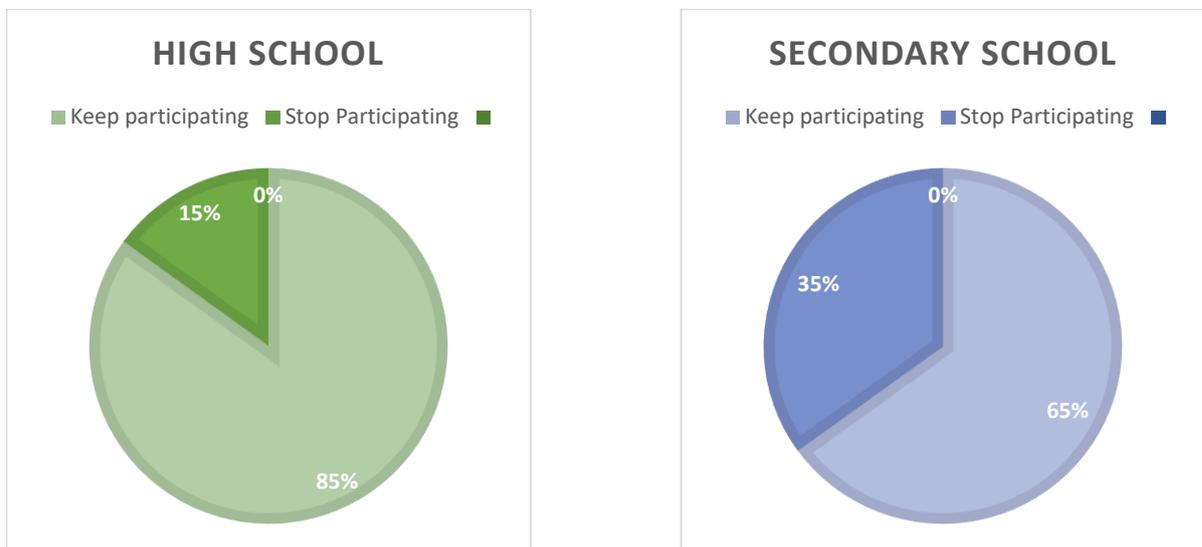


Figure 2.11: Attitudes towards Peers' and Teachers' Negative Feedback

Middle school: most pupils (85%) keep participating in class open activities even after when they receive a negative feedback. Only (15%) stop participating in class.

Secondary school: The majority of secondary school learners (65%) continue to participate in class open activities despite negative feedback on recurrent mistakes. (35%) of learners stop participating in class open activities after receiving negative feedback.

Section Four: Learning Strategies

Q:12 Does your teacher refer you back to your mistakes?

Yes, very often sometimes rarely never

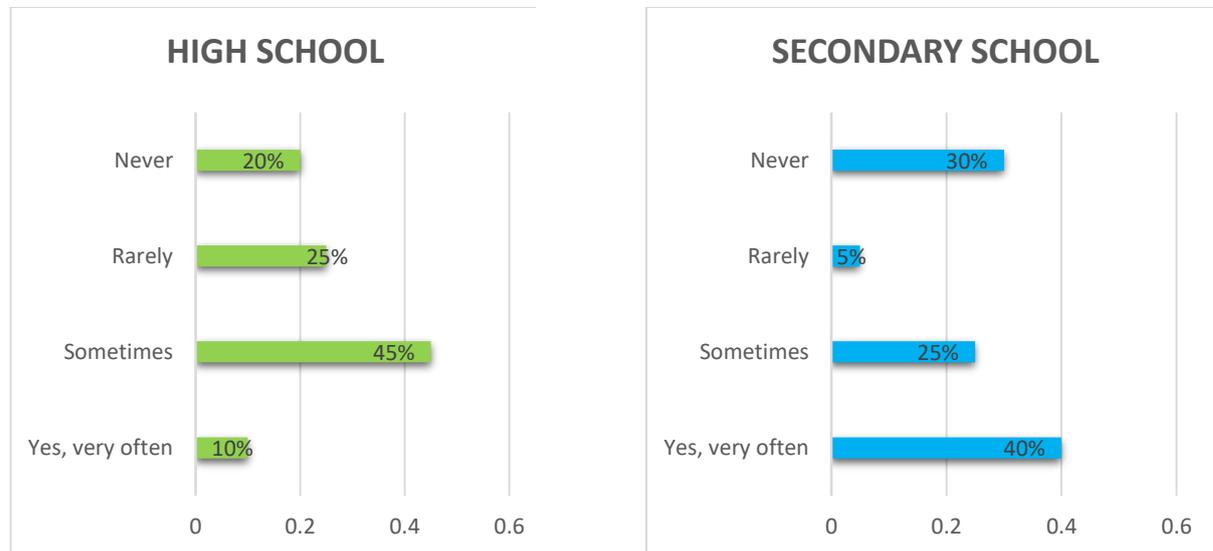


Figure 2.12: Teachers' Reference to Past Mistakes

Middle school: a number of (45%) are sometimes referred back to their past mistakes by the teachers. (25%) chose rarely. (20%) selected never. The rest (10%) claimed yes, very often.

Secondary school: the largest group (40%) reported that their teachers refer them back to their mistakes very often. On the other hand, a substantial portion (30%) of learners reported that their teachers never refer them back to their mistakes. (25%) are sometimes referred back to their mistakes. And (5%) of learners reported that their teachers rarely refer them back to their mistakes

Q:13 Do you correct your mistakes on the spot or let them to later time?

on the spot

later

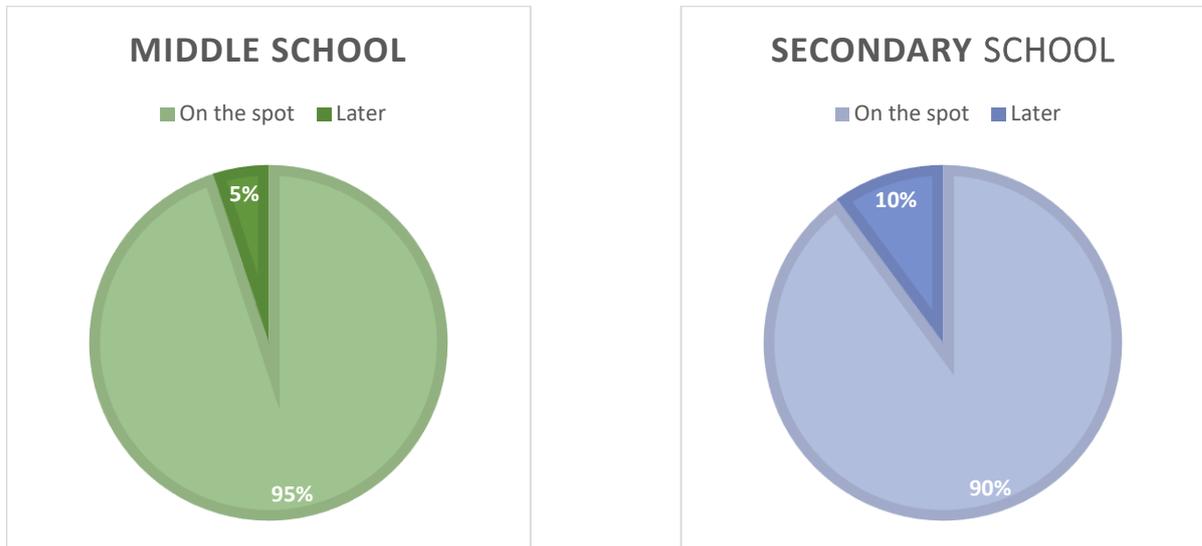


Figure 2.13: Learners' Frequency of Correcting their Mistakes

Middle school: most (95%) of the students fix their mistakes immediately rather than leaving them for later. And a number of (5%) leave those mistakes for later.

Secondary school: the results presented imply that the majority of the subjects (90%) correct their mistakes on the spot. However, a small minority (10%) of learners reported that they leave their mistakes for later.

Q:14 Do you find difficulty to get rid of them once and for all?

Yes not really no

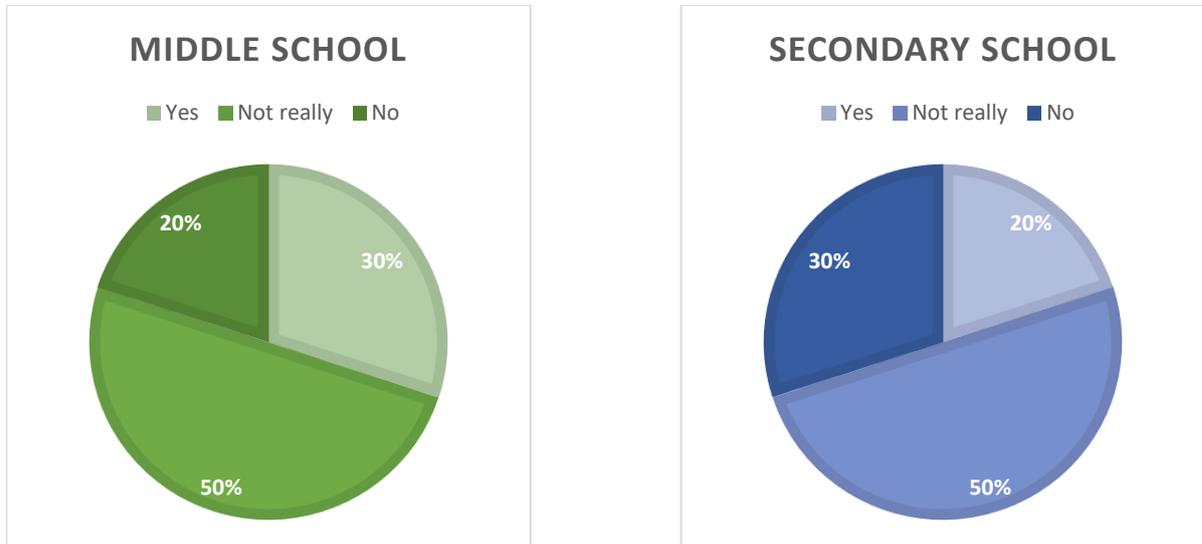


Figure 2.14: The Difficulty in Eliminating the Recurring Mistakes

Middle school: (30%) reported that they find difficulties getting rid of their mistakes. (50%) do not really find any difficulties. Only (20%) find no difficulties.

Secondary school: a small percentage (20%) of the secondary school subjects find it difficult to get rid of their mistakes once and for all. On the other hand, (30%) of learners reported that they do not find it difficult to get rid of their mistakes, while the largest group (50%) reported that they do not find it difficult.

Q:15 When you figure out that you have made a recurrent mistake, do you generally

concentrate on the mistake you have made

just drop it and concentrate on your further performance

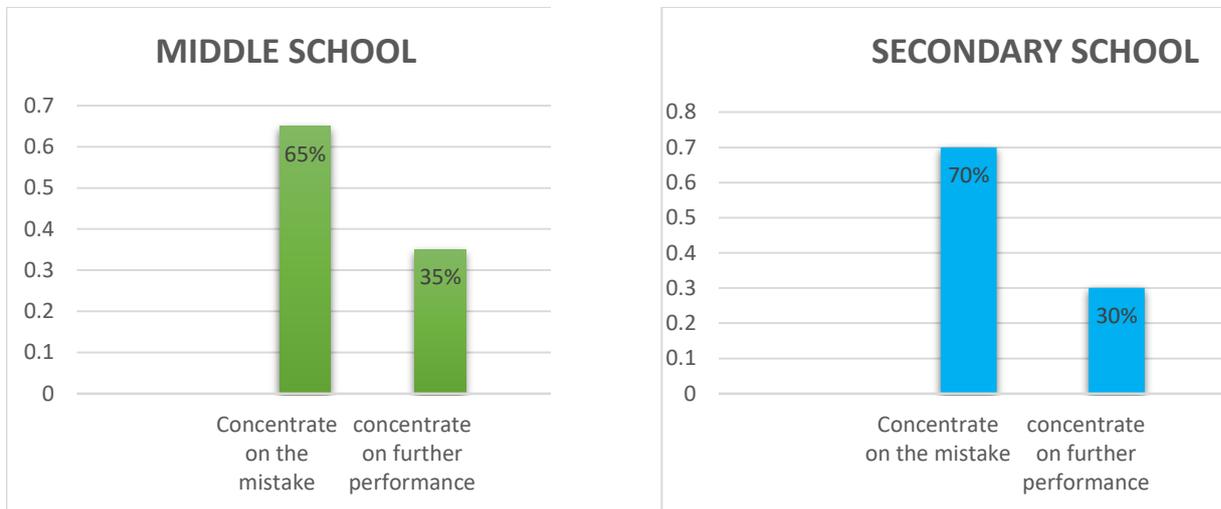


Figure 2.15: Learners' Ability to Spot their Recurring Mistakes

Middle school: the majority of the respondents (65%) concentrate on the recurring mistakes they have made. And the rest of the respondents (35%) drop it and concentrate on their further performance.

Secondary school: The highest number of the subjects (70%), appear to concentrate on the mistake they have made when they realize they have made a recurring mistake. However, (30%) of the subjects reported that they just ignore the mistake and concentrate on their further performance.

Q:16 In case of negative feelings, do you keep motivated for further learning activity?

yes no

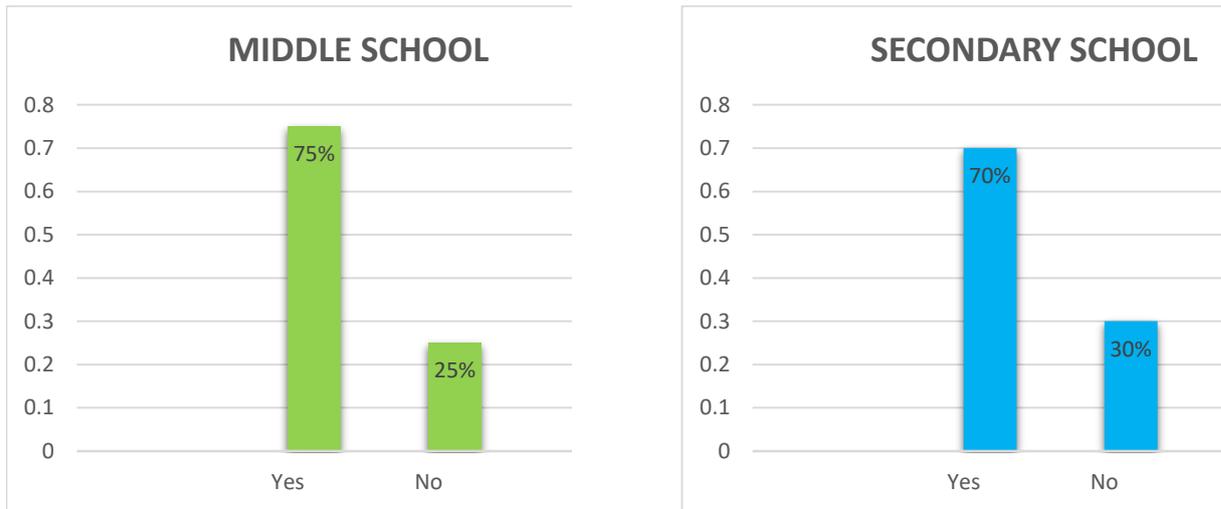


Figure 2.16: The Impact of Negative Emotions on Learners' Motivation

Middle school: (75%) keep motivated for future performances. Only (25%) lose motivation for further performance.

Secondary school: (70%) of the subjects keep motivated for further learning activity even when facing negative feelings. However, (30%) of the learners claimed that they do not feel motivated for further performances.

Q:17 How do you feel at your teacher's negative feedback on a recurrent mistake?

embarrassed indifferent satisfied

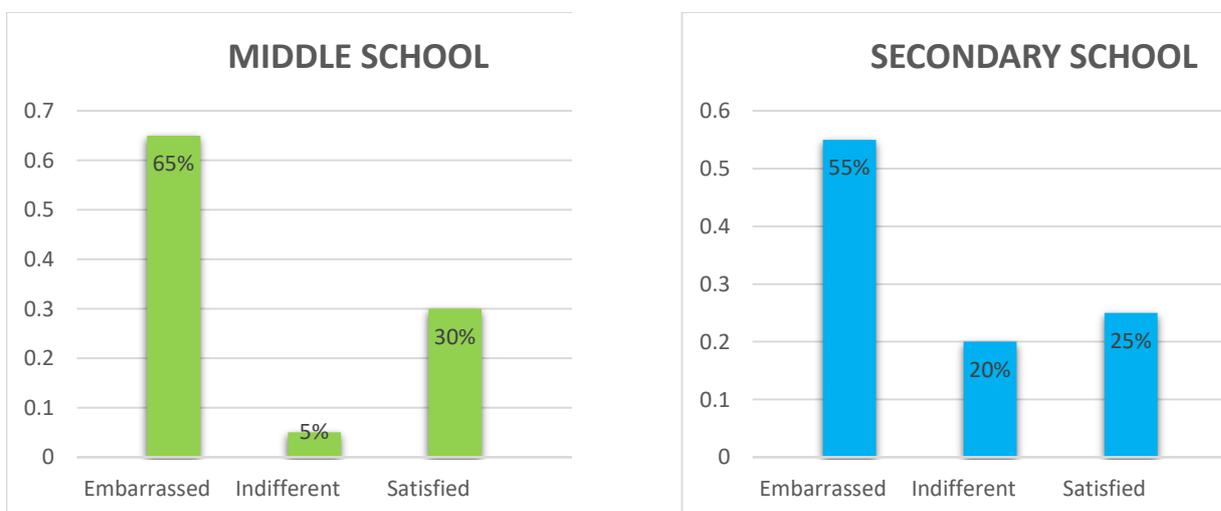


Figure 2.17: Learners' Reaction towards Teachers' Feedback on a Recurrent Mistake

Middle school: according to the results from the graph, (65%) feel embarrassed at teacher's negative feedback on a recurrent mistake. (30%) feel satisfied. While only (5%) feel indifferent.

Secondary school: it is seen that (55%) feel embarrassed when receiving negative feedback from their teacher on a recurrent mistake. The other (25%) of learners reported feeling satisfied. Lastly, (20%) of learners reported feeling.

2.7.2 Insights of the Students' Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire yielded valuable insights into the learners' language acquisition process. They shared their various experiences encountered in the classroom. Their answers provided a deeper understanding of the challenges associated with language acquisition.

In conclusion, the questionnaire administered to the learners resulted in a productive exchange of information. It offered valuable insights into the challenges in second language acquisition and its consequential effects. The findings obtained from this questionnaire will make a significant contribution to the ongoing study efforts focused on the problematic. Furthermore, they will assist in the development of effective strategies aimed at supporting both teachers and second language learners in alleviating fossilization in second language acquisition.

2.8 Teachers' Interview

The second survey consists of an interview presented orally to the English teachers from the previously mentioned educational institutions. It that involves ten questions that aims at gathering background information from the teachers concerning the research topic. The interview is displayed in four sections, the first section includes simple questions to gain a background information about the teachers, the second section consists of questions about

fossilization and teachers' viewpoint about the impact of fossilization among EFL learners' ability to acquire language. The third section is made of a series of situational questions where it investigates if the teacher' learners have shown any signs of fossilization during classroom activities. The final section of questions asks the teachers' about the learners' language proficiency. The interview is summarized as shown below:

Introduction

Greetings and thanking the interviewee for their time

Explaining the purpose and scope of the interview

Background information and expertise of the teachers

Asking the teachers about their past experience in the teaching field

Fossilization: An Exploration of a Language Learning Phenomenon

Q:1 Have you heard of the term "fossilization in language acquisition" before?

Impacts of Fossilization on EFL Learners' Proficiency in English

Q:2 Do you think fossilization can have an impact on EFL learners' ability to become proficient in English?

Q:3 have you noticed any sign of fossilization among learners?

Assessing Learners' Confidence in Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing in English

Q:4 How confident are your learners in their ability to speak English?

Q:5 How confident are your learners in their ability to understand spoken English?

Q:6 How confident are your learners in their ability to read English?

Q:7 How confident are your learners in their ability to write in English?

Conclusion

Ending the interview on a positive note and reiterate appreciation for their participation

2.8.1 Analysis of the Interview Results

The interview was scheduled with English teacher. During the interview, they were asked questions directly, which focuses on fossilization in second language acquisition.

The research aims to understand the causes and effects of language fossilization on EFL, as well as exploring potential strategies to help learners overcome this hurdle based on teachers' responses and opinions.

During the interview, various aspects related to fossilization in L2 acquisition were presented. The teachers were asked about their experiences with English language learners who have exhibited signs of fossilization and how they approach teaching in such cases. Additionally, to any specific challenges they encountered when trying to address language fossilization in the classroom.

Background information and expertise of the teachers

This section contains a question about teaching experience in the field. The teachers have been in the field of education for many years, which makes them highly experienced in the domain. They possess a diverse range of approaches to effectively address various issues related to language learning and acquisition.

Fossilization: An Exploration of a Language Learning Phenomenon

Q1: have you ever heard of the term "language fossilization" before?

The teachers' answer to this question was as follows "**No, we haven't heard of the term "language fossilization" never before.**" Analyzing the statement provided, it is suggested that the English teachers claim to be unfamiliar with the term "language fossilization." There

could be several reasons why the teachers might not be familiar with the term. It is possible that they have not come across the specific term "language fossilization" during their training or professional development. It could also be a case of terminology variation; as different educators may use different terms to describe similar concepts.

Impacts of Fossilization on EFL Learners' Proficiency in English

Q2: Do you think fossilization can have an impact on EFL learner's ability to become proficient in English?

After introducing the terminology of English fossilization in second language acquisition, the teachers responded to the question with a positive affirmation: **"yes of course! process of acquiring incorrect linguistic forms during second language learning can indeed have an impact on the learner's fluency and accuracy."** The teachers' response acknowledges that language fossilization, which involves the acquisition of incorrect linguistic forms, can have consequences for the learner's fluency and accuracy.

According to them, when learners engage in second language acquisition, they naturally strive to acquire correct linguistic structures and use them accurately. but, due to various factors such as the influence of their first language, limited exposure to the target language, or ineffective language instruction, learners may unintentionally internalize incorrect forms or structures.

Q:3 Have you noticed any sign of fossilization among learners?

After addressing this question to the teachers, they stated as: **"yes, many times they make errors in written and oral expressions and, even in grammar, and they tend to repeat those errors"**. The teachers acknowledged that learners often make errors in both written and oral expressions, including grammar, they also highlighted that learners tend to repeat these errors. The teachers' response reflects a common observation in language learning, in the early stages of language acquisition, learners make mistakes in their written and oral

communication. Errors can occur due to a variety of reasons, such as limited language proficiency, influence from their first language, lack of exposure to the target language, or an incomplete understanding of grammar rules.

The statement also emphasizes that learners have a tendency to repeat these errors. This repetition can occur when learners internalize certain incorrect language features or forms, which then become fossilized in their language production. As a result, learners may continue to make the same errors even after receiving corrective feedback or guidelines.

Assessing Learners' Confidence in Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing in English

Q:4 How confident are your learners in their ability to speak English?

Following the teachers' responses, they affirm that some learners may feel quite confident in their English speaking skills, particularly if they have had extensive exposure to the language or have successfully engaged in meaningful conversations in English. These learners may be more willing to participate actively in speaking activities, and express themselves with relative ease.

On the other hand, some learners may struggle with self-confidence when it comes to speaking English. They might feel anxious or frustrated about making mistakes or being misunderstood. This lack of confidence can be influenced by factors such as limited exposure to English-speaking environments, fear of judgment.

Q:5 How confident are your learners in their ability to understand spoken English?

Based on the teachers' answers, they stated that confidence levels of learners can vary. Some learners may feel more confident in their ability to understand spoken English, while others may feel less confident. It often depends on various factors such as their language

learning preferences, the amount of vocabulary they know and their personal comfort with listening and comprehension.

Q:6 How confident are your learners in their ability to read English?

The teachers stated that a high level of confidence is present among learners who have been extensively exposed to English texts, they developed strong reading abilities and tend to feel more assured in their English reading skills.

Conversely, beginners or learners who are not always active in the classroom activities may initially experience lower levels of confidence. They may encounter challenges related to unfamiliar vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and cultural references. Nevertheless, with proper guidance and consistent practice, their confidence can gradually grow and improve over time.

Q:7 How confident are your learners in their ability to write in English?

The teachers confirmed that learners are not afraid when engaging in writing activities, however they tend to make certain mistakes that they may or may not be aware of. Learners who receive corrective feedback tend to lose confidence in their writing activities, they experience stress and insecurities. Whereas a small proportion accept the fact of making written errors, and learn from the instructive feedback they get.

2.8.2 Insight of the Teachers' Interview Results

The interview provided significant insights into the teachers' perspective on language fossilization. they shared examples of common errors and misconceptions that learners face, as well as their classroom experiences with English language learners. Their expertise and practical knowledge added depth to the understanding of the problematic.

In conclusion, the interview with the English teachers proved to be a fruitful exchange of ideas and information. It shed light on the challenges posed by fossilization in second language acquisition and its effects. The findings from this interview will contribute to the ongoing research on the problematic and assist in developing strategies to support teachers and language learners in overcoming language acquisition obstacles.

2.9 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has effectively achieved its objective of providing clarity on the research design and methodology employed in the study. By outlining the sampling procedures and data collection tools implemented, it has ensured the suitability and reliability of the study's findings. The chapter has also focused on the statistical analysis of the research results, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the data.

Furthermore, this chapter has provided in-depth information regarding the administration of questionnaires to middle and secondary school learners, as well as the interviews conducted with teachers. Through these methods, the research aimed to investigate the presence of a psychological phenomenon of fossilization among EFL learners and its impact on their second language acquisition process. By studying these aspects, the chapter has laid the foundation for future discussions and exploration of the research topic. The findings of this study hold significant implications for the field of language acquisition and provide valuable insights into the factors that may facilitate second language learning.

Finally, this chapter serves as a vital component of the research, establishing the groundwork for the subsequent analysis and contributing to the broader body of knowledge in the field. The research design, methodology, and findings presented here shape the way for further investigation and potential interventions to enhance the second language acquisition process of EFL learners.

CHAPTER THREE:
INTERPRETATIONS
AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an in-depth exploration of the results obtained from the comprehensive questionnaire administered to middle and secondary school students, along with an interview conducted with their teachers.

The following interpretations of the results consist of making a deep analysis of the responses gained from the samples, allowing the elaboration of a general sense of these findings to explore the scope of fossilization in second language acquisition in contextual perspective.

The process of interpretation involved an examination of the data collected, in which meaningful conclusions will be inferred in valuable recommendations that will prove useful for the area of study.

In summary, this chapter provides an interpretation of the results obtained from the questionnaire and the interview. Through this research. The aim is to gain insights into the experiences and perspectives of the subjects, generating recommendations and insightful strategies that can alleviate fossilization in foreign language learning.

3.2 Interpretation of the Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire was designed in a simplified outline that can match learners' understanding. Each of the questions serves as a foundation for the research problematic.

The findings depicted in the graphs from the preceding chapter will now be interpreted, deductions regarding remedial actions that should be undertaken by both students and teachers for instructional feedback.

The results obtained from the subjects revealed certain shortcomings in the language acquisition process of the participants. As a result, these findings will be examined and discussed, allowing to test the hypotheses regarding how fossilization obstructs the learner's progress in achieving fluency and accuracy in a foreign language.

3.2.1 Language System Difficulties

The numerical data acquired from the responses of the questionnaire concerning the English learning difficulties faced by learners of middle school shows that learners have equal difficulties in grammar and pronunciation, twenty-five percent each, it can impose challenges for them when learning the second language. It indicates the lack of additional attention & support to improve language skills.

For the communicative skill, the majority of thirty-five percent struggle with it, causing the difficulty to express themselves and understand each other, this is maybe due to their lack of vocabulary.

Only twenty percent find that vocabulary more difficult when learning English. It suggests that learners do not consider the acquisition of vocabulary as their primary difficulty in English language learning.

In addition, a partial difference was deduced from secondary school learners, where judging by the previous graph, fifty-two percent find grammar to be the most challenging aspect of learning the language. Because they often struggle with the complexities of English grammatical structure.

The relatively equal percentage of respondents who chose pronunciation and vocabulary of nineteen percent suggests that these two areas may be closely linked. Meaning that students who struggle with pronunciation may also have difficulty with vocabulary acquisition.

Ten percent of the respondents of the respondents chose communication as the most challenging aspect of learning English, which is totally logical because having a rich vocabulary and an understandable recognition of the grammatical rules and items allow the learners to be well equipped when engaging in communication.

3.2.2 Writing and Oral Mistakes in the Classroom

The majority of the learners at middle school show that they have frequency of making mistakes when talking or writing, this can indicate that the mistakes are normal for the second language learning process, and a very small number of learners say they never commit an error or rarely. The aim of this question is to identify whether or not learners commit errors during exposure to written and spoken tasks activities in classroom, this could indicate that there are learners who demonstrate a level of language proficiency and they might have extra exposure to the foreign language which make them less effectuated to the mistakes they commit.

Based on the previous results collected from the secondary school learners, it seems that a majority of them make mistakes when talking or writing in English, this shows how learners find the systematical construction of the English items to be multi-faceted. The other proportion of students suggests that some students may have a good grasp of English and feel confident in their abilities. However, the other proportion selected often make those written and spoken mistakes indicating that some students may struggle more with English and may benefit from additional support and resources to improve their language skills.

3.2.3 Mistakes Recurrence in Oral and Written Performance

The aim behind this question is to identify the mistakes that reoccur in oral and written performance among EFL learners, fifteen percent of the subjects make recurring mistakes in pronunciation in oral performances, learners might not be aware of the specific pronunciation rules or patterns in the target language, they may not realize that they are making mistakes or may not know how to correct them.

Just twenty-five percent make grammatical mistakes, probably due to the inability to understand the grammatical rules and acquire them in a proper way.

Fifteen percent make vocabulary recurring mistakes, this suggests that a sizable portion of the learners struggle with accurately recalling and employing the appropriate words and terms in their language learning.

A smaller percentage with ten percent of learners make recurring mistakes in communication. This indicates that these learners face obstacles not only with vocabulary but also with effectively expressing themselves and conveying their intended messages.

It appears that most of the respondents of secondary school, identified pronunciation to also be the most recurring type of mistake in their oral or written performance. This may indicate that many learners have a hard time with proper pronunciation of English words, the same as middle school's ones, which could as well impact their overall communication skills in English, leading to fossilization to occur within their speech. Interestingly, nearly a quarter of respondents identified vocabulary as a recurring issue, which suggests that expanding one's vocabulary may be an important aspect of improving their overall language proficiency because they feel limited in terms of words. Grammar was identified as a recurring issue by thirty-two percent of respondents, which is not surprising given that English has many complex grammar rules as discussed in the case of the middle school learners that can be difficult to master. Finally, the rest of the respondents selected "communication" as the most recurring type of mistake, which may indicate that some individuals struggle with expressing their thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in English.

3.2.4 Recurring Language Errors: The Importance of Monitoring Speech and Writing Performance

When questioning the learners if they monitor their errors, the goal was to address their recurring language errors when they are not monitored, and when they are focusing on their

performances. The majority of middle school subjects face difficulties with persistent language errors that are not easily corrected when they are not monitored, and about forty-nine percent of the rest of the learners said that they keep the same mistakes more than once even when focusing on their mistakes, what can be deduced from the responses is that a lack of constructive feedback and monitoring from the instructors guarantees the presence of constant mistakes, and learners by themselves are not able to spot those errors, even if they concentrate.

After analyzing the results concluded from the secondary school subjects, it has been discovered that they share the same issue that leads to the recurrence of speech and writing performances, which is the absence of monitoring their performances. This challenge was also present among middle school learners. A vast number of the secondary school subjects claimed that their oral and written mistakes are likely to persist when they are not observed, this suggests that monitoring is an essential tool in language learning to reduce learners' mistakes and to ensure a safe development of the TL. However, few learners stated even when focusing on their performances, performance decreases, resulting recurring mistakes.

3.2.5 Error Awareness in Language

The large number of sixty-five of the middle school subjects declare they sometimes have a self-awareness of their written and oral mistakes, what can be assumed from this statement is that the learners possess a certain degree of recognition, however it is possible the learners are not always paying close attention to their activities inside the classroom, resulting in a high risk of spontaneous mistakes, which is considered as a sign of language fossilization. The other twenty percent of the subjects indicate that they never realize that they commit errors, which is a positive and total declaration of fossilization in their performance, due to a lack of self-awareness and lack of surveillance, while the fifteen percent of the subjects tend to be fully aware of their when make a mistake in their performances, suggesting that a small proportion have the ability to pass close attention to their faulty production of spoken and written language

in the TL. The aim behind such question is to investigate the mental presence of those learners when they are performing activities associated to the language, and if they possess a metacognitive realization for such errors.

Moreover, the results of the secondary school respondents are slightly different, it is shown that the majority of the respondents that consists of fifty-five percent, are sometimes aware of their writing and speaking mistakes, the other forty percent are fully aware of those mistakes, and only five percent are never able to do so. Perhaps the majority is able to differentiate between what is wrong and what is correct but are not very sure because they have not developed strong language skills yet, or they might be under pressure to complete a task. The reason why forty percent are fully aware of their errors could be their strong desire to improve their language skills. The rest of the learners might lack self-awareness or tend to overestimate their skills, or simply have low cognitive aptitude towards the language.

3.2.6 Mistake Recurrences after Teacher's Correction

Mistakes and errors are always present when acquiring the TL, the intended question was asked to explore the possibility of certain mistakes despite the teachers' correction, and to detect any sign of fossilization that can occur unwillingly without the consciousness of the non-native speaker. Seventeen percent respondents claimed that they make few recurring mistakes after their teacher's correction. Twenty-five percent make no errors after the feedback, proving the effectiveness of teacher's feedback during the learning process. Only five percent of learners reported that they still make many errors despite teacher guidance, proving that the learners are unable to improve their language performance and errors awareness, it might be considered a sign of fossilized language in their language acquisition, and teachers must aid the learners to enhance their abilities, it is safe to assume that errors keep the learners less motivated and block their progress in language learning.

In the case of secondary school, the great number of seventeen percent respondents showed a sign of few recurring mistakes right after their teacher's correction, which suggests that they learn while still making minors errors. While the other percentage of twenty percent showed that some learners have none recurrent mistakes, meaning that they are able to learn from their past mistakes when assisted by their teacher. Finally, the rest of the proportion, ten percent have shown that many mistakes reoccur even after being corrected, possibly due to the lack of confidence and demotivation when the same mistakes reoccur.

3.2.7 Recurring Mistakes: Spontaneous or Deliberate

The aim of the given question was to assess the nature of the mistakes performed by the EFL learners, to determine whether the mistakes occur spontaneously or deliberately, the instructor will be able to gain insights into the learners' language proficiency, their awareness of errors, and their level of control over their language production. A number one hundred percent of the subjects claimed to make A number one hundred percent of the subjects claimed to make recurring errors spontaneously. Learners may make recurring mistakes spontaneously for various reasons. It could be due to a lack of understanding or knowledge about the lessons and insufficient practice, cognitive or processing difficulties, lack of attention and focus, overgeneralization of incorrect rules, or the impact of stress or pressure. Identifying the underlying causes of these mistakes is crucial in helping learners overcome them and improve their understanding and performance.

A total of nineteen-five percent secondary school respondents make recurring mistakes spontaneously, possibly done without planning or by external influence, and as a result of a sudden urge or inclination without premeditation or external stimulus. The other five percent claim to perform those mistakes deliberately, feasibly losing interest and motivation and performing tasks for the sake of doing it.

3.2.8 The Impact of Recurrent Mistakes on Learning Performance

About fifty percent of middle school students said that recurring mistakes affect their performance just a little, and thirty percent are not affected in their performance, while the last twenty percent are affected in their future activities. The aim from asking this type of question is to explore whether the realization of having repeated a mistake has any psychological influence on learners' performances. What can be inferred is that the idea of having a repeated error in the language whether its written or oral can have a large impact on learners, although the degree of the influence varies, some learners may become anxious and their learning process and may get effected and demotivated, this can lead to fossilization.

Based on the responses, it can be concluded that a significant portion of the secondary school participants are affected by the thought of having made a recurrent mistake, which is a common issue present among EFL learners, restricting them from communication. this fear might be deleterious to their language learning. Out of these, forty percent reported that it affects their performance to a great extent, which is likely to cause limited performance and latent improvement. While the other thirty percent of the subjects indicated a moderate impact that can have various supposed causes; one possibility is urge to meet higher expectations and a stressful environment, creating a sense of doubt and self-esteem. The other possibility is the lack of supportive and competitive environment that will allow the learners to exploit all of their remaining potential. Another thirty percent of the participants reported that the thought of making a recurrent mistake has no effect on their further performance. These results suggest that for a majority of learners, having the thought of making a recurrent mistake can have an impact on their future performance.

3.2.9 Attitudes Towards Recurrent Mistakes

The aim behind such question is putting under test the psychological and motivational state of learners. Fifty percent feel a malaise after they make a recurrent mistake in both spoken

and written activities when learning the second language, what can be inferred is that the learners are affected in their language performance. Ten percent reported feeling indifferent, this may be a sign of carelessness due to being unable to avoid making the same errors when learning in general. The final forty percent claimed that a recurrent mistake can influence them in a negative way leading them to frustration, it can be deduced that frustration from recurrent mistakes is a source for discomfort and doubt in their ability to achieve a successful clear structure of language. Errors are likely to persist in the learners' language and thwart their performances causing them to feel low and unmotivated.

For the majority of secondary school learners, they are emotionally impacted when making a recurrent error. Sixty-five percent respondents feel frustrated, the constant repetition of such mistake can make learners feel incompetent and that they are not making any progress in their language acquisition, which discourages them. For the other thirteen percent of the respondents, they are likely to feel a malaise because frequent mistakes interfere with their spoken and written performances leading to less communicative improvement. While only five percent of responders exhibit neither frustration nor malaise about their mistake, but they feel indifferent, perhaps some learners over time become disinterested in their recurring spoken and written mistakes, especially if done for a long period of time. This might be due to a lack of feedback and motivation in the classroom.

3.2.10 Attitudes Towards Peers' Negative Feedback

The purpose of the question was to see the psychological state and motivation of middle and secondary school students, the idea that can be drawn from middle school students' responses is that the first fourteen students felt embarrassed when receiving negative feedback, it can be inferred that it affects their performance and cause fear of peers' criticism, leading to shame. The second handful of learners consists of ten percent, reported feeling indifferent,

which could be a sign of less interest in their studies in general, and the final proportion consists of twenty percent the learners, claiming feeling satisfied when they receive a negative feedback from their classmates, which initiates a positive and supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable giving and receiving feedback without fear of being judged. EFL learners seem to face significant challenges in their language learning progress due to errors and mistakes acting as barriers to their proficiency in the new language.

The results have proven that the majority of the secondary school learners consisting of fifty-seven percent show a feeling of indifference, this might be due to two possibilities, either these learners have a high level of self-esteem and confidence, or they have never experienced receiving negative feedback from their classmates. The other respondents consist of thirty-eight feeling embarrassed, which is something normal and any learner can face, maybe some learners feel less productive when receiving negative feedback or they compare themselves to others. Finally, only a group of five percent feel satisfied, this is maybe because they believe that mistakes are something totally normal and are part of the learning process.

3.2.11 Attitudes Towards Peers' and Teachers' Negative Feedback

The majority of eighty-five percent of the subjects claimed to keep engaging in the classroom activities and participate despite the recurrent failure. Supposedly, the majority of the learners' motivation may not be affected by their peers' and teachers' negative criticism, this suggests their strong will to engage in the learning process despite the challenges they face. Fifteen percent of the remaining respondents stop participating, this may be due to their fear of criticism, excluding any help from peers and teachers, as well as not developing a sense of self-correction.

The majority of sixty-five percent of the secondary school subjects appeared to continue participating in the class open activities despite negative feedback on recurrent mistakes,

perhaps due to the fact that adult learners possess a high level of self-confidence compared to younger learners in middle school. It can be deduced that a number of adult learners reach a level where they come to conclusion that receiving negative feedback from others is part of learning a language. On the other hand, there was a small proportion of thirty-five percent of learners who claimed that they stop participating in class open activities after receiving negative feedback from their peers and teachers. This could lead to disengagement and hinder critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. It can be deduced that some category of learners does not accept being criticized, as it might affect their pride and motivation to learn a language, losing interest in a language is the first step toward fossilization among EFL learners.

It is safe to say that receiving negative feedbacks from peers and teachers can impact learners differently, from encouraging to demotivating the learners' performance during language acquisition. This shows that mistakes are more likely to persist, causing the decrease of their learning process as hypothesized whenever learners are affected by external elements such as negative feedback from peers and teachers, due to this, the learner will be unable to focus on those mistakes.

When learners receive constructive criticism when making mistakes in selecting words or pronouncing them inaccurately, these errors become deeply rooted in their language abilities and endure as time goes on. Consequently, these persistent errors can hinder or impede their progress in developing the language further. However, it was also shown that not all learners can be affected by such factors. When learners receive constructive criticism when making mistakes in selecting words or pronouncing them inaccurately, these errors become deeply rooted in their language abilities and endure as time goes on. Consequently, these persistent errors can hinder or impede their progress in developing the language further.

3.2.12 Teachers' Reference to Past Mistakes

The results showed forty-five percent of middle school subjects claiming that sometimes their teachers reference them to past errors, it implies that the teachers recognize and address error and support the learners even when they repeat the same mistakes.

Twenty percent of the responders claimed that the teacher never references their past mistakes, teachers may choose not to reference learners' past mistakes frequently for several reasons. First, they might want to create a positive learning environment that encourages improvement rather than focusing on negativity, avoiding constant reminders of past mistakes, teachers may promote a supportive atmosphere.

The rest of twenty-five participants mentioned that their teachers rarely pointed out their mistakes, teachers might think that a constant reminder of mistakes may cause learners to be demotivated.

Only ten percent reported that the teachers often reference them to their past mistakes. Teachers might probably think that dwelling on past mistakes can negatively impact students' self-esteem and confidence, however the learners may not be able to develop their language skills if they do not receive constructive criticism time to time.

The results suggest that there is a significant variation in how frequently secondary school teachers refer their students back to their mistakes. The largest group of forty percent reported that their teachers refer them back to their mistakes very often, which may indicate a focus on identifying areas of improvement and encouraging language development through targeted feedback based on previous mistakes, insuring such errors would not recur in future performances.

On the other hand, a substantial portion of thirty percent of learners reported that their teachers never refer them back to their mistakes. While this may indicate that these learners are

performing well, it may also suggest a missed opportunity for targeted feedback that could help to further develop their skills.

The remaining twenty-five and five percent of learners reported that their teachers refer them back to their mistakes sometimes and rarely, respectively. This suggests that there is a degree of inconsistency in how teachers provide feedback on mistakes, which could potentially lead to confusion and lack of clarity for learners, leaving more possibly exposed to the risk of becoming fossilized. The results highlight the importance of providing targeted feedback that is consistent and supportive, and that encourages learners to learn from their mistakes.

3.2.13 Learners' Frequency of Correcting their Mistakes

This question aimed to inquire the general approach of the pupils regarding the correction of mistakes, and it tend to address and rectify their errors on the spot when they notice them or prefer to correct them later. About ninety-five percent fix their mistakes on the spot without any hesitation which leads to say that they are less likely to repeat the same mistakes later on, continuously trying to improve their language skills and make effort to L2 proficiency. Only five percent of the respondents claimed leaving their mistakes for a later time, they might lack interest or that they are simply unable to correct those mistakes by themselves, perhaps they prefer seeking help from reliable sources before correcting any error.

For the secondary school learners, the results presented imply that the vast majority of the subjects which is nine-teen percent correct their mistakes on the spot rather than leaving them for later. This is a positive indication of their attention to detail and willingness to learn from their mistakes in real-time, allowing themselves to progress by not allowing any mistake to compromise their acquisition of the L2. However, it is concerning that a small minority composed of ten percent of learners reported that they leave their mistakes for later. This could

potentially lead to a build-up of errors causing the process of which incorrect language becomes a habit and cannot be easily corrected, in other words; fossilization.

The results suggest that a large number of learners prefer correction in time rather than letting slip, this brings up the conclusion that learners are always willing to improve their skills. On the other hand, a very small portion of learners do not proceed the same way, leaving errors for later can only construct more recurring mistakes in their dialect. Perhaps this minority is not capable of recognizing their mistakes, or perhaps they are aware of their mistakes, and are unable to correct them due to lack of interest and motivation. This proves that a vast number of instructional insightful strategies are needed so that it can alleviate fossilization in foreign language learning and guide the learner.

3.2.14 The Difficulty in Eliminating the Recurring Mistake

The purpose of the question is to understand the internal struggles linked with second language acquisition, thirty percent have significant difficulties in getting rid of mistakes in their L2 acquisition, fifty percent stated that they face some minor difficulties getting rid of the errors, it is possible that those errors are already accumulated and stuck in their interlanguage, and the final twenty percent of learners find no difficulties in eliminating errors, this might indicate that the learners benefit from instructional feedback in improving their proficiency.

As shown on the previous results, a small percentage of twenty percent of the secondary school subjects find it difficult to get rid of their mistakes once and for all. This may indicate a need for further support and guidance. On the other hand, thirty percent of learners reported that they do not find it difficult to get rid of their mistakes, this suggests that they might be more flexible continuously engage in classroom activities, and they are able to overcome their weaknesses.

While the largest group of fifty percent reported that they do not find it difficult "not really". This suggests that a majority of learners are able to effectively identify and address their mistakes, either through self-reflection, feedback from others, or other strategies. It is assumable that most learners are capable of getting rid of their recurring errors, only few faces difficulties, it is assumable that learners still need external help not only from teachers, but from peers as well. This brings up the hypothesis that strategies such this are essential to ease the learning process and decrease the risks of fossilization.

3.2.15 Learners' Ability to Spot their Recurring Mistakes

The purpose for this question was to understand learners' reaction after realizing they committed an error, sixty-five percent of the subjects concentrate on the mistakes they have committed, this indicates they are persistent about acquiring the L2, and try to employ every strategy to improve their level.

On other hand, thirty-five percent concentrate on future performance, learners might prefer leaving the recurrent mistakes behind and give more importance for future performances, learners may prioritize future improvement, by harnessing the knowledge acquired, by doing so, EFL learners will be less likely to enhance their future language skills, and unable to fix their previous errors that they might encounter in future performances.

Secondary school subjects showed a number of seventy percent appear to concentrate on the recurrent mistake when they realize they have made ones, this is a positive indication of their willingness to reflect on their mistakes and learn from them in order to improve their future language performance.

However, thirty percent of the subjects reported that they just drop the mistake and concentrate on their further performance. While it is important to focus on future performance, it is also important to address recurring mistakes in order to avoid repeating them in the future.

It can be deduced that learners should be monitored, and not left alone when committing certain mistakes, especially when they are repetitive. A learner can benefit from positive feedback and correction of the recurring mistakes, and it is up to the teachers to decide whether or not they should move on to the second stage of learning. This leads to the assumptions that receiving a variety of methodologies and guidelines may avoid language fossilization to occur during and after the learning process.

3.2.16 The Impact of Negative Emotions on Learners' Motivation

Negative emotions can contribute to the disengagement of the learners in the classroom, the purpose of the question is to understand how negative emotions such as stress and anxiety, could affect their overall motivation while learning a new language, as to understand the psychological impact on the learner's future performances.

Seventy-five percent of the middle school participants declare being unable to stay motivated for learning activities despite the negative feelings, this may refer to their ability to overcome such feelings and manage their learning in an effective way, this suggests that learners may have a high level of interest in the language, or they simply do not take into consideration those negative emotions, and decide to move forward with their learning process.

A minority of twenty-five percent show a sign of resignation, negative emotions coming from external influences such as peers or teacher's criticism can hinder their ability to stay motivated, potentially making it more challenging for them to engage in learning activities. The reasons for this can vary, and may include factors such as decreased interest, a lack of energy or focus, or difficulties in managing emotions effectively.

Based on the results covered from the secondary school samples, seventy percent keep motivated for further learning activities even when facing negative feelings. This is a positive

indication of their resilience and determination to continue learning despite challenges and emotional difficulties.

However, thirty percent of the learners claimed that they do not feel motivated for further learning activity in case of negative feelings. Negative feelings such as frustration, disappointment, and self-doubt appear to have a negative effect on their learning proficiency.

It is safe to assume that based on the previous results, motivation has a significant role in ensuring that a learner stays focused and contributes more during classroom activities and other language performances. The need for undertaking general measures and techniques must be established to minimize any risk of language fossilization.

3.2.17 Learners' Reaction towards Teachers' Feedback on a Recurrent Mistake

The need for this final question is to understand how the EFL learners react towards receiving a feedback on a recurrent mistake from their teachers. Starting with the middle school respondents, sixty-five percent claimed feeling embarrassed when they receive a negative feedback from the tutor upon repeating the same errors, this may lead automatically to frustration, shame and disengagement in class, the learner will then start leaning back and avoid engaging with his or her peers, as they are afraid to be criticized again by their teachers

Secondly, thirty percent declare that they feel satisfied, suggesting that learners consider the feedback as an opportunity to learn and improving their target language.

The last five percent stated that they feel indifferent. This may be due to several emotional factors, probably a lack of interest.

For the secondary school subjects, fifty-five percent feel embarrassed when receiving negative feedback from their teacher on a recurrent mistake. This is understandable, as negative feedback can sometimes make the learners feel uncomfortable and hard to receive. The other

twenty-five percent of the learners reported feeling satisfied when receiving negative feedback on a recurrent mistake. Maybe the feedback provides them with a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their performance and demonstrates that their teacher cares about their progress.

Lastly, twenty percent of learners reported feeling indifferent to negative feedback on a recurrent mistake. This could potentially indicate a lack of engagement or investment in the learning process. As mentioned in the previous cases, several strategies must be adopted to serve as alternative tools to evade fossilization during language acquisition.

3.3 Interpretation of The Interview Results

An investigation was conducted with middle school and secondary school teachers to investigate the psycholinguistic phenomena known as language fossilization. After interviewing the teachers. The majority were ignorant of the term fossilization in language acquisition. The general purpose was to get a clear insight whether or not the teachers are fully aware of what is behind most of the learners' incompetence and struggle.

The procedure to analyze and interpret the results taken from both middle and secondary school English teachers will be the same as the method adopted with the results collected from the questionnaire, all the answers will be mentioned and given a clear analysis to provide this research with reliable data that serves the research question. The Interpretation should draw conclusions from the answers collected.

It is essential to conduct a thorough analysis of the obtained answers in this research, taking into account the reliability, credibility, and relevance of the data. when systematically organizing, evaluating, and synthesizing the responses, researchers can offer dependable and valuable insights that significantly contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the research topic and effectively address the research question.

3.3.1 Background Information and Expertise of the Teachers

The teachers interviewed for this research were selected from two distinct educational institutions: a middle school and a secondary school. Both institutions operate within the Algerian educational system, ensuring a common framework and curriculum. The chosen teachers have extensive experience in the field of education, with their teaching careers spanning from fifteen to fourteen years.

The inclusion of teachers from both middle and secondary schools allows for a broader perspective on the research topic, as it captures insights from different levels of education within the same system. This variation in educational levels enhances the diversity of perspectives and enriches the analysis of the data collected.

The teachers' long-standing experience in the educational field adds significant value to the research findings. Their years of teaching provide them with a wealth of practical knowledge and insights into the challenges, trends, and dynamics of the Algerian educational system. This expertise enhances the reliability and credibility of the data, as these teachers have witnessed firsthand the evolution and nuances of the educational landscape over an extended period.

3.3.2 Fossilization: An Exploration of a Language Learning Phenomenon

Teachers do not seem to be aware of what fossilization is in both educational levels, according to them, **“We have never heard or meet this sort of phenomena”** this suggests that teachers are not prepared to face a latent psychological structure such as fossilization without knowing its causes and nature. The aim is providing a clear insight for the teachers to facilitate the teaching and learning process during instructional courses, in other words the lack of awareness about language fossilization among teachers can affect the instructional process.

3.3.3 The Impact of Fossilization on EFL Learners' Proficiency in English

After giving a clear and brief explanation about fossilization to the subjected teachers, they were able to answer the following question **“Do you think fossilization can have an impact on EFL learners' ability to become proficient in English?”**. According to them, they think that fossilization can indeed impact the learning process, they assume that it can alter their proficiency and language production, which true, such errors will cause the learners to be less productive and reach a point where they are unable to perform effectively.

One teacher stated that **“If learners struggle repeatedly with various aspect of the language, or example grammar, or pronunciation, it can limit their ability to communicate effectively and confidently in English.”** Judging by this statement, we can safely assume that fossilization without a doubt, occurs precisely in the language systems such as grammar and pronunciation, which are considered the basic foundations of a language.

Based on extensive research and scholarly consensus, it is indeed reasonable to assert with confidence that fossilization unequivocally manifests itself within the core components of language systems, specifically grammar and pronunciation. These foundational aspects play a fundamental role in shaping linguistic competence and overall language proficiency.

Grammar, as a fundamental pillar of language, encompasses the structural rules and patterns that govern the organization and combination of words, phrases, and sentences. Fossilization in grammar refers to the phenomenon whereby learners exhibit persistent errors or deviations from target-like usage, despite prolonged exposure to the language and instruction. It represents a stage where certain grammatical structures or rules become deeply ingrained and resistant to modification, impeding further progress in language acquisition.

Pronunciation, another critical facet of language, pertains to the production and perception of sounds, phonemes, and intonation patterns. Fossilization in pronunciation refers to the

persistent retention of non-native speech patterns or accent features, despite ongoing efforts to improve pronunciation skills. Learners may encounter challenges in accurately reproducing specific phonetic distinctions or adopting the native-like rhythm and intonation patterns of the target language.

The occurrence of fossilization in these foundational language components can be attributed to various factors. For instance, individual learner characteristics, such as age, cognitive abilities, and prior language learning experiences, can influence the extent and nature of fossilization. Additionally, the influence of the first language and the degree of exposure to authentic language input and communicative opportunities can also impact the manifestation of fossilized patterns.

Understanding the occurrence of fossilization in grammar and pronunciation is crucial as it has implications for language instruction and pedagogy. Educators and language practitioners need to be aware of the potential challenges learners may face in these areas and design targeted instructional interventions to address them. Moreover, recognizing the specific linguistic features that are more susceptible to fossilization can inform the development of effective teaching strategies to minimize the occurrence and mitigate its impact on language proficiency.

In conclusion, the observation that fossilization predominantly occurs in the core language systems of grammar and pronunciation is well-founded and supported by research. These foundational elements, forming the bedrock of a language, can exhibit resistance to change and modification, hindering learners' progress towards native-like proficiency. By acknowledging and addressing the phenomenon of fossilization in these areas, language educators can tailor their instructional approaches and interventions to foster more accurate and fluent language production and comprehension.

3.3.4 Identifying Signs of Fossilization in EFL Learners

The teachers declared observing signs of fossilization in different ways among their students. One aspect was the persistence of errors, they noticed that the majority of the students tend to repeat the same mistakes they were already told to correct. According to one of the respondents **“I have noticed that many of my students appear to make the same errors, whether in grammar, or vocabulary, and pronunciation, even when i correct them and expose them to the rules again and again.”** The teachers claim that their students face difficulties overcoming their errors despite the fact the exposure to the target language.

3.3.5 Assessing Learners' Confidence in Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing in English

Various factors can affect the learners when performing specific language tasks, the respondents claim that students encounter great challenges when trying to engage in learning activities. Very few learners possess a good level in English that boosts their confidence, however it is not the case for some others, many students tend to lose motivation easily, whether due to lack of confidence, stress, or other different factors. According to the teachers' answers: **“it is not always the learners fault, sometimes they get exhausted after spending a whole day at school, time management plays a great role in the learning process.”**

Based on the previous statement, it is true that learners are not always energetic, and mentally just because at the end of the day they are unable to focus. This is where they are more vulnerable for making errors.

In conclusion, it is evident that learners can experience mental fatigue and decreased focus, particularly towards the end of the day. This reduced energy and concentration can render them more susceptible to making errors in language learning. The phenomenon of fossilization, characterized by persistent errors and deviations from target-like usage, may become more

prominent during these periods of vulnerability. Recognizing the impact of learner fatigue and implementing strategies to support learners in managing their energy and maintaining focus are essential considerations for educators and language practitioners. By addressing these challenges, learners can optimize their language learning potential and work towards achieving greater accuracy and proficiency.

3.4 Recommendations

3.4.1 Understanding and Overcoming Language System Difficulties

Based on the results, it is safe to say that educational instructors should focus more on strengthening the grammatical comprehension of the learners, teachers should teach grammar explicitly and provide clear explanation of grammar rules as well as integrating grammar into other language skills such as reading, writing, speaking and listening because it is the foundation of any given language to ensure great communicative performances.

3.4.2 Enhancing Writing and Oral Skills in the Classroom: Practical Strategies for Overcoming Mistakes

It is important to offer learners adequate instructions based on written and speaking materials and use authentic tools such as articles, stories, videos and podcasts that touches English use in real world. In addition to teachers' support as well as offering the learners the chance of self-correction of their mistakes so the learners would be able to gasp those mistakes.

3.4.3 Reducing The Recurrence of Oral and Written Performances

The subjected learners lack communicative skills that is due to limited amount of grammatical responses and vocabulary. It is safe to say that learners feel stuck or more accurately "fossilized" with very low level of dexterity in these systems of language, having such limitation will prevent further improvement in communication. Exposing the learners to a large spectrum of language rules and language items will benefit them in enhancing their

competences in acquiring the TL, and break free from their fixation. The instructors would then be focusing more in teaching accuracy during the classroom activities, as it's important to focus on accuracy in addition to fluency. Encourage learners to take their time and produce correct language, rather than rushing to produce a lot of words and sentences quickly.

3.4.4 Monitoring Speech and Writing Performance: Addressing Recurring

Language Errors

This addresses the importance of active engagement and attention to detail when it comes to language learning. It also suggests that effective monitoring and feedback can play a significant role in improving language skills and preventing errors from repeating themselves. This explains the importance of the teachers in monitoring their learners, no matter how much attention or focus the learners put in their language acquisition, they will still fail. An accumulation of recurring mistakes will then be part of their acquired TL, they will then reach a stage where those same errors and mistakes will stay fossilized in their memory.

3.4.5 Improvement of Error Awareness in Language

It has been concluded that it is necessary to provide a pressure-free environment where learners take their time in performing their activities, to boost their confidence and relieve anxiety that may lead to a latent psychological structure that will cause them to act unconsciously and produce fossilized language errors in the future. In addition to encourage learners to seek out additional resources outside of the classroom, such as dictionaries language learning applications or online courses, to enrich their learning and improve their language competences. Last but not least, offering regular feedback and guidelines for learners, pointing out areas where they are produce mistakes and providing suggestions for improvement. This can help learners develop a stronger sense of self-awareness and generate their language proficiency over time, to avoid reaching a state of fossilization.

3.4.6 Unraveling Mistake Recurrences Following Teacher's Correction

Based on the previous study, it is possible that EFL learners need in depth and constant guidance by their teachers for a lot of reasons. Firstly, because providing more feedback and coping with the learners will boost their confidence, and they will be more likely to learn while making errors but at the same time learning from those mistakes allowing them to differentiate between what is wrong and what is correct to prevent further recurrence in future performances. Second, teachers should schedule a session where they perform a quick revision to previous activities and lessons to see if the learners have actually acquired and mastered the rules and items, as well as making sure if the learners have not repeated the same mistakes. Lastly, teachers should make the learners feel okay when making mistakes, even after correction, letting the learners know that making mistakes does not mean they are incompetent, but a part of the learning process. The learners will be more productive and be motivated in the classroom.

3.4.7 Exploring the Spontaneous and Deliberate Nature of Recurring Mistakes

The most important aspect when learning a language is motivation, a teacher should provide the learners with forwarded and constructed feedback, highlight the recurring mistakes and showcase the correct use of rules. Effectively illustrate the appropriate utilization of language structures or expressions by showcasing them through examples, role-plays, or real-life scenarios. Offer abundant chances for learners to engage in exercises that allow them to apply the language accurately.

3.4.8 Reducing The Impact of Recurrent Mistakes on Learning Performance

To overcome the anxiety associated with making repeated mistakes, it is critical to create a learning atmosphere that encourages support and encouragement. This may be accomplished by creating a classroom environment in which students feel secure to take risks and make errors without fear of being judged or embarrassed. Learners can establish a positive attitude toward their language journey by stressing that mistakes are not failures but rather

significant chances for growth and progress. To overcome the anxiety associated with making repeated mistakes, it is critical to create a learning atmosphere that encourages support and encouragement. This may be accomplished by creating a classroom environment in which students feel secure to take risks and make errors without fear of being judged or embarrassed. Learners can establish a positive attitude toward their language journey by stressing that mistakes are not failures but rather significant chances for growth and progress. It is important to give adequate opportunity for learners to practice and reinforce their language abilities, in addition to developing a supportive environment

3.4.9 Overcoming the Different Attitudes Towards Recurrent Mistakes

In general, the main critical issue concluded is that learners are more sensitive to negative feelings such as frustration, pressure and else, causing the learning process to be unnecessary, because the nature of the problem comes from within the learners, their psychology plays an important role in language acquisition, should this aspect be altered the learners will become stuck and unable to move any further, thus becoming fossilized. That is why, it is necessary to establish clear learning objectives for the learners to understand that the correction of recurrent mistakes is part in achieving learning, as well as providing meaningful context for language use when performing spoken and written activities. The learners must be encouraged to raise their self-correction, teaching them self-monitoring and self-editing, such as proofreading their writing, or recording their oral performances.

By implementing such strategies, the teachers can foster a classroom where the learners will feel comfortable and develop a greater awareness of their mistakes.

3.4.10 Overcoming the Different Attitudes Towards Peers' Negative Feedback

It is important to incorporate a communicative environment between the students, creating a cooperative atmosphere, teaching them the philosophy that receive negative feedback

is a normal and essential process in learning. Providing constructive feedback guidelines, which teaches the learners how to criticize their peers' in a manner that will not make them feel low and incompetent. Such strategies will encourage peer collaboration, so they can even learn from their mistakes.

3.4.11 Overcoming the Different Attitudes Towards Peers' and Teachers'

Negative Feedback

Educators should create a safe and supportive learning environment where learners feel comfortable making mistakes and receiving feedback. Effective feedback that focuses on the process rather than the person can promote autonomy and ownership over the learning process. Teaching the learners to consider negative feedbacks as a tool to look into what sort of mistakes they performed, and constructing a correct approach to language learning based on external views.

3.4.12 Teachers' Reference to Past Mistakes and how it should Benefit the

Learner

It is important for teachers to balance between highlighting areas for improvement and acknowledging successes in order to increase motivation of their students. Effective feedback that is focused on the process rather than the learner can help to foster a strong mindset and encourage learners to persist in overcoming challenges.

3.4.13 The Frequency of Learners' Self-Correction and its Importance in

Language Acquisition

Constant practice ensures language acquisition, teachers should provide enough exercises to their learners, to reinforces their knowledge. More exposure to the language will equip learners with the ability to spot their errors and be more familiar with the language, and its idiomatic expressions and colloquial aspects.

3.4.14 Overcoming The Difficulty in Eliminating the Recurring Mistakes

It is preferable that the instructors analyze the students' errors frequently, as well as encouraging them to analyze their own recurring mistakes systematically. Teaching them to save a record of their mistakes, categorize them by grammar or vocabulary topic, and identify patterns or difficulties. This helps learners become more aware of their specific areas of weakness and ensures for targeted practice and language enhancement. Furthermore, teachers should address those common mistakes and highlight them in lessons, and providing a session for activities to solves these obstacles.

3.4.15 Learners' Ability to Spot their Recurring Mistakes and its Implication for Language Proficiency

Certain strategies can be adopted based on the previous results to prevent learners from misguiding themselves. It is highly recommended for to teachers to incorporate a system of error analysis, provide dedicated time for their learners to make a deep dive analysis on their performed tasks and activities, and discuss the errors present in these performances to develop collaborative methods to overcome and correct such recurring errors. Additionally, it is important to allow the learners using external resources to correct themselves. Dictionaries in particular, are the most reliable and recommended tool for self-correction and language improvement, learners must carry with them such types of resources so they can be able to reflect upon their mistakes. by providing these opportunities, the learners will then feel unrestricted and free to seek every assistance possible.

3.4.16 Preventing The Impact of Negative Emotions on Learners' Motivation

Motivating and inspiring the students is an important step towards language acquisition, because the psychological state of the learners is what keep them engaging in the learning journey. Learners cannot always stay focused, that is why the teachers should provide emotional

support in the classroom, and offer an environment where both hard work and entertainment take place.

3.4.17 Learners' Reaction towards Teachers' Feedback on a Recurrent Mistake and its Importance in Language Acquisition

Students should be provided with a supportive educational environment where they are able to freely express their thoughts and even be allowed to make mistakes without having to feel restricted and ashamed of what their colleagues or teachers may think. As for their tutors, it is essential to train their students to manage their feelings and psychological states during classroom activities.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has provided a comprehensive analysis of the results obtained from administering a detailed questionnaire to middle and secondary school students, coupled with interviews conducted with their teachers. Through the process of interpretation, the responses gathered from the samples have been probed, enabling to develop a broader understanding of these findings and explore the extent of fossilization in second language acquisition within a contextual perspective.

The interpretation process involved a meticulous examination of the collected data, leading to the inference of meaningful conclusions and the formulation of valuable recommendations. These insights and recommendations are intended to contribute to the field of study by offering practical strategies that can help mitigate the effects of fossilization in foreign language learning.

Finally, this chapter has served as bridge to the interpretation of results derived from the questionnaire and interviews. Through an examination of the experiences and perspectives of

the subjects, the research aims to provide suitable recommendations and insightful strategies that have the potential to alleviate the challenges of fossilization in foreign language acquisition.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The research problem addressed in this study is to investigate the psycholinguistic phenomenon of fossilization in second language acquisition and its effects on learners' path towards the acquisition of fluency and accuracy in the L2.

The study aims to understand the specific levels within the systems of the foreign language where fossilization occurs, and the various factors of fossilization and its influence on the learners' language in the acquisition of the L2, and to develop ways that can lessen fossilization in foreign language learning.

The research implied different scientific methods that ensured the collection of valid and reliable data. Tools consisting of a questionnaire distributed to middle and secondary school learners to acquire knowledgeable insights of their challenges in second language acquisition, in addition to an interview that was conducted with their teachers, where they shared their expertise and classroom experiences with their learners.

The findings driven from the research experiment concluded that EFL learners find difficulties more specifically in grammar in addition to mastering the rest of the different systems of the second language, in which fossilization is more likely to occur at the level of each of these systems; the grammatical, the lexical, the phonological, the morphological structures, as well as underlying cultural system which consists of the behaviour and psychological state of the learners. It came to conclusion that fossilization impacts the EFL learners' language acquisition due to a lack of monitoring and constructive feedback, as well the negative criticism they get from their peers and teachers, in addition to making repetitive errors as it is considered to demotivate them and hinder their future language performances leading to a cessation in acquiring the L2 correctly and efficiently. causing a buildup of errors that become fossilized in their L2. It was also deduced that a number of instructional strategies can contribute to the reduction of fossilization in foreign language learning, which are:

- A positive motivation for learning environment may sustain EFL learner's ability to improve acquiring the L2 teachers.
- The teachers should monitor learners work individually, pair or group activities so they can identify and avert errors in time.

- Teachers should apply self-correction that is asking learners to correct their own mistake and giving them constructive feedbacks later on.
- The instructor can also use peer collaboration and create an environment where learners assist each other during activities.
- Consistent practice guarantees the acquisition of language skills, and educators ought to offer ample exercises to students to strengthen their understanding. Increased exposure to the language will enable learners to develop a greater level of familiarity with it.
- It is important to create a supportive learning environment for students, where they can freely express their thoughts and make mistakes without feeling constrained or embarrassed by the opinions of their peers or teachers.

The research study at hand offers a genuine understanding about the psycholinguistic phenomena of fossilization in second language acquisition among EFL learners. Through extensive investigation on how fossilization hinders the learning process among learners, and its impacts on their L2 performance, the research seeks to provide a general knowledge and insights and expand the current body of literature.

The results acquired have the potential to be incorporated into the field of education and be beneficial when teaching a second language. Endeavoring new perspectives, and developing adequate solutions, this study can inform guidelines for classroom teaching, critical thinking, and making productive outcomes that serves the teachers and the learners.

The value of this study lies in its contribution to the respective field of education, more specifically second language acquisition. While the present research study provides valuable insights in the domain of second language fossilization, it is necessary to acknowledge that the conclusions presented are not absolute and terminal. We encourage for further investigations and rigorous comprehensive analysis, and that our research is an ongoing process that requires larger exploration and validation. Furthermore, it is crucial to understand the need for long term studies to extend upon the findings demonstrated in this research.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

The English version of the questionnaire in middle and secondary school

Section One: Demographic Information

Gender:

Level:

Section Two: Language System

Q:1 What is more difficult for you when learning English?

Grammar Vocabulary Pronunciation communication

Q:2 Do you happen to make mistakes when talking or writing in English?

yes, very often sometimes rarely never

Q:3 What sort of mistakes recurs in your oral or written performance?

Grammatical Vocabulary Pronunciation communication

Q:4 The same mistakes recur in your speech and writing

when you do not monitor on your performance

even when you focus on your performance

Q:5 Do you happen to figure out that you have made mistakes when speaking or writing?

Yes sometimes never

Section Three: Language Impact

Q:6 Are there mistakes which recur even after your teacher's correction?

Many few none

Q:7 Mistakes recur with you:

spontaneously deliberately

Q:8 Does the thought of having made a recurrent mistake affect your further performance?

yes a little not at all

Q:9 What do you generally feel when you make a recurrent mistake in your speech or writing?

indifference malaise frustration

Q:10 How do you feel at one of your peer's negative feedback at a recurrent mistake?

embarrassed indifferent satisfied

Q:11 When you receive a negative feedback on a recurrent mistake from your teacher or a peer, do you

keep participating in the class open activities?

stop participating in class open activity?

Section Four: Learning Strategies

Q:12 Does your teacher refer you back to your mistakes?

yes, very often sometimes rarely never

Q:13 Do you correct your mistakes on the spot or let them to later time.

on the spot later

Q:14 Do you find difficulty to get rid of them once and for all?

Yes not really no

Q:15 When you figure out that you have made a recurrent mistake, do you generally

concentrate on the mistake you have made

just drop it and concentrate on your further performance

Q:16 In case of negative feelings, do you keep motivated for further learning activity?

yes no

Q:17 How do you feel at your teacher's negative feedback on a recurrent mistake?

embarrassed indifferent satisfied

APPENDIX 2

The Arabic version of the questionnaire in middle and secondary school

Section One: Demographic Information

الجنس:

المستوى:

Section Two: Language System

1. ما هو الأصعب بالنسبة لك عند تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟

القواعد النحوية المفردات النطق التواصل

2. هل تقع في أخطاء عندما تريد التحدث أو الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية داخل القسم؟

نعم كثيرًا أحيانًا نادرًا لا أبدًا

3. ما هي نوعية الأخطاء التي تتكرر أثناء أدائك الشفوي أو الكتابي؟

قواعد لغوية مفردات نطق تواصل

4. تتكرر نفس الأخطاء في كلامك وكتابتك عندما:

لا تراقب أدائك حتى عند التركيز على أدائك

5. هل أحيانا تدرك أنك ارتكبت أخطاء أثناء التحدث أو الكتابة؟

نعم أحياناً لا أبداً

Section Three: Lagunage Impact

1. هل هناك أخطاء تتكرر حتى بعد تصحيحها من قِبل أستاذك؟

العديد القليل لا شيء

2. الأخطاء تتكرر معك :

بشكل تلقائي بشكل متعمد

3. هل تؤثر فكرة ارتكابك لخطأ متكرر على أدائك المستقبلي؟

نعم قليلاً لا أبداً

6. ما هو شعورك العام عندما ترتكب خطأً متكرراً في كلامك أو كتابتك؟

لا مبالاة مشكلة إحباط

7. كيف تشعر عندما يقدم أحد زملائك رد فعل سلبي على أخطائك المتكررة؟

مخرج لا مبالي مقتنع

8. عندما تتلقى برد فعل سلبي حول خطئك متكرر من أستاذك أو من أحد زملائك هل:

تستمر في المشاركة في الأنشطة داخل الصف؟

أم تتوقف عن المشاركة في هذه الأنشطة؟

Section Four : Learning Strategies

1. هل يعود أستاذك إلى الخطأ الذي ارتكبته؟

نعم كثيراً أحياناً نادراً لا أبداً

2. هل تقوم بتصحيح أخطائك على الفور أم تتركها لوقت لاحق؟

على الفور لاحقاً

3. هل تجد صعوبة في التخلص من الأخطاء نهائياً؟

نعم ليس بشكل كبير لا

4. عندما تكتشف أنك ارتكبت خطأ متكرراً، هل:

تركز على الخطأ الذي ارتكبته عموماً أم تتجاهله وتركز على أدائك القادم

5. في حالة شعور سلبي هل تبقى متحمساً لمزيد من الأنشطة التعليمية؟

نعم لا

6. كيف تشعر عندما يعطيك أستاذك رد فعل سلبي بشأن خطأ متكرر؟

الإحراج لا مبالاة القبول

APPENDIX 3

The interview

Introduction

Greetings and thanking the interviewee for their time

Explaining the purpose and scope of the interview

Background information and expertise of the teachers

Asking the teachers about their past experience in the teaching field

Fossilization: An Exploration of a Language Learning Phenomenon

Q:1 Have you heard of the term "fossilization in language acquisition" before?

Impacts of Fossilization on EFL Learners' Proficiency in English

Q:2 Do you think fossilization can have an impact on EFL learners' ability to become proficient in English?

Q:3 have you noticed any sign of fossilization among learners?

Assessing Learners' Confidence in Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing in English

Q:4 How confident are your learners in their ability to speak English?

Q:5 How confident are your learners in their ability to understand spoken English?

Q:6 How confident are your learners in their ability to read English?

Q:7 How confident are your learners in their ability to write in English?

Conclusion

Ending the interview on a positive note and reiterate appreciation for their participation.

Ibn Khaldoun University

2022-2023

ملخص

يواجه متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تحديات كبيرة عند اكتساب هذه اللغة بسبب حدوث التحجر في لغتهم البينية، وفي مختلف مستويات الأنظمة اللغوية، وكذلك تأثيرها على أدائهم في المستقبل. قدمت هذه الدراسة ظاهرة التحجر اللغوي واقترحت الطرق التي يمكن للمدرسين تبنيها لتقليل تأثير التحجر اللغوي عند المتعلمين. تم إخضاع الطلاب لاختبار من أجل تحليل الصعوبات التي يواجهونها في القسم أثناء محاولتهم لتعلم لغة أجنبية، مع خبرة المعلمين في المجال، تمكنا من إلقاء الضوء على جانب مهم من التحجر اللغوي في اكتساب اللغة لمساعدة كل من المتعلمين والمعلمين في مجال التعليم لضمان النقل الصحيح للغة الأجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية، لغتهم البينية، التحجر اللغوي، الصعوبات، اكتساب اللغة.

Résumé

Les apprenants EFL sont confrontés à de grands défis lors de l'acquisition de la langue anglaise en raison de l'apparition d'une fossilisation dans leur interlangue, et les différents systèmes d'une deuxième langue qu'elle atteint, ainsi que de son impact sur leurs futures performances. Cette recherche a présenté les phénomènes de fossilisation et suggéré des stratégies que les enseignants peuvent adopter pour minimiser l'influence de la fossilisation du langage chez les apprenants. Les élèves ont été soumis à un test afin d'analyser les difficultés qu'ils rencontrent en classe lorsqu'ils tentent d'apprendre une langue étrangère, suivi de l'expertise des enseignants dans le domaine de l'enseignement, nous avons pu mettre en lumière certains aspects importants de la fossilisation dans l'acquisition de la langue pour aider à la fois les apprenants et les enseignants dans l'état de l'éducation pour assurer un transfert correct de la deuxième langue.

Mot clé : apprenants EFL, l'acquisition de la langue, fossilisation, interlangue, difficultés

Summary

EFL learners face great challenges in English language acquisition due to the occurrence of fossilization in their interlanguage, and the different systems of a second language it reaches, as well as its impact on their future performance. This research presented the phenomena of fossilization and suggested strategies that teachers can adopt to minimize the influence of language fossilization in learners. The students were subjected to a test in order to analyze the difficulties they encounter in the classroom when trying to learn a foreign language, followed by the expertise of the teachers in the field of teaching, we were able to highlight some important aspects of fossilization in language acquisition to help both learners and teachers in the state of education to ensure proper second language transfer.

Key words: EFL learners, language acquisition, fossilization, interlanguage, difficulties.