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English Pronunciation and Spelling: Problems and Difficulties

Case study: Adrar University Students

**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
A Master s Degree in Linguistics and Didactics**

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Academic year: 2019-2020

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my mother, the source of happiness and success in my life, may Allah bless her.

To my beloved brothers, sisters and friends for their support.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Allah for his Mercy and help to have made me reach this level so far.

All my thanks go to my supervisor Mr. Benyagoub Lehcene.

I would also like to thank all my teachers at the department of English. At Ahmed Deraia University.

I would not forget to thank my friends.

I also thank everyone who helped me even by a piece of advice.

Abstract

Teaching English pronunciation and spelling are not an easy task, because both are important parts in any language. Students of English at Ahmed Deraia still encounter errors consciously or unconsciously. Learners are not able to pronounce or spell words in the correct way so, taking care of these mistakes is very important. However, Arab students are adversely affected with English spelling and pronunciation more than other foreign countries. The researcher focuses on those two interesting skills in English as they are one of the complex one. This study attempts to highlight the major problem that our students face in spelling as well as in pronouncing English words. Different instruments are used in this study as observation and questionnaire (teachers and learners). The aim of this study is to investigate the main reasons of the students' errors.

Key words:

Mispronounced, students, teachers, language, motivation, spelling errors

Résumé

Enseigner l'anglais prononciation et écriture n'est pas facile, car les deux sont importants pour la langue. Les étudiants de la langue anglais a l'université Ahmed Deraia encore visages erreurs consciemment et inconsciemment. Ils ne sont pas capables à prononcer ou écrire les mots correctement. Alors il est très important d'éviter ces erreurs. Les étudiants arabes sont affecte par l'anglais (prononciation et écriture) plus que d'autres pays étrangers. La recherche est basée sur ces deux facteurs à l'anglais. Cette étude tente de définir le plus grand problème qui confronte les étudiants à l'écriture. Le but de cette étude est d'atteindre les raisons principales des erreurs commises par les étudiants.

Mots clés : Anglais mots, prononciation, écriture, erreurs, les étudiants arabes, éducation.

المخلص

إن دراسة النطق والكتابة بالانجليزية ليس بالأمر السهل لأنهما يعتبران جزءان مهمان من اللغة. وما زال الطلاب في جامعة احمد دراية يقعون في الأخطاء وليسوا قادرين حتى الآن على نطق جملة صحيحة ولا كتابة كلمة بدون أخطاء . لذلك الاهتمام بهاته الأخطاء جد مهم و الأشخاص الأكثر تأثيرا بهذه الظاهرة هم طلبة العرب فهم الأكثر عرضة للوقوع في الخطأ. البحث يركز على مهارة الكتابة أكثر من مهارة النطق لأنها الأكثر تعقيدا وسنحاول من خلال هذا البحث إيجاد المشكل العويص الذي يقف حاجزا أمام الطلبة ولذلك سنتطرق في هذه الدراسة إلى استعمال بعض الأدوات كالملاحظات والأسئلة لكل من الطلبة والاساتدة. فالهدف من هذه الدراسة هو التحقق من الأسباب الرئيسية لهاته الأخطاء.

الكلمات المفتاحية الكلمات الانجليزية النطق الكتابة الأخطاء الطلاب العرب التعليم

List of acronyms

EFL: English Foreign Language.

L1: First Language.

L2: Second Language.

Q: Question.

%: Percentage.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

English Pronunciation and Spelling are two important elements in English language teaching, without them learning become poor. Pronunciation is the way that people speak words while spelling is the way in which people write words. English pronunciation and spelling are characterised by their difficulties since students are continuously confusing with the correct pronunciation of the words and spelling too. Students do not have the capability to spell and pronounce simple English words despite the years of learning, students' errors are continuous and noticeable, it affects the speaking and writing intelligibility. This work underlines the problems and errors committed by the learners. So, the work is based on the English spelling more than English pronunciation, simply because English spelling is hard task.

English spelling becomes increasingly difficult; this study focuses on English spelling rather than English pronunciation. In addition, students face more problems in spelling unfamiliar words. This research attempts to highlight gaps and give feedbacks, the work also tries to share the problems and find the exact causes of such errors, however, it also tries to find out if there is any influence of pronunciation on spelling . As a result, this study tries to study such problem in the Algerian context, it aims at improving students spelling by using modern techniques and aids in spelling English learning.

1. Statement of the problem

First year students tend to relate English pronunciation to Arabic when they learn English pronunciation. They face problems when they spell English words. Students are unaware of English sounds and words. They have problems in the pronunciation of some English words; as a result, they commit errors when spelling these words as well as when they are pronouncing them.

2. Research questions

This modest work aims to provide answers to the following questions:

- What are the spelling and the pronunciation errors committed by students when using English?
- Why do students commit spelling/ pronunciation errors?
- To what extent is pronunciation affected by EFL learners (L1)?
- How can teachers and learners treat English pronunciation and spelling problems?
- To what extent do the students answer their understanding or misunderstanding of the English spelling?

3. Hypotheses

Students are negatively influenced by their first language, so they absolutely commit errors.

-Once students default the rules restriction of the target language, they will encounter difficulties and commit errors.

4. Aims of the study

In learning English, students at Ahmed Draia University face difficulties in their learning process of English spelling and pronunciation. The learners are confused about English spelling and pronunciation, because they think in their mother tongue Arabic to express themselves in the target language (when using pronunciation). The main of this study is to provide answers to the questions that are related to the types of spelling and pronunciation errors.

5. Significance of the study

This study tries to make evident contributions between both languages learning and teaching, because it sheds light on English language. Spelling and pronunciation are complex problem for EFL learners (non-native speakers of English). More than that, this study deals with the main reasons that are responsible for the poor achievement of EFL learners in using English pronunciation and spelling.

This study can be a guide for the researchers in the field of English pronunciation and spelling. The findings of the study can be considered as a reference to students who want to study phonetics.

The work may be helpful for the learners, because it simply remember them of the common errors and mistakes as well as the reasons behind them, so that they can avoid them in the future.

6. Structure of the study

The work is divided into two chapters, the first one is theoretical, and it deals with the literature review in which different researchers presented different views. The second

chapter shows the practical side of the work in which the research methodology is applied. In addition, in this chapter, the researcher tries to share her capabilities and her understanding with the readers. Finally, the last practical chapter, presents the data collect the information and introduce the findings of the study in a statistical form and discuss the findings and reasons.

Chapter one

English pronunciation and and spelling

1.1. Introduction

Most of students have a desire to speak and learn English with correct pronunciation and write with correct spelling. Students are unable to spell or pronounce simple words, despite the years of English instruction they have had in school.

Students' errors are noticeable and continuous and they affect their intelligibility in speaking and writing. This part is divided into two sections. The first section deals with English pronunciation; it gives and defines the concept of pronunciation and the common errors that are committed by the students as well as the importance of English pronunciation. The second section is about English spelling (errors, mistakes, rules....act).

Part one: English Pronunciation

1.2. Definition of English Pronunciation

According to AMEP Research Centre (October 2002):

Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing, rhythm (suprasegmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality), and in its broad definition, attention to gestures and expressions are closely related to the way we speak a language.

According to this definition, pronunciation is the way or the method in which the language sounds are pronounced. People produce sounds in different ways according to the community they come from. It is all about the production of sounds for making meaning.

Marianne Celce-Murcia, Donna M.Brinton, Janet M.Goodwin stated that learners who use incorrect rhythm patterns or who do not connect words together are at the best frustrating to the native-speaking listener; more seriously, if these learners use improper intonation contours, they can be considered as interrupted, and if the stress and rhythm patterns are too non-native like, the speakers who produce them may not be understood at all. p.131.

According to this, the incorrect use of sounds patterns can influence the pronunciation of the words. However, if students use erroneous intonation, they can be understood as disconnected contours; and also when the stress and rhythm patterns are produced by non-native speakers, the understanding will be nihilistic.

As a result, pronunciation is the people way of speaking, it is an oral language and it leads to the intelligibility.

1.3. English Pronunciation vowels and consonants

1.3.1. Definition of vowel

According to Oxford University Press Dictionary (2008): “Vowel is a speech sound, it is produced by comparatively open configuration of the vocal tract, with vibration of the vocal cords but without audible friction. It is a unit of the sound system of a language that forms the nucleus of a syllable.”

It is a speech sound which is produced by humans, it is made by the vocal folds and it is also type of letters in the alphabet. Vowels vary in the quality, loudness and the quantity of length and they differ from one language to another.

1.3.2. Definition of consonant

According to Oxford University Press Dictionary (2008): “Consonant is a speech sound in which the breath is abstracted, it can be combined with a vowel to form a syllable.” Consonant is a speech sound that is articulated with complete or partial closure of the vocal tract. It is a unit of sound that depends on the language to create meaning.

1.4. Pronunciation Differences between British and American English

British and American English are two different languages. There are some differences between them especially the way of pronouncing words. The difference includes the way of thinking and the way of expressing their needs. Those differences also include different things and the most important one is pronunciation, spelling, grammar as well as vocabulary.

1.4.1. Pronunciation

Both British and American English pronounce words in different ways. They have different accent, so they pronounce words differently. Both accents differ in the quality and the voice. According to Oxford University dictionary accent is all about the manner in which people differ in pronouncing words, it is related to the region for example. They also differ in the pronunciation of individual words of lexicon, vowels and consonants, and change in stress. Their pronunciation confuse people especially the learners, most of them use both British and American pronunciation in the same time without any idea that they use both languages.

1.4.2. Spelling

There are a few major spelling differences between British and American English, because British English has generally kept the spelling of words as it has taken from other languages, but American English has changed or adapted the spelling to reflect

the way that sound is said. British and American writing system are different, they spell words according to their instructions. Both use different writing system according to the rules of the community.

In spelling differences, we can follow three rules

1-In U.K. most words ending with –our- whereas in U.S.A. are spelt without –u- .

British English spelling	American English spelling
Behaviour	Behavior
Colour	Color
Favour	Favor
Contour	Contor
Neighbour	Neighbor

2-Most words ending with-re- in British, but in American are spelled with –er-

British	American
Centre	Center
Fibre	Fiber
Litre	Liter
Parametre	Parameter
Cabre	Caber

3-British English verbs ending with –ise- whereas ending with –ize- in American

British	American
Characterise	Characterize
Specialyse	Specialize

Analyse	Analyze
Catalyse	Catalyze
Organise	Organize

1.4.3. Grammar:

Grammar is changed over time and its rules also change continuously, British American Grammar is separately different. The tense is used differently and the use of prepositions too. American speakers use the present perfect tense more than British speakers of English, because it seems easy to express the needs with simple method in addition to the use of preposition as well.

1.4.4. Vocabulary

As we can notice, there are many differences between American British English. However the most complex and difficult one is vocabulary. The latter is so complicated for English learners. It considers as one of the complex element of learning English, because language itself is hard and vocabulary is characterised by its difficulties too. British American vocabulary is separated; each language has its words and its characteristics.

As a result, there are many differences between American English and British English. Both Americans and Britons know about these differences. Sometimes, they find themselves too much terrible when they go on holidays. They find difficulties in interacting and expressing their needs. The most important thing is to remember is to decide which type of English you are going to use and stick with it.

1.5. Pronunciation Problems and Difficulties

1.5.1. Pronunciation problems

Correct pronunciation is the desire of many people.. Students are facing pronunciation problems that are related to their sounds and students make those errors consciously or unconsciously. However, the major problem of English speakers is the sounds replacement. Most of the time, they produce or use their language sounds to express their needs, for example, they replace / p/ with / b/.Some linguists factors are explained by some researchers such as the difference of sounds system between L1 and L2, the unconsciously of some sounds in English language, the mother tongue interference and the influence of spelling on pronunciation.

Alkhuli (1983) noticed that Arab students confuse in the use of /p/ and /b/ and this is directly related to the influence of their mother tongue, so they commit such errors until the mastery of L2 sounds. As a result, L1 of the teacher affects his L2 too as a result of L1 transfer. So, the learner surely meets some problems.

English speakers' habit to their mother tongue (Arabic), so the phonological features of Arabic were built and this conflict make them encounter many problems in distinguishing sound between first language and second language. According to Alkhuli (1983), he argued that the main problem in teaching and learning English pronunciation comes from the difference between sound systems. Learners face different difficulties, because of the linguistics backgrounds and English pronunciation is not an easy task. In Arabic, each letter illustrates only one sound, so it is more easier to read any written text whereas in English, there is difference in the sound system and it is hard to read something (in the L1 and L2), because learners transfer their mother tongue firstly. Many Arabic learners

replace sounds that do not exist in their mother tongue, because their organs speeches are different.

As a result, Arabic language has twenty-eight (28) letters and the whole category represent one sound only whereas English language has twenty-four (24) consonants; therefore there are forty-four (44) phonemes. It is difficult to pronounce any foreign sounds with its exact accent, simply because sounds are firstly the practice of the first language.

One of the major problems is the influence of spelling on pronunciation. Students find difficulties in pronouncing some words from simple written text. In Arabic, students can easily pronounce words by just looking at it are written. In English, there are some words which are spelt with different method, but they have the same pronunciation. For example, the words 'rain', 'rein' and 'reign', they pronounce in the same way 'rein'; for the learners who do not mastery pronunciation well, it is difficult to pronounce and they pronounce each word by looking at its spelling. Consequently, they mispronounced them, because they do not know the exact relationship between sound and spelling.

There are some words with silent letters which makes problems for the learners for example, the silent /k/ does not pronounce in words like 'knee', 'know', 'knight', 'knife'. The learners who do not know the correct pronunciation, they directly pronounce them with /k/. As a result, English spelling lead the learners to deduce wrong pronunciation from words spelling. English pronunciation is famous by its difficulty and student should be aware about pronunciation rules.

1.5.2. Pronunciation difficulties

Pronunciation plays an important role in our personal and social lives. Pronouncing a foreign language is somehow difficult, it is linguistically a cognitive side. However, there is no simple answer to explain why pronunciation is difficult. Most disadvantageous thing of communication process is the pronunciation of the learners neither vocabulary neither grammar. There is a distinction between pronunciation and speaking, the former considers as a sub-skill of speaking. It is not easy to change the learners' way of pronouncing words, because firstly we need to change the thinking way about sounds of those words.

1.6. There are some important factors that affect the pronunciation learning:

1.6.1. Accent:

In general, accent identifies where the person is from regionally, it is all about how speaker's accent differ. The difficulty of accent related to the person region and how they pronounce and use their accent. Students get trouble with the sound that does not exist in their language. Each one has its different accent and they confuse between sounds. Accent distinguishes between the learner language sound and the second language sound

1.6.2. Stress, intonation and rhythm:

Stress, intonation and rhythm are affected by intelligibility. They are supra-segmental features. They are an important element in English spelling. Intonation has its sound parts, stress is complex concept and need time and rhythm is the movement in speech which marked by stress. Stress, intonation and rhythm affect the pronunciation.

1.6.3. Motivation and exposure

Learners are motivated for learning English to improve their English especially pronunciation. They hope to speak good English pronunciation, learners simply desire to improve themselves and be effective and perfect.

If motivation does so, learners can be highly experienced about pronunciation. Experience has a positive influence on learners' motivation about the language. In addition, teacher must focus on pronunciation and accent in class lesson and discussion, he should encourage them to speak English inside and outside the classroom and learn them the structure of those interactions.

Both motivation and exposure are very important, because learners who are motivated towards learning English, they achieve good results in pronouncing words as well as in participating during class lessons. Good pronunciation can be controlled by the learner itself. So motivation is one of the effective and perfect factors to acquiring pronunciation. Mohammad Reza Ahmadi (2011.p. 76.).

1.6.4. Mother Tongue Influence

Learner transferred his first language into the second language to express his ideas and needs. This transfer causes incorrect pronunciation of English words, therefore it influences on the sounds, rules, stress and intonation of the second language .The sound system (of the native language) can influence the learners pronunciation of the second language (English) , so the learners may not able to produce or even perceive the sound.

1.7. Pronunciation errors committed by EFL learners

English pronunciation is a big problem to some learners and difficult for the others. Majority of English learners make serious errors in addition to the phonological,

lexical and spelling errors. Learners are not even aware about the pronunciation errors that are made. Most of the learners also believe that the main difficulty when speaking English is pronunciation, because the latter includes individual sounds and sound segments and it plays a key role in communication. English Learners commit serious errors when they deal with pronunciation. Some Arab Learners of English confuse between /p/ and /b/; /f/ and /v/ and /i/ /.As a result, the main cause is the difference between English language and the native language of the learner as Arabic language.

Learners' errors are something continuously at any process of learning. It considers as a step of learning acquiring another language (second language). Students cannot be self correct errors.

In English pronunciation, there are two types of pronunciation errors: mistakes and errors. Mistakes are the incorrect performances or achievements of the learner and it can be made by even native speakers while errors are systematic and it shares the learner gaps and the latter is the main reason of the problems that the learners commit.

Mistakes are disorganised and non-systematic situation that it may happen in the native languages of a speaker. Whereas errors are systematic occurrences in the use of the L2 and it compared to the correct use of the native language to show the gaps and the feedback of the language.

Burt and Kiparsky (1972) made a difference between errors and he classified them into global and local. He argued that global errors are different from local errors. Local errors simply are as in the omission of third person singular which means it is all about the neglecting of the second language learner while global errors would be the wrong order in a sentence and it is committed by both native and non-native speakers.

Pronunciation is the most important thing and the most difficult problem that the non-native speakers face in their English study. It refers to the ability to pronounce correct English words. During a conversation, the native speakers notice the mispronounced words that are committed by non-native speakers. Grammar and vocabulary are also important, but pronunciation more.

Part two: English Spelling

1.8. English Spelling Definition

According to Oxford University (2008) spelling is the way or the process of writing words. English Spelling is the combination of letters to form a written word, linguistically; it is process of correct writing with the appropriate letters. However, it considers as a standard language. Spelling is the person ability to spell words in correct way by using the acceptable letters. Furthermore, English Spelling is the easier complex method of writing in which it is difficult and easier in the same time according the person ability.

1.9. Spelling Rules

In English, words are not spell as they are pronounced, it is followed by some basic rules and these rules are followed by the majority of English users. Spelling rule is a guideline or principle which helps the writers to spell words accurately. It makes the person writes in order way.

1.9.1. Prefixes and Suffixes

They are sets of letters that are added to the beginning or the end of another word to create new words with different meaning and most of time prefixes and suffixes make

the contrast of the word. Prefix is an element takes place at the beginning of the words whereas suffix is one letter or more that is added at the end of the word.

Examples:

Prefix	Suffix
Happy= un happy	Hope= hop ing
Legal= il legal	Change= change able
Like= dis like	Courage= courag eous
Patient= im patient	Like= lik ely
Agree= dis agree	Care= care ful
Correct= in correct	Use= use ful
aware= un aware	Peace= peace ful
Noticeable= un noticeable	Home= hom ely
Spelled= mis spelled	Late= lat ely
Consciously= un consciously	Advantage= advantag eous
Understand= mis understand	Make= mak er

1.9.2. Doubling Consonant

It is a method used to double the letter to create a perfect word. It is the most difficult aspect of English spelling and it is one of the biggest challenges that English learners faced. The most errors committed by students are caused by doubling consonant.

1.9.3. Silent Letters

Silent letters cause problems for both native speakers and English learners, because silent letter makes the spelling of words different from their pronunciation. It can change

the pronunciation of the words. So, silent letter is the letter that has written form but it does not pronounce, it makes a huge difference to the meaning of the word.

Examples

Silent b: clim**b**, comb, crumb**s**, deb**t**, doub**t**, numb, subt**l**e, thum**b**, tomb**.**

Silent d: Wed**ne**sday, sand**w**ich, hand**s**ome, ed**g**e, brid**g**e.

Silent k: kne**e**d, kn**i**fe, kn**ig**ht, kn**o**t, kn**o**ck, kn**o**w.

Silent l: wou**l**d, shou**l**d, cal**f**, hal**f**, sal**l**mon, tal**k**, yolk.

Silent n: autum**n**, colum**n**, condem**n**, dam**n**, hym**n**, solem**n**.

1.9.4. Words Ending

Words ending are either letters or syllables added to the word to create new words. Some spelling rules are worth learning; others are too complicated or have too many exceptions.

1.10. Difference between Spelling Errors and Spelling Mistakes

Spelling error according to Oxford University Press (2008) is mistake, it is when there is a mistake in the spelling of words, it is committed by students it is an unaccepted error form of spelling word. Difference between Arabic and English writing system may be one of the major reasons of students spelling errors, because most of spelling errors is because of their mispronunciation.

According to Press University (2008) spelling mistake is an act that is wrong, when there is an error in spelling. Spelling mistakes are easy to make but it is not always easy to notice whereas spelling errors are unnoticeable (by you) and it means that you need to learn how to spell the word correctly. Some people think that when words are spelt correctly and their used incorrectly, that is spelled mistake.

Spelling errors and spelling mistakes are two separated methods that the most of people commit consciously or unconsciously.

Common misused words:

Accept/ except/ expect: each word of them has a different meaning.

Accept which means that to consent or take willingly while **except** means other than and **expect** which means that to consider probable.

Examples

- The policeman **accepted** the offer to address the strikers.
- Everyone **accepts** for the elderly and infirm, must vote.
- Most people **expected** the popular party to win the election.

Could have / could've: in which there are no such could of, should of or would of.

Could have: which means that may be while **could've** means a contraction of could have.

- The election was so close that either party **could have** won.
- The election **could've** been won by either party.

Then / than: in which each word has a completely different meaning.

Examples

- If the party wins, **then** they will be in power. **Then** which means that at that time, next or consequence.
- The party won the election by larger numbers **than** was expected. **Than** it is used for comparison.

1.11. Homophones, Homonyms and Homographs:

Homonyms, homographs and homophones are a category of words that can be confusing because of 3 things: spelling, pronunciation and meaning.

Homophone is a word that is pronounced the same as another word but differs in meaning. It may also differ in spelling. **Homonyms** are two words that are spelt the same with the same sound, but they have different meaning. The word 'homo' which means the same, and the suffix nym which means name, for example, pen is a holiday area for animals and writing instrument. It has characteristics of both homophones and homographs. **Homographs** are words that are spelt the same as indicated by the suffix graph which means writing. For example, tear and tear means drops of water from the eyes or to trip paper into pieces. So, Homophone has the same pronunciation, homograph has the same spelling and homonym has both the same spelling and pronunciation.(Oxford University Press 2008).

Examples of homophones:

- To; two; too.
- Scent; sent; cent.
- Passed; past.

Examples of homonyms:

- I will **park** the car outside.
- We are going to the **park**.
- Our team played a **match** on Sunday.
- We need a **match** to light the fire.
- Do not **waste** the paper.
- My **waist** is too tiny.

Examples homographs:

- You can **polish** my shoes.
- My teacher is **polish**; he comes from Warsaw.
- Did you **tear** in the paper?
- Do you have a **tear** in your eye?

1.11. Conclusion:

English pronunciation and spelling are continuous problem for EFL learners, EFL students are not awarded towards the existing differences between Arabic and English pronunciation. Both are an important element at any language learning. The errors are the result of the unawareness about the rules of English Spelling and pronunciation. Teachers have to provide the students with the tasks they prefer to motivate them and to avoid mistakes.

Chapter two

case study

2.1. Introduction

This last chapter represents the practical side of the research, the researcher focuses on English spelling only, because it is considered as one of the difficult and complex writing systems. English writing system should be followed by both native speakers and L2 learners (non-native). As a result, English spelling is easier than difficult as many people think, because the learner already knows how to spell a lot of words correctly. So, the thing that we must follow is just to master the ones which the learner gets terrible with.

In this last chapter, research deals with the findings of the data, it collected throughout teachers and students questionnaires. The findings are presented in the pie chart form only. These figures are followed by detailed description and discussion in addition to the main findings will discuss and the pedagogical implications will be concluded.

2.2. Research Methodology

In order to collect data, the researcher uses the questionnaire which is considered as the easiest tool for collecting information about a particular issue of interest; it also allows the researcher to get huge values of data from a large number of subjects. It is so direct and does not need much time to be answered.

2.3. Sample of the study

In this study, there are 40 students and 10 teachers from the English Department University of Adrar. Two forms of questionnaires were used .The first one concerns the first year LMD students while the second form was delivered to English teachers at the same department. University learners and teachers were asked to give sufficient and meaningful answers to the proposed questions. As a result, students and teachers

questionnaires are more helpful in the research, because it provides the researcher with perfect information.

2.4. Students' questionnaire

Students questionnaire included (14) questions ordered in three parts. Part one is concerned with the general information about the participants which are gender, the choice of the language and the preference of English learning. Part two, dealt with general questions and contained 14 questions like the problem that the learners face in English spelling, types of activities that used. Part three tried to look at the results of using English spelling. The main questions are presented in details for the aim of clarification as well as to facilitate the students' understanding.

2.5. Teachers' questionnaire

The questionnaire included ten questions; they were gathered in three sections. The questions were a mixture of questions' forms includes open-ended and closed-ended questions. Open-ended questions are the question that cannot be answered with 'yes' or 'no' response. The response requires more than one word which means needed a worthy sentence. Closed-ended questions were questions that can be answered by 'yes' or 'no'. In some questions teachers give multiple options. Teachers were asked to justify their chosen answers and provide extra explanations in the empty space of two or three lines. In the open-ended questions, the participants were required to respond by writing whereas in the closed-ended questions the respondents had options which determined by the researchers. Closed-ended questions were used more than opened-ended ones, because subjects able to complete them efficiently in a limited period of time.

2.6. Analysis' of the results

2.6.1. Students' Questionnaire

Part one: Personal Information

Q1: what is your gender?

Table 3.1.: students' gender

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	7	17,5
Female	33	82,5
Total	40	100%

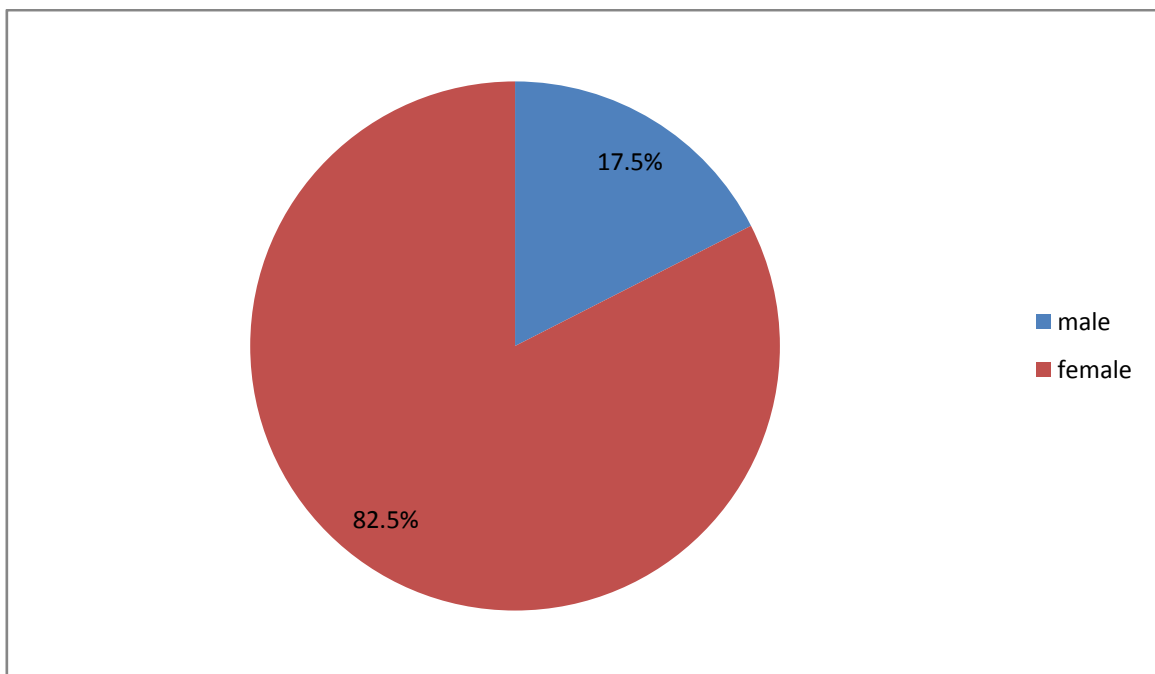


Figure1: students' Gender

This figure shows that the majority of students are females (82.5%) whereas 17.5 % are boys. This shows the domination of the female teachers.

Q2: Was it your choice to study English?

Table 3.2.: Students' choice of English language

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	36	90
No	4	10
Total	40	100%

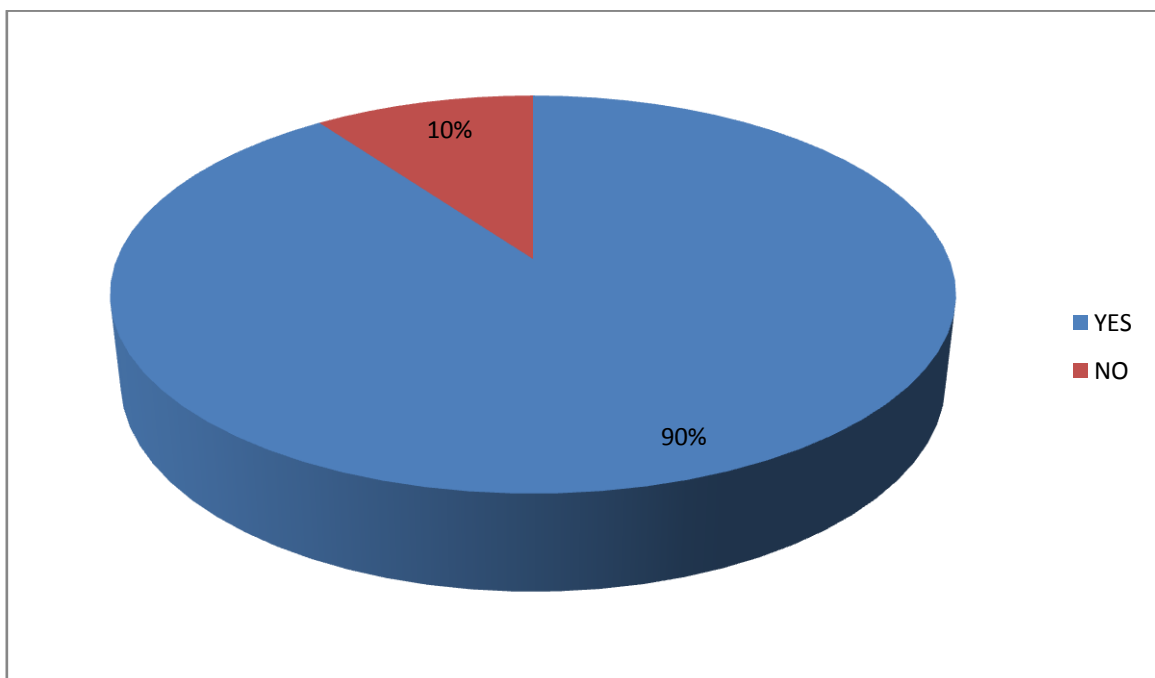


Figure 2: Students' Choice of English Language

The data shows that 90% of students say that English language is their choice whereas (10%) answer with 'no'. Students are motivated to learn English.

Q3: Do you like learning English?

Table 3.3. : Students' Skill.

Options	frequency	Percentage %
Very much	32	80
I like it somehow	8	20
Not much	0	
Total	40	100%

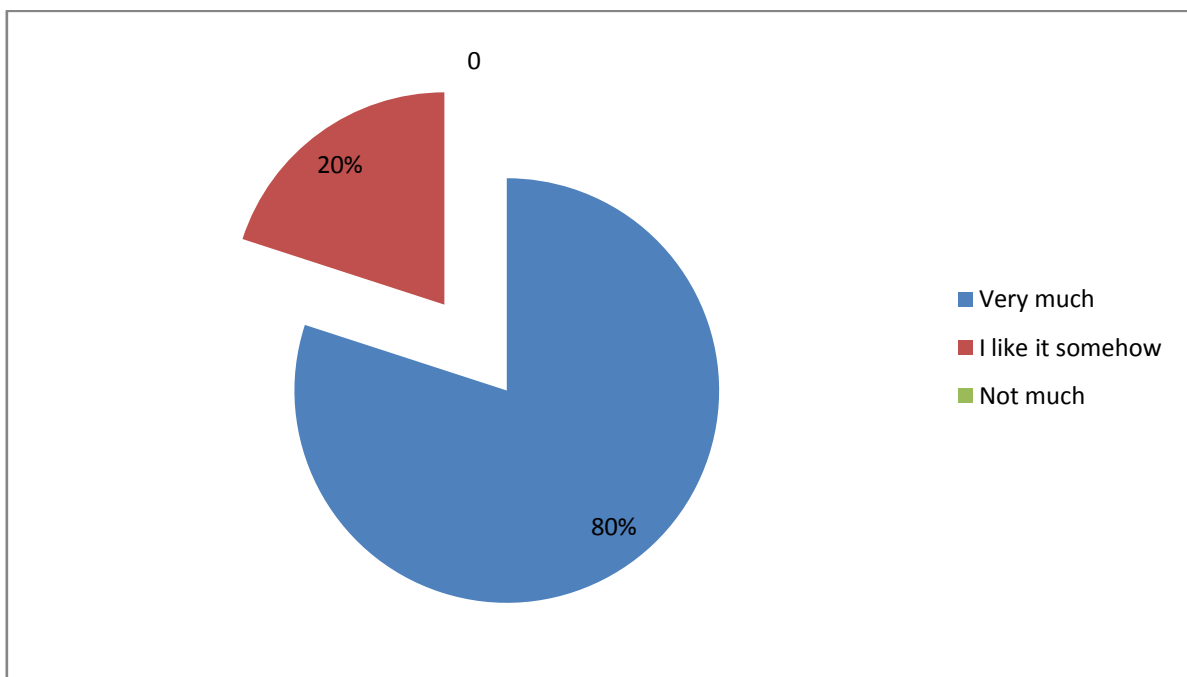


Figure 3: Students' Skill

(80%) of students say that they like learning English very much, and only 20% say they do not like learning English.

Part two: English Spelling

Q4: Which spelling do you prefer?

Table 3.4.: English spelling preference.

Options	frequency	Percentage %
American English Spelling	14	35
British English Spelling	26	65
Total	40	100%

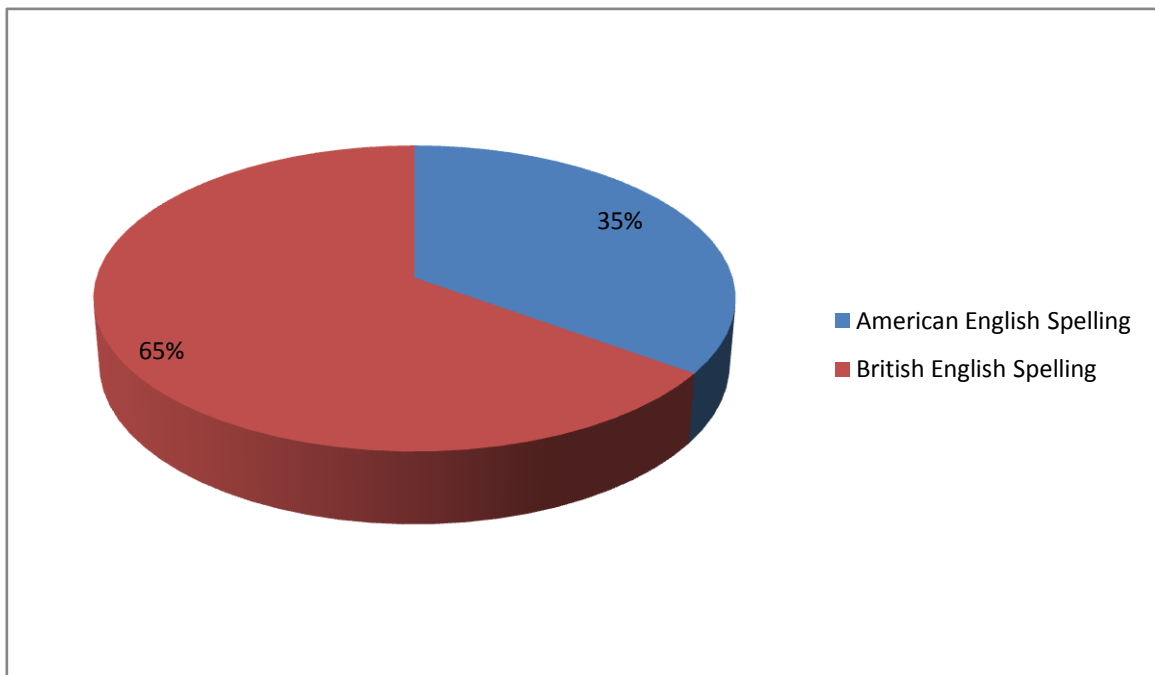


Figure 4: English Spelling Preference

The pie chart shows that the majority (65%) prefer British English Spelling whereas (35 %) of the others prefer American English Spelling.

Q5: Are you satisfied with your level of English Spelling?

Table 3.5.: Students' satisfaction with their English level.

Options	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	24	60
No	16	40
total	40	100%

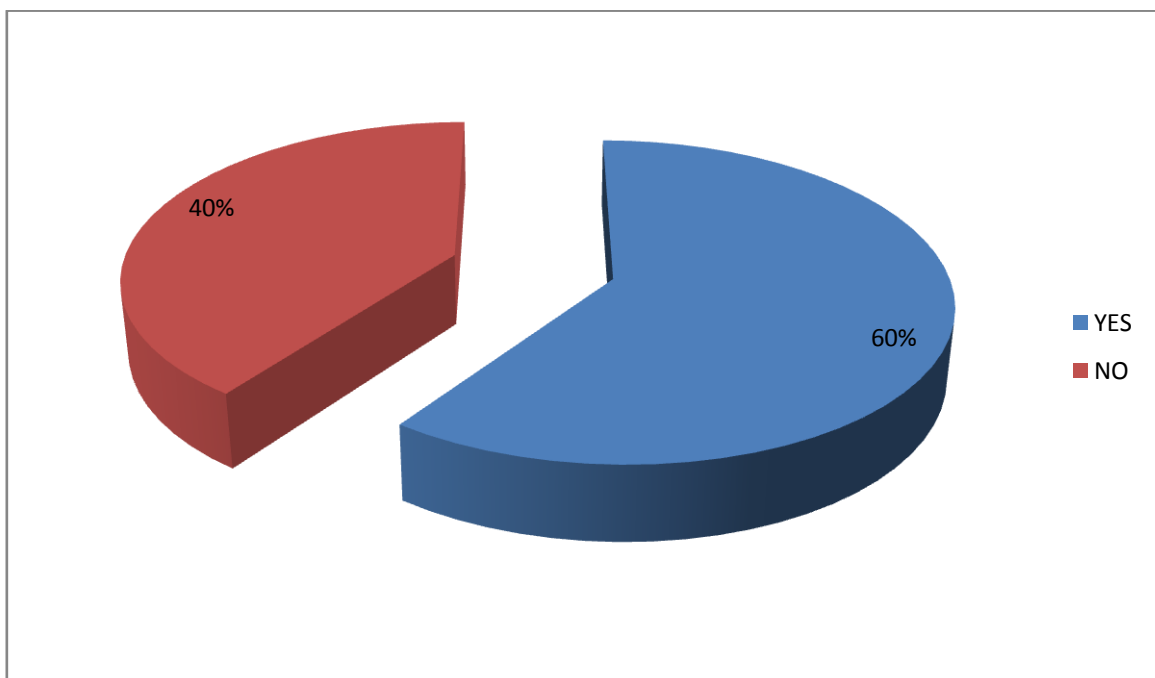


Figure 5: The Satisfaction about English Level

With this level of English spelling (60%) are satisfied with their level of English Spelling whereas (40%) of students are not satisfied enough.

Q6: Do you face problems in learning English Spelling?

Table 3.6.: Students' problems in learning English spelling.

Options	frequency	Percentage %
Yes	15	37.5
No	25	62.5
Total	40	100

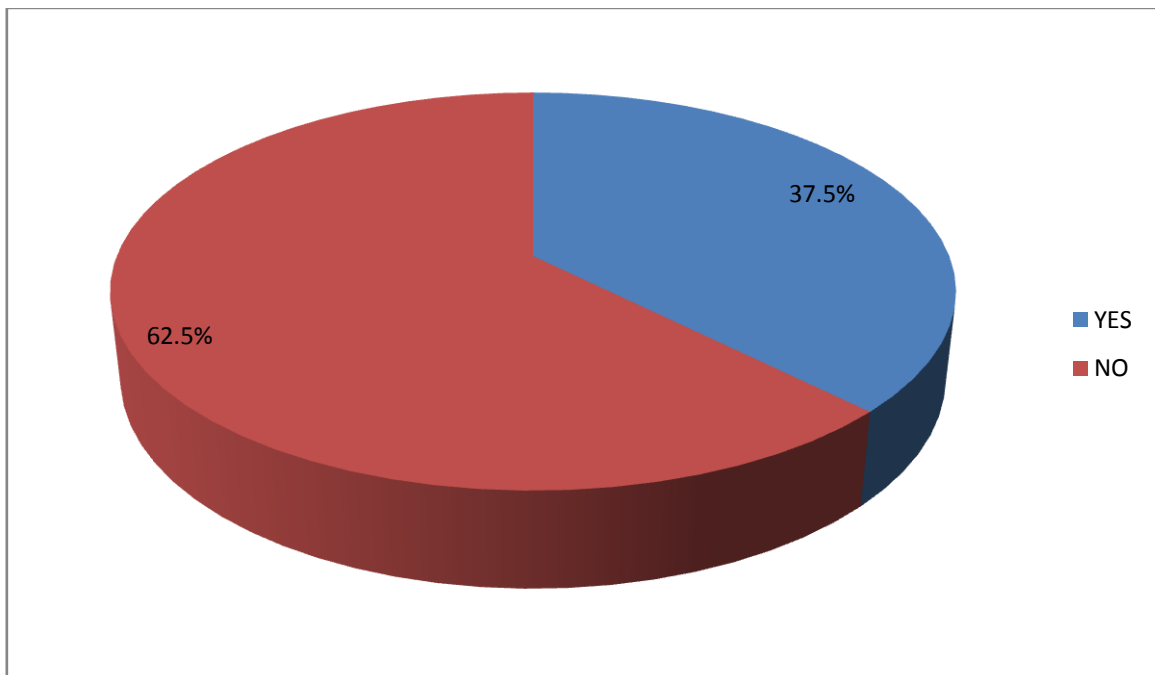


Figure 6: Students' Problems in Learning English Spelling

The figure above shows that (62.5%) of the participants do not face problems in learning English as a second language and 37.5% have problems in learning English Spelling.

Q7: Has English Spelling anything to do with writing.

Table 3.7.: Students' opinions about English spelling.

Options	frequency	Percentage %
Definitely agree	11	27.5
Agree	15	37.5
Disagree	10	25
Definitely disagree	04	10
Total	40	100%

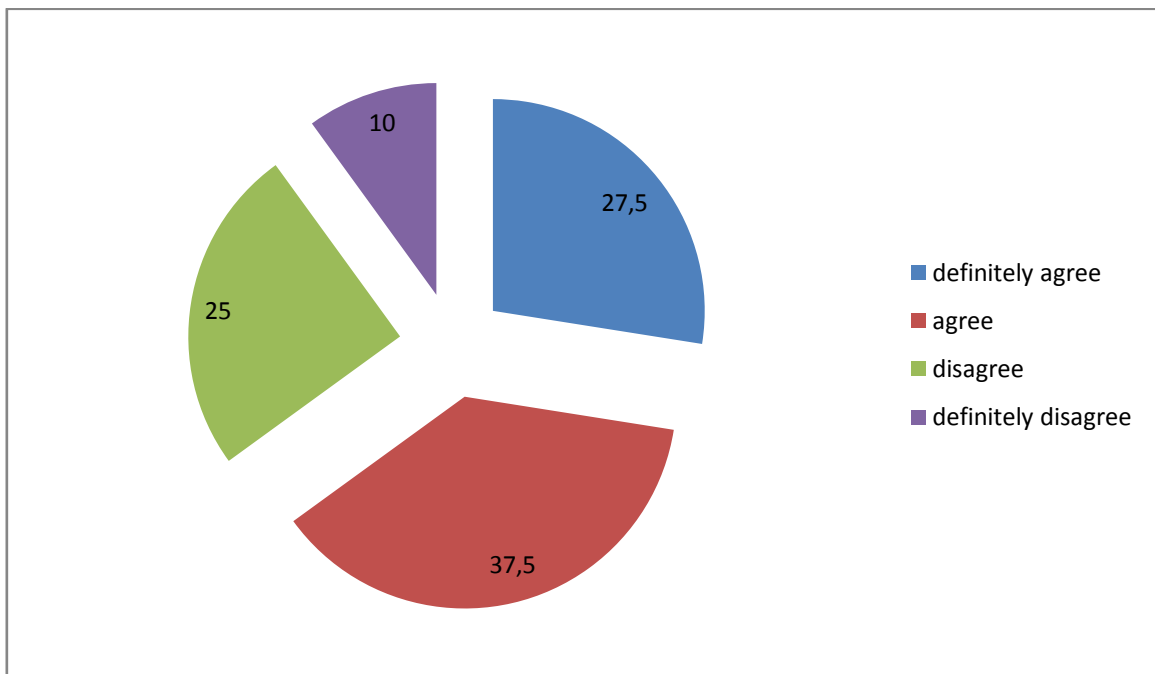


Figure 7: Students' Opinion about English Spelling

Figure 7 shows that 37.5% of students agree that English Spelling has something to do with writing while 27.5% definitely agreed. 25% disagree about English Spelling and. Finally, 10% of students definitely disagree.

Q8: Which types of activities are used in your English Spelling lessons?

Table 3.8.: Types of activities used in English spelling.

Options	frequency	Percentage %
Accuracy activities	31	77.5
Speedy spelling activities	09	22.5
Total	40	100%

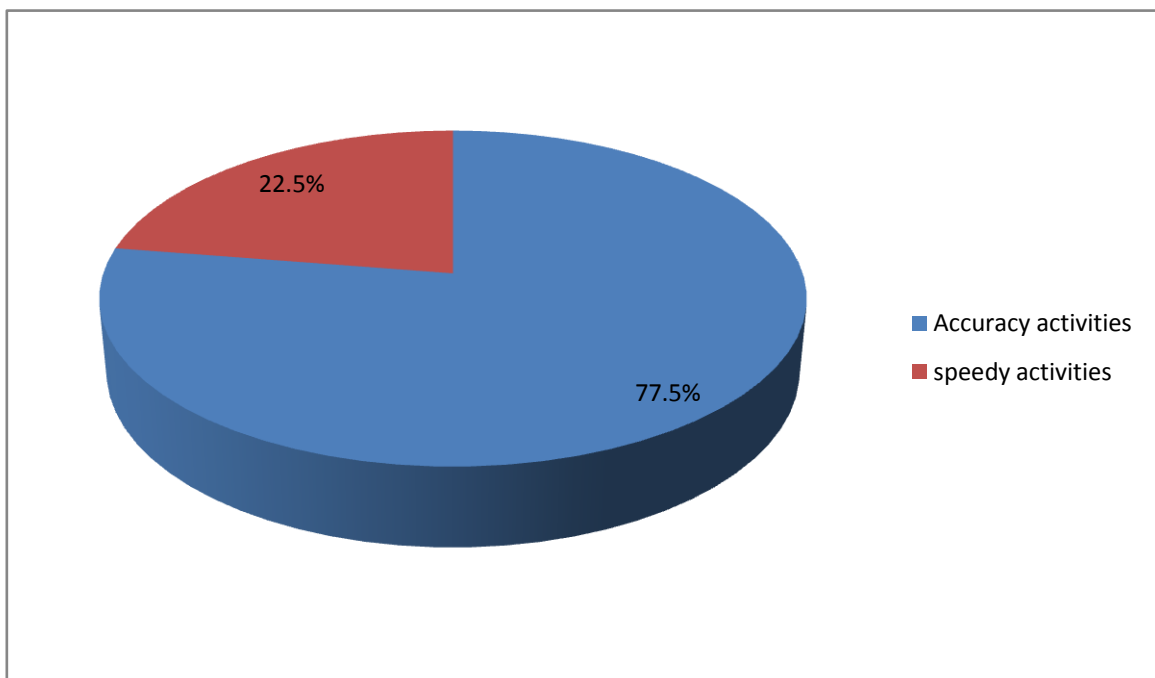


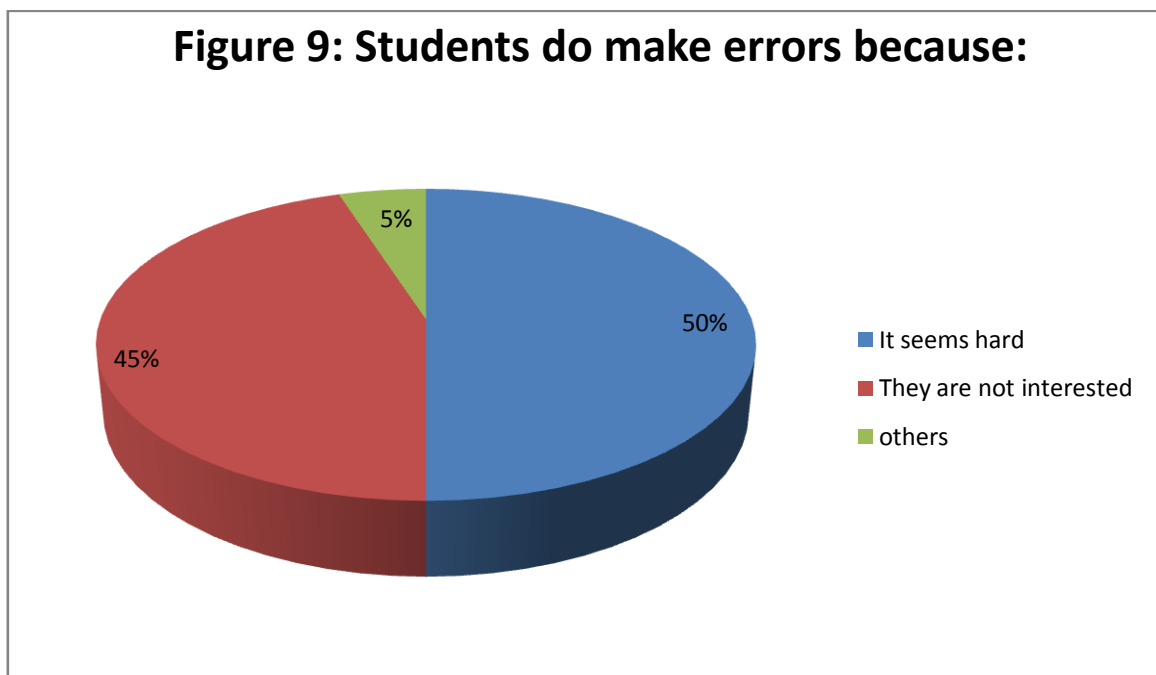
Figure 8: Types of Activities used in English Spelling

The figure indicates that 77.5% of students use accuracy activities while 22.5% use speedy activities.

Q9: Students do make errors because:

Table nine: The reasons behind students committing errors.

Options	N	100
It seems hard	20	50
They are not interested	18	45
Others	02	5
Total	40	100%



50% of students find English Spelling as hard task and about 45% of them are not interested in it. While 5% of them give other reasons such as lack of reading, lack of searching, learners time wastingetc.

Q10: In your opinion, what is English Spelling?

Table 3.10.: Opinion about English spelling.

Options	frequency	Percentage %
Very complex	01	2.5
Complex somehow	25	62.5
Not complex	14	35
Total	40	100%

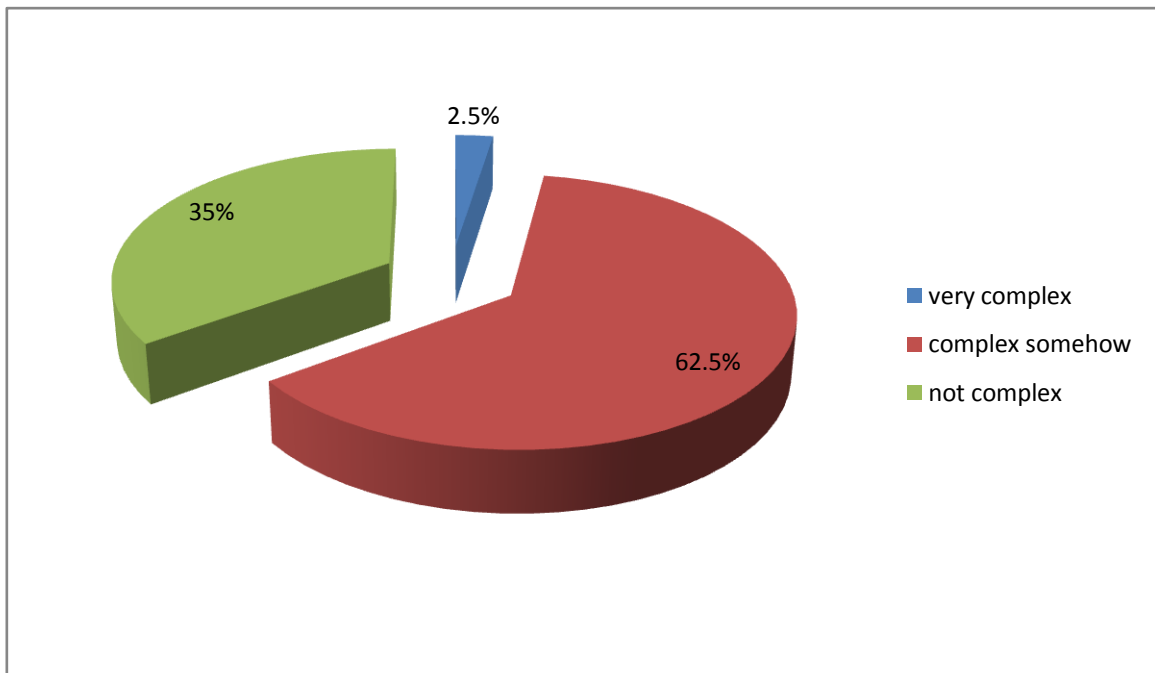


Figure 10: English Spelling

The figure above shows that 62.5% of students say that English Spelling is complex somehow unlike 35% who find English Spelling easier task. Only 2.5% of students who find English very complex.

Part three: Spelling and Motivation

Q11: How often do you spell (write) words in class?

Table 3.11.: Students' participation in class.

Total	frequency	Percentage %
Frequently	13	32.5
Sometimes	23	57.5
Rarely	03	7.5
Never	01	2.5
Total	40	100%

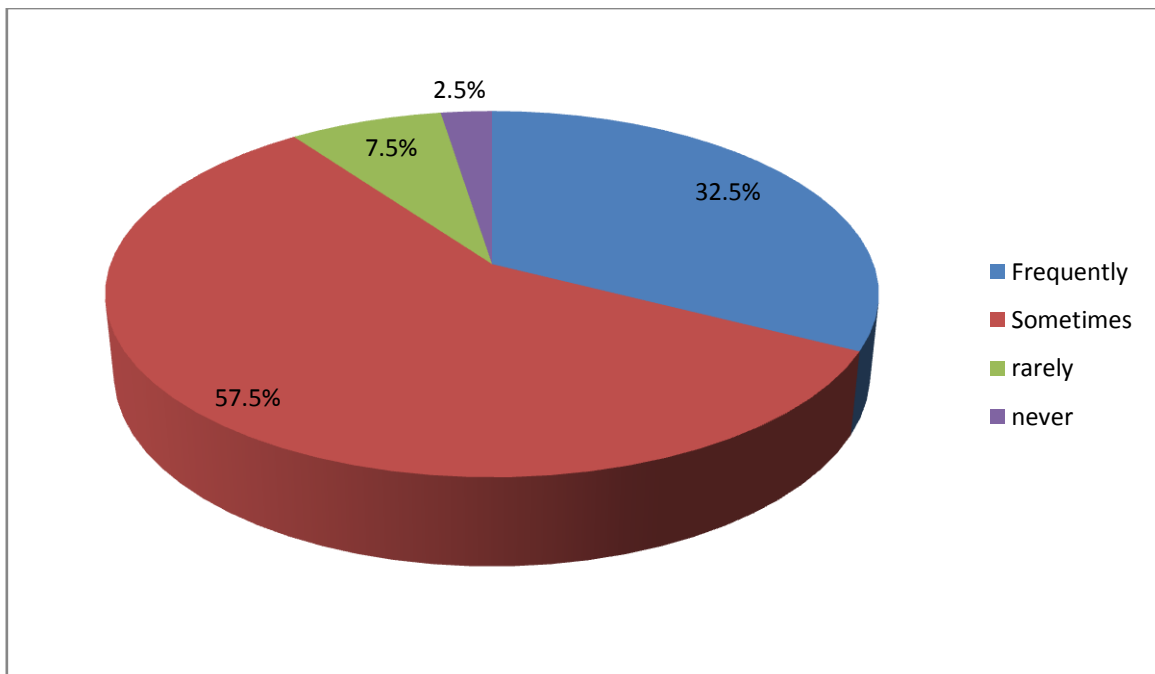


Figure 11: Students participation in class

The figure shows that 57.5% of participants say that they 'sometimes' write words in the classroom whereas 32.5% of them argue that they 'frequently' write in class and

about 7.5% say that they ‘rarely’ do and 2.5% affirm that they ‘never’ write words in the classroom.

Q12: How do feel when taking part in spelling words in class?

Table 3.12.: Students’ feeling spell words in class.

Options	frequency	Percentage %
At ease	30	75
Not at ease	10	25
Total	40	100

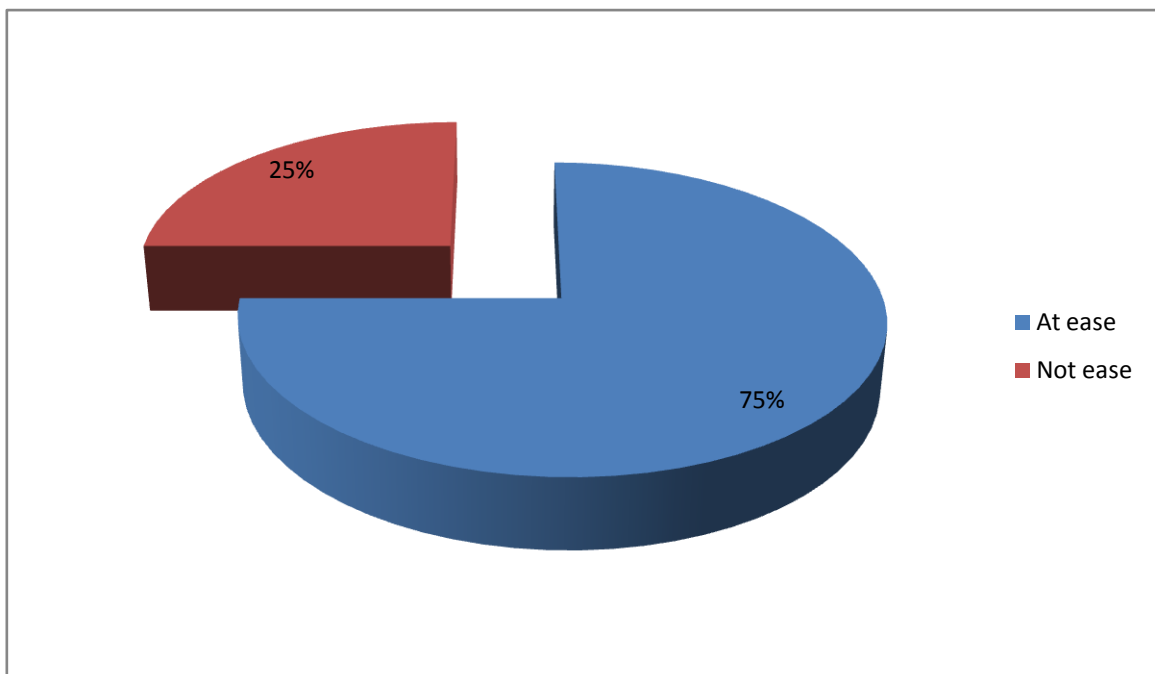


Figure 12: Students’ Feeling when spell words in class

From this figure we notice that 75% of students say that they feel ease when spelling English words in class while 25% of them find it hard task.

Q13: Do you always take part in class?

Table 3.13.: Students participation during class lessons.

Options	frequency	Percentage %
Yes	18	45
No	22	55
Total	40	100

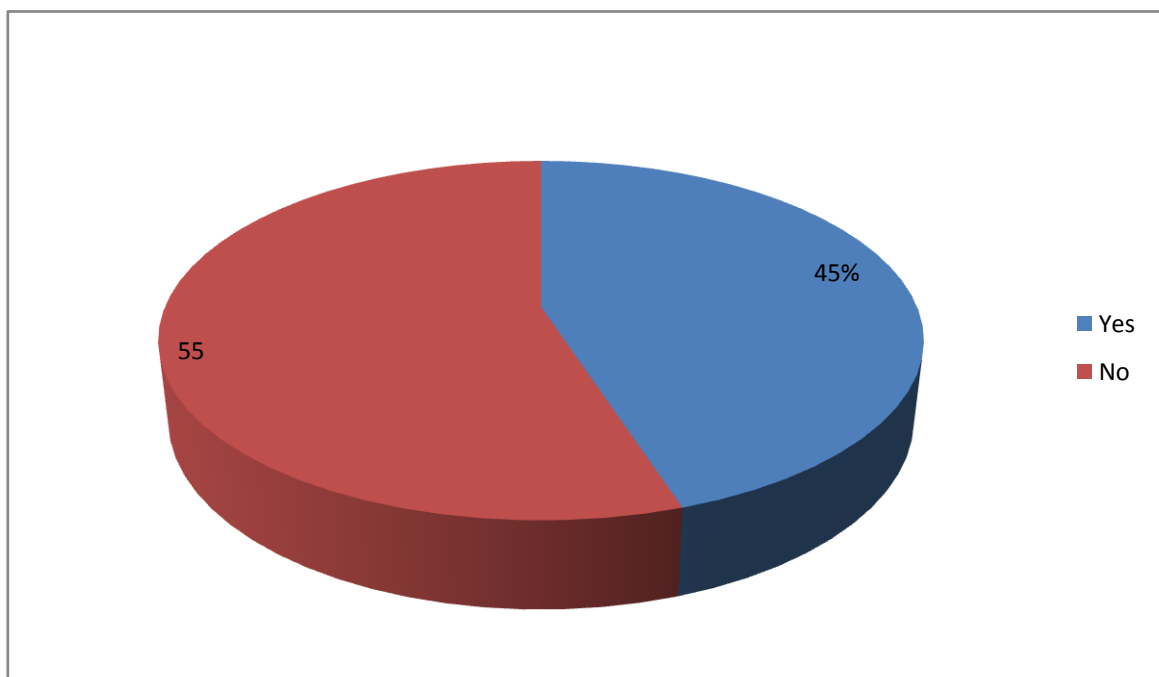


Figure 13: Students' Participation during class lesson

The figure above illustrates that 45% of the participants participate in class activities whereas 55% of them do not.

Q14: Do you seek to develop your spelling using:

Table 3.14.: The ways used in developing spelling.

Options	frequency	Percentage%
Visual aids	16	40
Writing discussion	07	17.5
Others	17	42.5
Total	40	100

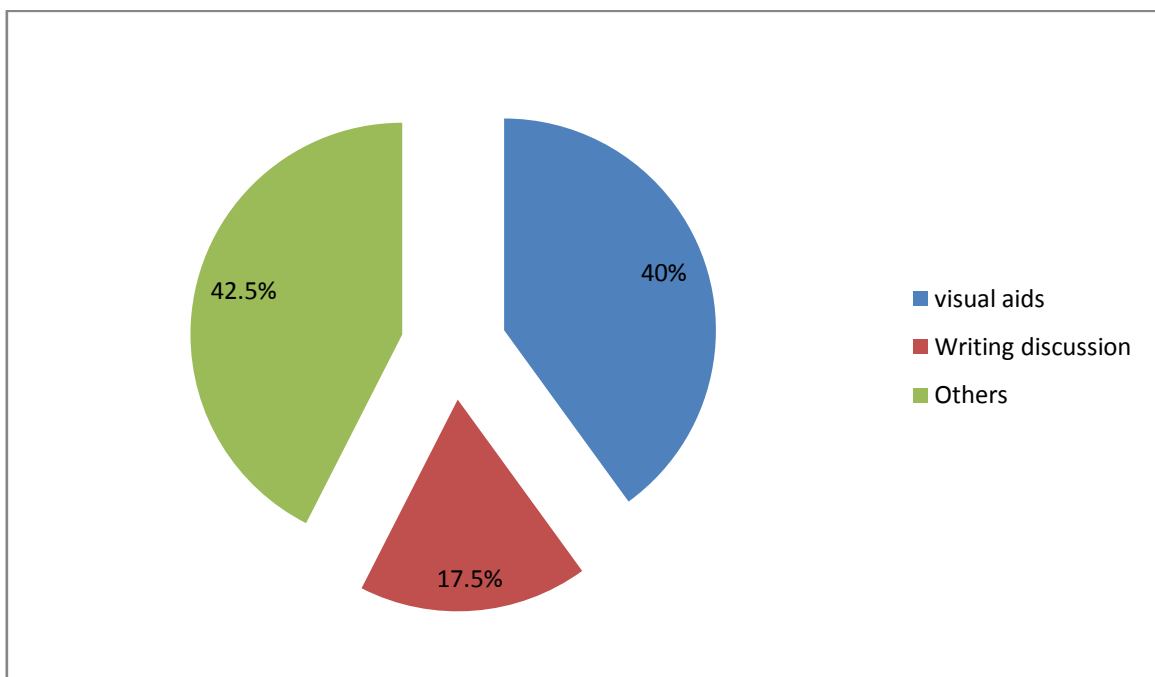


Figure 14: Development Spelling Skill

42.5% of the informants use other aids during their writing whereas 40% of them use visual aids. 17.5% of participants use writing discussion.

2.6.2. Teachers' questionnaire:**Part one: Personal Information**

Q1: What is the highest academic degree you hold?

Table 3.1.: Teacher academic level.

degree	Frequency	Percentage%
License (MA)	0	0
Magister	6	75
Doctorate Degree	2	25
Total	8	100

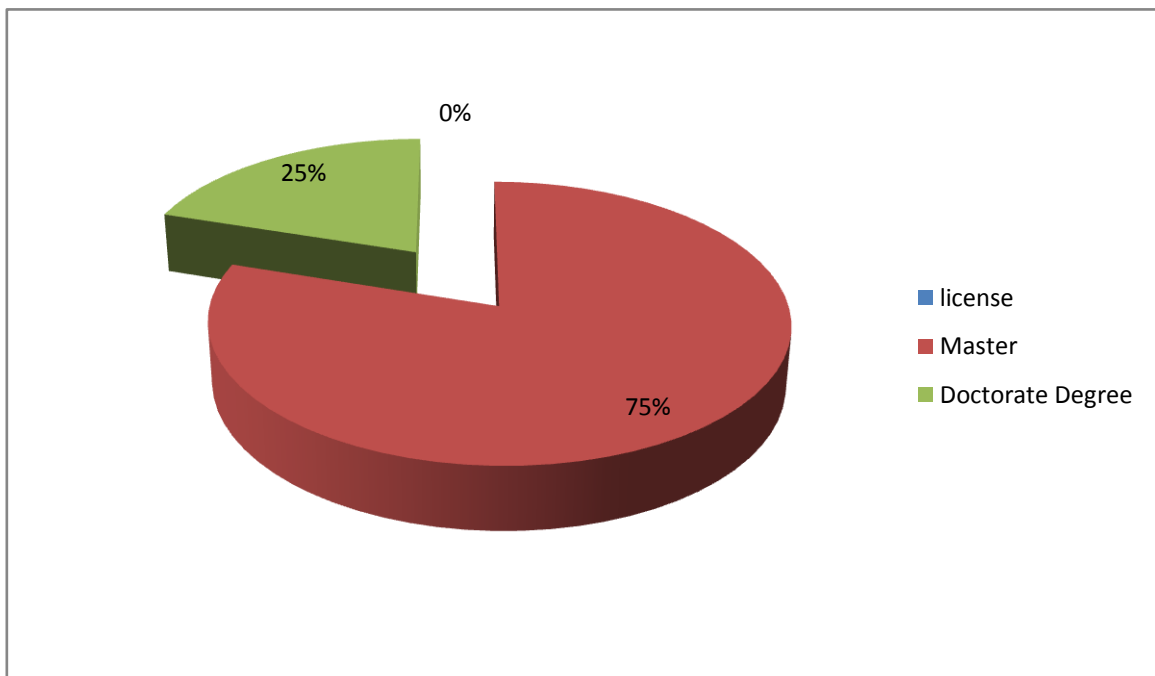


Figure 1: Teacher Academic Level

The table above illustrates that 75% of informants hold a Magister Degree in English while 25% of them have a Doctorate Degree. This means that teachers' academic level is good.

Q2: How long have you been teaching English?

Table 3.2.: Experience of Teaching

Year	frequency	percentage%
2 years	2	25
3 years	1	12.5
4 years	1	12.5
5 years	2	25
6 years	1	12.5
25 years	1	12.5
Total	8	100

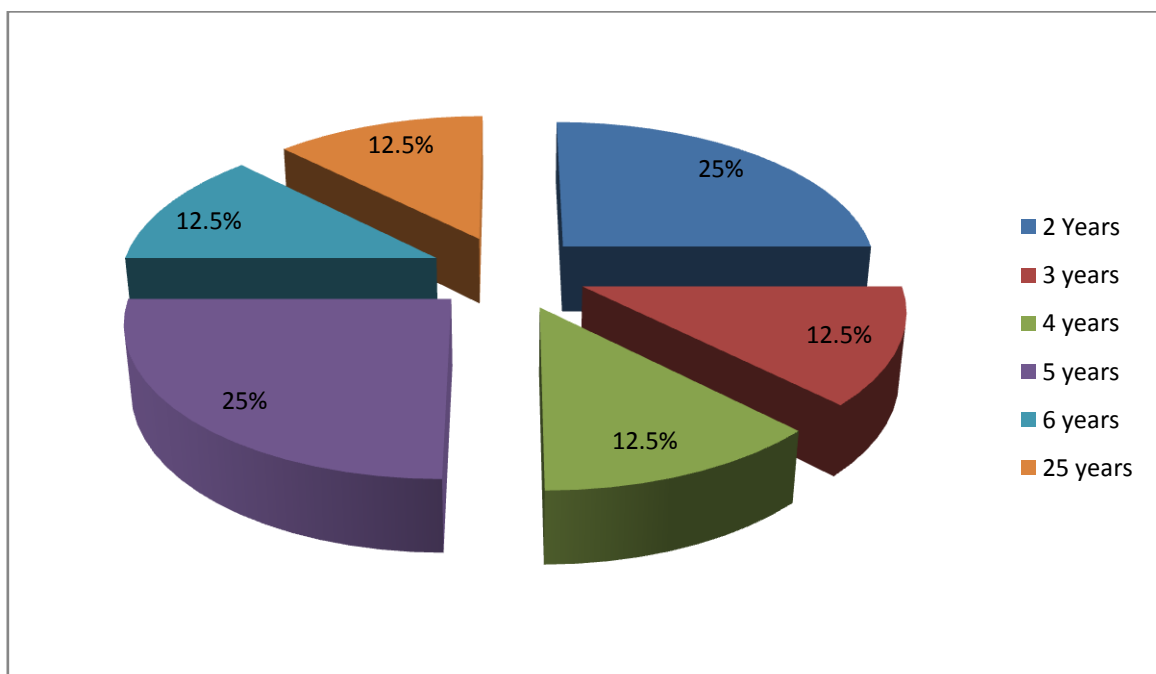


Figure 2: Experience of Teaching

From the figure above, we notice that 25% of teachers have worked between two and five years whereas 12.5% of them have worked between five to twenty-five (25) years.

Part two: English Spelling

Q3: To what extent do you think it is important to teach English Spelling to your students?

English Spelling is a successful method for students. So, the majority of the participants state that these activities are important because:

✓ Spelling is highly important so, students can write or take notes in class, though they mostly type on the computers to do research; the fact which prevents them from enhancing their spelling.

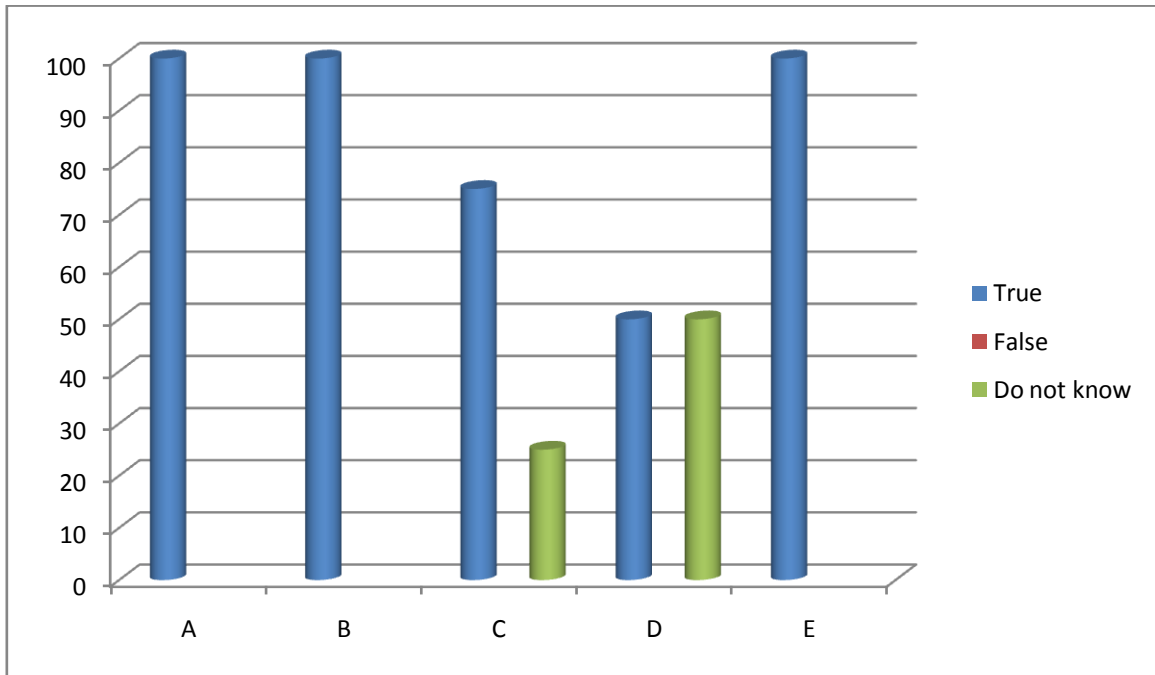
✓ It is definitely an important thing as understanding is very much dependent on correct spelling.

✓ For a good writing to avoid mistakes.

Q4: What do you think of English Spelling?

Table four: Teachers' opinions about English spelling.

English Spelling	True		False		Do not know	
	N	100%	N	100%	N	100%
A-language is a means of communication	8	100	0		0	
B-spelling is an activity of writing	8	100	0		0	
C-spelling is standard order	6	75	0		2	25
D-spelling involves only individual	4	50	0		4	50
E-spelling relies heavily on writing skill	8	100	00		0	

Figure 4: What do you think of English Spelling

This figure shows the teachers' opinion about English spelling. The teachers give the option 'true' which means English spelling is easy.

Q5: Do you think that using writing activities enhances students' spelling skill?

Table 3.5.: Activities that enhances students' in spelling skill.

options	Frequency	percentage%
Yes	8	100
No	0	0
total	8	100

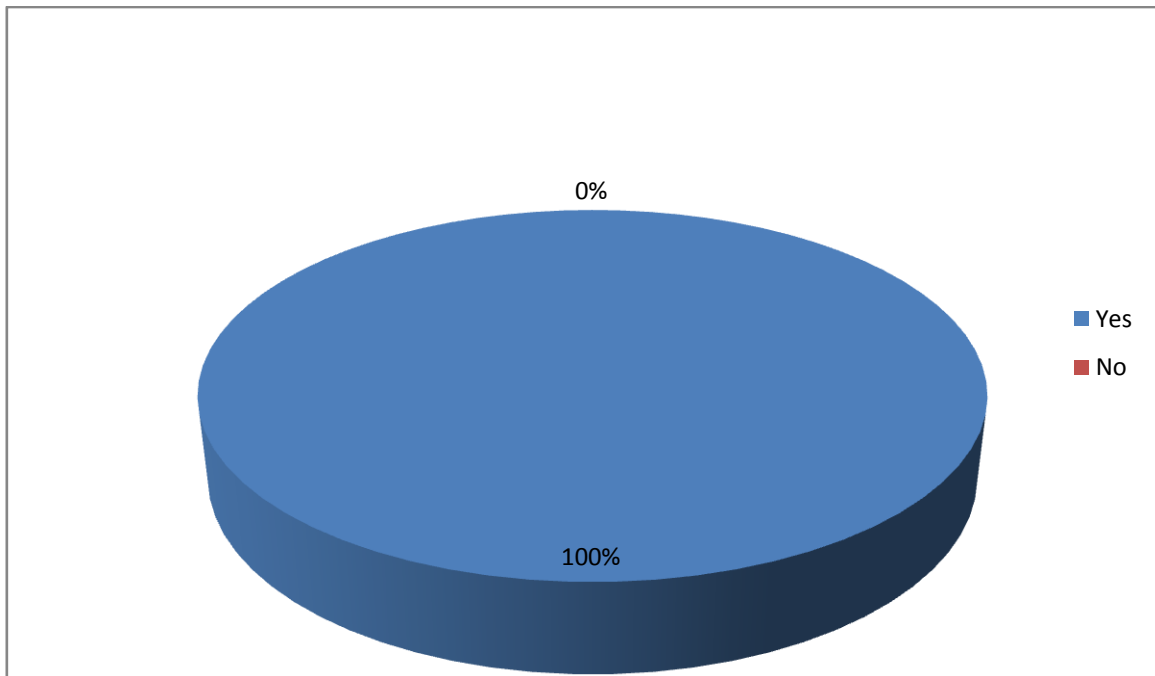


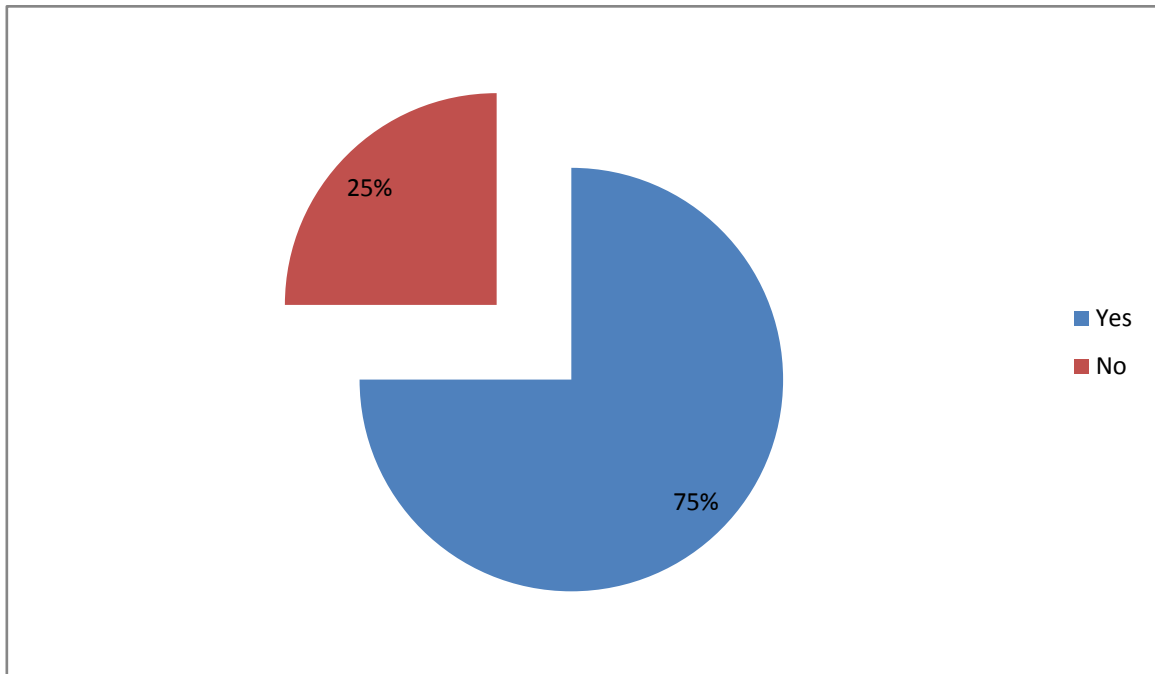
Figure 5: Activities that enhances Students' Spelling Skill

From the figure above, all the informants have chosen the option 'yes' and they define that the use of writing activities improve the writing skill of students. 100% of teachers answer with 'yes'.

Q6: Do your students interact more when they are involved in spelling activities?

Table 3.6.: Students' interactions in spelling activities.

Options	Frequency	percentage%
Yes	6	75
No	2	25
Total	10	100



The figure above shows that 75% of the participants answer that the students are interactive in spelling activities whereas only 25% of the participants answer with the opposite. English spelling is an interactive skill

Q7: What are the other factors responsible for persistent spelling errors of the learner?

This question underlines the factors responsible for persistent spelling errors of the learner. The majority consider that lack of reading of the factors.

✓ Lack of reading. Most students do not read much or do not read at all. Reading is very important to correct spelling.

✓ Typing in phones and computers for a long time makes the students forget how to spell.

But spelling can have other activities from writing.

✓ Words that are similar in pronunciation, as a result the students confuse between them.

✓ Students are afraid of making mistakes, so, they are not use to write.

✓ Students are not self-confident.

✓ Teachers do not encourage and motivate them to write.

Part three: Spelling and Motivation

Q8: Are your students motivated to write in class?

Table 3.8.: Students motivation about writing.

Options	frequency	percentage%
Yes	4	50
No	4	50
Total	8	100

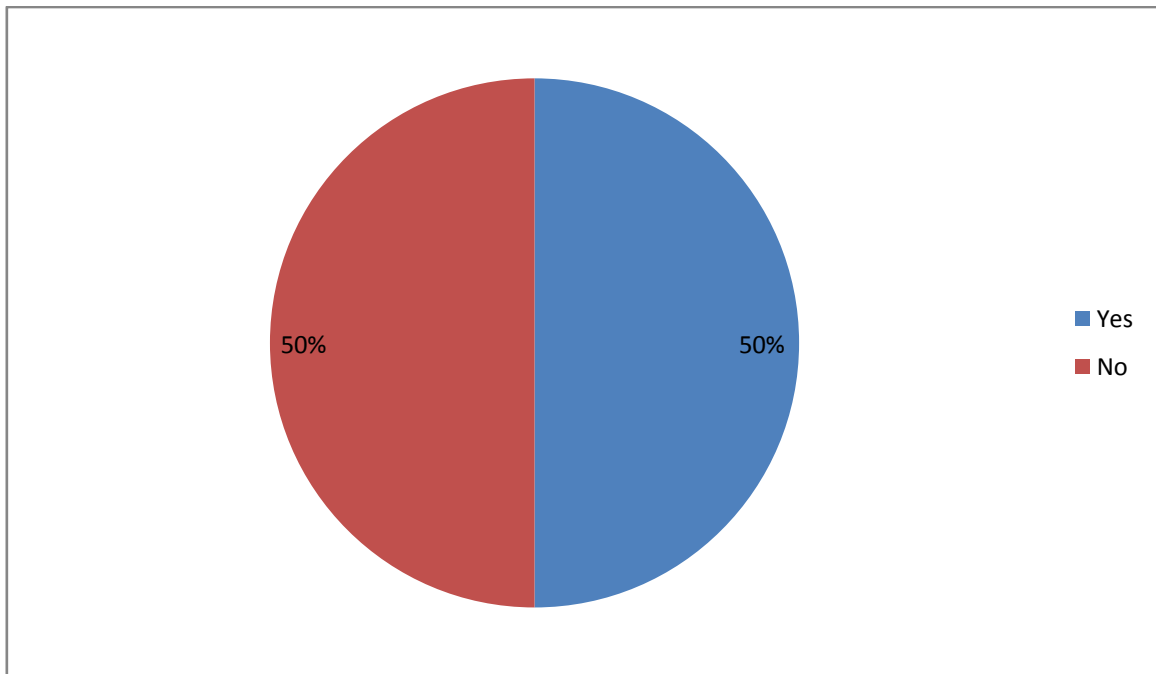


Figure 8: Students Interactions in Spelling Activities

From the figure above, we notice that students are motivated and non-motivated in the same time. 50% of teachers answers with 'yes' whereas 50% of them answer with 'no': The result is equal.

Q9: Why Students do not participate?

Table nine: Students' lack of participation in class.

Options	Frequency	percentage%
The class is overcrowded	2	25
They are not interested in the class activities	5	62.5
Others	1	12.5
Total	8	100

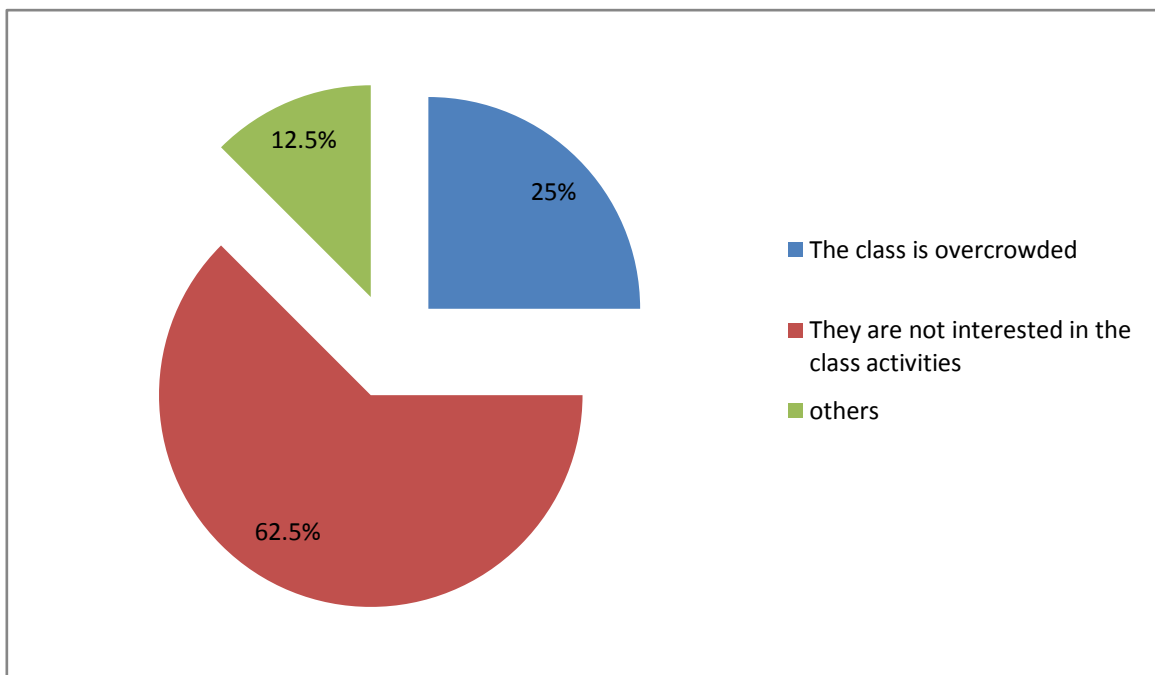


Figure 9: Students Participation in class

In the table above, 62.5% of the informants find that the less participation because students are not interested in the class activities whereas 25% of them present that the class is overcrowded .12.5% of them use other reasons like the overall atmosphere of the classroom(heat, dust, unorganised chairs).

Q10: How do you find English Spelling Activities?

Table 3.10.: Motivation of English spelling activities.

Options	Frequency	percentage%
Very motivating	3	37.5
Motivating somehow	5	62.5
Not motivating	0	0
Total	8	100

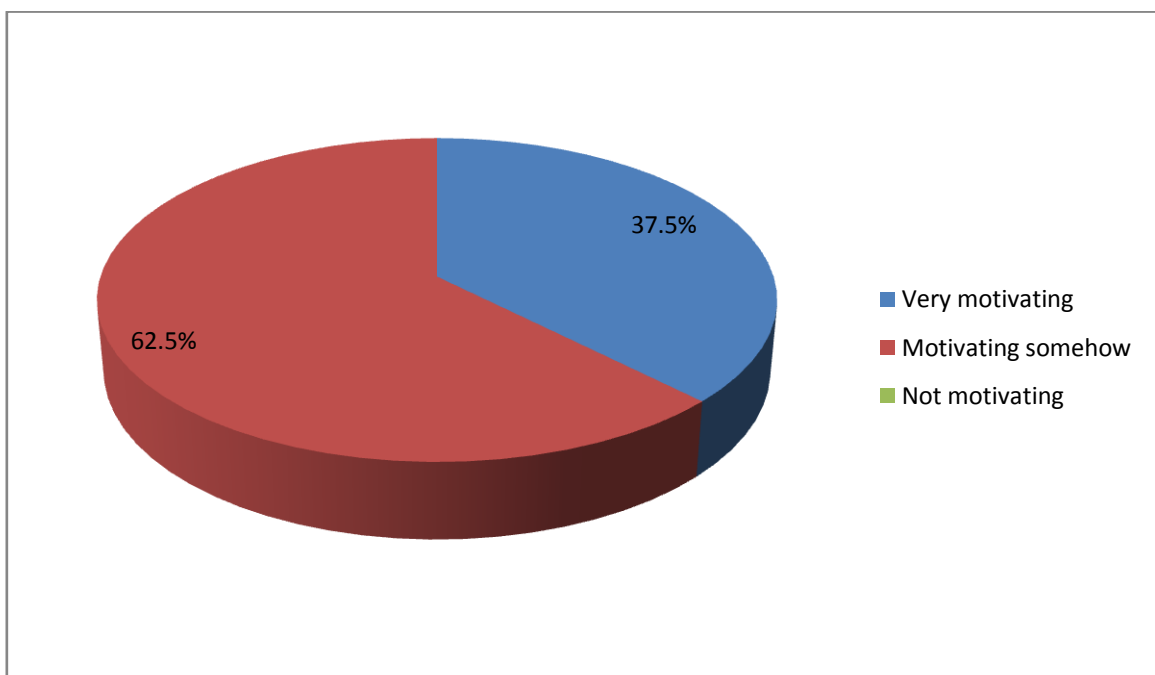


Figure 10: Motivation of English Spelling Activities

62% of teachers consider English spelling activities as motivating unlike 37.5% who consider it as very motivating.

Conclusion

To conclude and according to the analysis of the questionnaires, English Spelling plays an important role in supporting the learners. Students continue struggling with English Spelling. English Writing System is considered as a problematic issue for Arabic learners. It is believed that students spelling errors can be corrected; they should give an exposure as to how the words are written and the opportunity to practice writing. With possible intervention, improving students spelling is possible.

Recommendations

Through this study, the researcher infuses the light on the learner to improve their writing, the learner be aware and conscious about the learning strategies that give better writing. This study also tries to suggest solutions for the learners as well as the teachers to outline the difficulty of English Spelling.

However, the major reasons behind spelling errors and mistakes can be formed to the unawareness of the students to the correct writing of the words as well as the confusion between pronunciation and spelling. Since English Spelling errors is a continual problem for the learner, EFL learners keep struggling and suffering with English Spelling. As a result, both (teachers and learners) are concerned with these problems. Teacher should apply effective and successful teaching methods as a solution to reduce or limit spelling problems, teacher has to use a logic means of teaching to engage students in the learning process. However, students are more interacting to work with each other.

Spelling errors are likely to be hard, since spelling is difficult in most of the time even for the native speakers and it is very puzzling. Committing mistakes and errors are a good step for the learners, because when the learner commits spelling mistakes or fails in spelling words; in this situation, it is easy for the teacher to give the right spelling of the words without challenging the learner. As a result, it is easy for the learner to avoid mistakes in the future.

Practice and more reading make writing better and perfect; it gives worth production without errors. So, students should practice, practice and read for better spelling .

Pedagogical Implications

Throughout this work, we noticed that many participants of English argued that English Spelling is an important method for motivating students to write more and improve their spelling. When we come to reality, the majority of the students consider it as a difficult context.

As a result of the study, we give some pedagogical implications that help the students:

- Teaching should focus on both organisation and production. Teachers should record spelling errors and correct them and also teach the students how to spell words correctly.
- The study suggests that there should be spelling lessons rank the same as lessons in the other skills (grammar, vocabulary and sentences structure....).
- I think, students should also look at the dictionary for checking the correct or the exact writing of words.
- English Spelling is distinctive than English pronunciation. For example, words are pronounced the same, but spelt different and it is one of the common mistakes that students commit . As a result, teachers should concentrate on improving English Spelling by using different spelling activities such as group discussion, speedy activities and accuracy activities.

General conclusion

General conclusion

Throughout this research, the main conclusion is that English spelling is one of the major difficult parts of English Language Teaching. The major cause of spelling errors is the students' unawareness about the instruction of spelling, they just write without having any simple idea about how words are spelt. However when there are similarities between pronouncing words, negative writing take place and the learners achieve poor results which means that students simply commit errors.

As presented in the pie chart, the majority of the students may give wrong answers, as a result of the unconsciousness about English spelling. Students are unaware that each word has its own writing despite the same pronunciation of some words. Moreover, English learners think that each English word may have the same writing and depending on the pronunciation only. This study underlines the strategies in which the learners master these difficulties. Teachers are different in their methods to treating spelling. Firstly, teachers should focus on the students' needs, ability and level. They can help students by highlighting the erroneous elements. When the students understand the functions of these elements, they will know the function and the things which will focus on and structure this basic awareness. In addition, the teacher must encourage them (students) to practice inside and outside the class. With careful preparation, spelling can be easier and become more important in helping learners generally in developing and improving their writing skill.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims at exploring the effects of English spelling in the Algerian context, especially at the university level. It gives a clear idea about the errors committed by the students at the University of Adrar.

Dear students, we really appreciate your collaboration to answer these questions by ticking (×) the appropriate answer.

Part one: Personal Information

1-What is your gender?

Male

Female

2-Was it your choice to study English?

Yes

No

3-Do you like learning English?

Very much

I like it somehow

Not much

Part two: English Spelling

4-Which spelling do you prefer?

American English Spelling

British English Spelling

5-Are you satisfied with your level of English spelling

Yes

No

6-Do you face problems in learning English Spelling?

Yes

No

7-In your opinion, Spelling English has to do with writing

Definitely agree

Agree

Disagree

Definitely disagree

8-Which types of activities are used in your English Spelling lessons?

Accuracy activities

Speedy spelling activities

9-Students do make errors because

It seems hard

They are not interested

Others, please

Justify.....

10-In your opinion, English Spelling is

Very complex

Complex somehow

Not complex

Part three:

11- How often do you spell (write) words in class?

Frequently

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

Please justify.....

12-How do you feel when taking part in spelling words in class?

At ease

Not at ease

13-Do you always take part in class?

.....
.....

14-You seek to develop your spelling using

Visual aids (video games.....)

Writing Discussion

Others

Appendix 2

The Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers:

This questionnaire is designed to EFL teachers about English Spelling at Ahmed Deraia University of Adrar. It aims to explore the most common errors that are committed by the students

There are no correct answers or responses to the questions. Please answer them on the basis of your own thoughts and experience. Please tick (×) in the corresponding box, or boxes and make full statements whenever necessary. Thank you for your help.

Part one: Background Information

1- What is the highest academic degree you hold?

License (MA) { }

Master { }

Doctorate Degree (phD) { }

2- How long have you been teaching English?

.....

.....

.....

Part two: English Spelling

3- To what extent do you think it is important to teach English Spelling to your students?

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

4- What do you think of English Spelling?

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

a- Language is a social means of communication

True { } false { } don't know { }

b- Spelling is an activity of writing

True { } false { } don't know { }

c- Spelling is standard order

True { } false { } don't know { }

d- Spelling involves only individuals

True { } false { } don't know { }

e- Spelling relies heavily on writing skill

True { } false { } don't know { }

5- Do you think that using writing activities enhances students' spelling skill?

Yes { } no { }

1- Do your students interact more when they are involved in spelling activities?

Yes { } no { }

2- What are the other factors responsible for persistent spelling errors in the learner?

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

Part three: Spelling and Motivation

3- Most of your students are motivated to write in class

Yes { } no { }

4- Students do not participate because

The class is overcrowded { }

They are not interested in the class activities { }

Others: please specify.....

.....
.....

5- In your opinion, English Spelling activities

Very motivating { }

Motivating somehow { }

Not motivating { }