Institute of Literature and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages
Branch: English

Does Grammar Really Help? Predicting Oral and Writing Ability from Grammar Achievement

The Case of Second Year EFL Learners at the University Centre of Mila

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of the Master Degree in
Didactics of Foreign Languages

Presented by: **Supervisor:**
1) Manal MERMOUNE   Dr. Fouad BOULKROUN
2) Nour El Wiam SEGHIER

Board of Examiners:
Chairwoman: Ms. Messaouda BOUDJERIDA
Supervisor: Dr. Fouad BOULKROUN
Examiner: Dr.Assia AZZIOUI

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PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
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AbdElhafid Boussouf University - Mila

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Dedication

First of all, my deep gratitude goes to Almighty Allah for providing me, Ms. Manal MERMOUNE, with the strength to finish this thesis which I dedicate to:

- *The most precious people to my heart; the ones without whom none of my success would be possible; the persons who gave me strength, hope, unconditional love, infinite support, and guidance: my precious mother and beloved father.*

- *The memory of my grandfather.*

- *My lovely sisters, Samah and Kaouthar.*

- *My dearest brothers, Abderahim and Abderaouf.*

- *My closest friend and my partner in this work Nour El-Wiam with whom I spent the best moments ever in university life.*

- *All my friends and family members without exception, and all those who helped and supported me to finish this work.*

Thank you all.

Dedication

First of all, my deep gratitude goes to Almighty Allah for providing me, Ms. Nour El Wiam SEGHIER, with the strength to finish this thesis which I dedicate to:

- *My beat heart and eye light, my father and mother, without whom I would not be the person I'm now. Words cannot interpret my heartfelt gratitude and love for their care, unconditional love, help, constant prayer, wise encouragement, and self-sacrifice on my behalf.*

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- *My dearly beloved brothers, Mouhamed and Wail.*

- *My uncles and aunts for supporting me all the way.*

- *All my dear cousins, especially my precious one, Alaa.*

- *The extraordinary person who backed me up all the way my best friend, Sara.*

- *My partner and my beloved friend, Manal who has motivated me to complete this journey through her wise encouragement. Thank you for the nice times that we spent together.*

- *All those who prayed for me and besought God to help me.*

- *And to you, 'Wiam'. Glad, you've made it finally.*

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Abstract

The current study attempts to investigate the predictive power of grammar. Specifically, it aims to determine whether the students' grammar achievements can predict their oral and writing abilities. For this to obtain, five research questions were raised: (1) Based on students' grades, does grammar help in predicting EFL learners' oral ability? (2) Based on students' grades, does grammar help in predicting EFL learners' writing ability? (3) Based on teachers' beliefs, is the proportion of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in speaking the same as the proportion of those who think otherwise? (4) Based on teachers' beliefs, are the proportions of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in writing and those who do not the same? (5) Based on teachers' beliefs, is grammar needed more in writing or in speaking? A quantitative mixed-methods design is opted for in the present study. Data were collected through two main research tools: second year EFL students' (N=216) grades (at Abdelhafid Boussouf University Centre of Mila) and a questionnaire for teachers (N=70). The data obtained from the students' grades were submitted to a Simple Linear Regression Test while the data obtained from the questionnaire were submitted to a Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test using SPSS. The results were statistically significant revealing mainly that grammar achievements can be used to predict the students' oral and writing abilities. Limitations of the study and recommendations for pedagogy and future research are proffered.

Key Words: Grammar achievements, oral and writing abilities, predictive power, regression, chi-square.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

ALM: Audio-Lingual Method

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

COVID-19: Coronavirus Disease of 2019

CA: Communicative Approach

DM: Direct Method

Etc: Et Cetera

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

L2: Second Language

PPP: Presentation, Practice, Production

PED: Pedagogical

TBLT: Task-Based Language Teaching

Q: Question

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

%: Percentage

List of Tables

Table of Contents

General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

Grammar plays a crucial role in the mastery of a foreign language. Language skills, and more precisely the productive ones, cannot be enhanced without a sound knowledge of grammar. Hence, the significant issue addressed by the current study is the investigation of whether grammar serves as a predictor of writing and oral abilities. This includes examining the relation between grammar and the productive skills for English as foreign language (EFL) students.

2. Aims of the Study

The aim behind conducting this study is to shed light on the possibility of using grammar achievements as a basis for predicting writing and oral ability. Besides, the study attempts to back up the findings, based on teachers' beliefs, about the relation between the variables in question.

3. Significance of the Study

The role of grammar knowledge in foreign language learning has been one of the most controversial issues in foreign language learning research. No doubt, many foreign language learners underestimate the importance of grammar and believe that mastering the language has nothing to do with its grammatical rules. The significance of conducting this research is to show EFL learners the importance of grammar (achievements) in their writing quality and oral performance. In addition, it will help English teachers to exert a due focus on grammar and rely on it as a tool for forecasting the learner's expressive, or productive, abilities.

4. The Research Questions

Based on the aforementioned, a set of questions was raised upon the topic under investigation:

1. Based on students' grades, does grammar help in predicting EFL learners' oral ability?

2. Based on students' grades, does grammar help in predicting EFL learners' writing ability?

3. Based on teachers' beliefs, is the proportion of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in speaking the same as the proportion of those who think otherwise?

4. Based on teachers' beliefs, are the proportions of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in writing and those who do not the same?

5. Based on teachers' beliefs, is grammar needed more in speaking or in writing?

5. The Hypotheses

We hypothesise that:

1. Grammar helps in predicting EFL learners' oral ability.

2. Grammar helps in predicting EFL learners' writing ability.

3. The proportion of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in speaking is the same as the proportion of those who think otherwise.

4. The proportions of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in writing and those who do not are the same.

5. Grammar is needed more in writing than in speaking.

5. Means of the Research

This study sets out to investigate the predictive power of grammar in speaking and writing abilities. For the sake of gathering information, it is opted for utilising the students' grades and a teachers' questionnaire which help obtaining the information required for the completion of this work.

The opted for grades are those of the EFL second year students of Mila University Centre, of the third semester, in three different modules: grammar, speaking, and writing. The

students' grades aim at exploring whether those who have a high score in grammar similarly have a high score in speaking and writing. The sample consists of 216 sophomores representing the whole population.

The teachers' questionnaire, on the other hand, is conducted with 70 EFL teachers from different universities. It is complementary to the previously mentioned tool yielding information from a different perspective. It aims at backing up findings in the previous tool, seeking specifically to investigate whether the grammar level of the students reflects their abilities in writing and speaking i.e., the relationship therein.

6. Structure of the Dissertation

The current dissertation falls into two main chapters. The first chapter constitutes the theoretical part of the research, while the second chapter is devoted to the field work.

The first chapter is divided into three sections that offer theoretical insights into the three variables of the study which are: grammar, the speaking skill (or oral ability), and the writing skill. The first section is devoted to provide an overview about grammar and its importance in teaching and learning a language in general and its relation with the productive skills in particular. The second and the third sections discuss the importance of both speaking and writing, methods and approaches to teaching them and some difficulties that EFL learners may encounter during learning these productive skills.

The second chapter is devised to provide a description of the field work of the present research. It tackles the research problem, addresses the raised questions, tests the hypotheses, and attempts to achieve the aims of the research. Within this chapter, the research methodology is thoroughly explained through the description of the research tools, the analysis of the data pertaining to both the questionnaire and the students' grades, and the discussion of the results and the main finding. Drawn to a close, this chapter ends up with

outlining the major limitations of the study and some recommendations for pedagogy and

research.

CHAPTER ONE: Grammar and the Productive Skills

Introduction

Among different means of communication, language is an extremely complex and highly versatile code used for human communication. It permits humans to communicate their thoughts, desires, feelings, ideas, and experiences by means of voluntarily produced symbols that can be spoken and/or written. When learning a language, students deal with speaking and writing. However, these two productive skills require the mastery of various elements, among them grammar which is fundamental to language and without it, language does not exist (Nassji & Fotos, 2011).

The bulk of this chapter is devoted to the explanation of the theoretical concepts related to the principal variables of our research that is further split into three sections. The first section copes with grammar as the pillar variable of this actual study. This section explores the nature of grammar through defining it. Then, it accounts for the importance of grammar teaching in foreign language learning and the contradictory viewpoints regarding this matter, which is the best part of this section. This is followed by a brief discussion concerning pedagogical grammar. Further, it casts some light on the different ways of teaching grammar as well as a brief comparison between grammatical competence and communicative competence. Besides, it proposes ways of assessing grammar. Last but not least, it stresses the relation between grammar and the productive skills. The second section deals with the speaking skill. It provides related definitions, aspects, types, importance, methods and approaches, difficulties that EFL learners may encounter in speaking classes and ways of assessing it. The third section represents the writing skill in the EFL classroom, related concepts including definitions, elements, importance, approaches, difficulties that face EFL students when writing and ways of assessment.

SECTION ONE: Grammar on/off the Defensive

1. Definition of Grammar

Each language has its own grammar. The etymology of the word "grammar" is traced back to the Greek word "Grammatikḗ" which is split into two parts: "Gram" and "tikḗ". The former means something written and the latter means art. Thus, "Grammatikḗ", or grammar, is referred to as the art of writing. Undoubtedly, it is a daunting task to provide a clear-cut definition to grammar since many scholars gave a multiplicity of views. Such difficulty is justified by Purpura (2004) as follows:

> Linguistic notions of grammar have changed over time (…) and this has significantly increased the number of components that could be called 'grammar'. In short, definitions of grammar and grammatical knowledge have changed over time and across context, and I expect this will be no different in the future (pp. 50-51).

It is a matter of fact that grammar is a crucial part of language in which words and sentences are chained together for the purpose of getting meaning. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2013) stated that grammar is referred to as a set of rules in a language which govern the formation of sentences through joining and changing the form of words.

Thornbury (1999) defined grammar as "the study of what forms (or structures) are possible in a language (…) a grammar is a description of the rules that govern how a language's sentences are formed" (p. 1). This is meant to say that grammar is associated with a wide range of rules that control and regulate a language. In the same vein, Richards and Schmidt (2013) stated that grammar is: "a description of the structure of a language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in

the language" (p. 220). This stresses the idea that grammar is about how linguistic units are combined to form correct sentences in a given language.

Understanding the meaning contained in utterances and/or sentences requires knowledge about grammar. That is to say, grammar gives people the ability to increase the accuracy of expressions as well as to understand each other's ideas, thoughts, and emotions. Crystal (2004) held that "grammar is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves" (p. 9). In the same line, Ur (1996) viewed grammar as: "a set of rules that define how words [or parts of words] are combined or changed to form acceptable units of meaning within a language" (p. 87). Both Crystal and Ur referred to grammar by emphasising what an utterance and/or a sentence means.

Back to Thornbury (1999), he claimed that grammar is conventionally seen as the study of the syntax and morphology of sentences. This is sustained by Radford (2009) who indicated that: "grammar is traditionally subdivided into two different but interrelated areas of study: morphology and syntax" (p. 1). On the one hand, syntax is referred to as the system of rules that underlie the way in which sentences are structured out of words. On the other hand, morphology is defined as the study of the internal construction of words. That is to say, it is the study of how the smaller units of a language are combined to form a word.

From the aforementioned, grammar is a vague term that is defined differently from the perspective of different linguists. It is defined as a collection of rules that govern how people use a language. It is a set of components: syntax, morphology, etc. It is about how words, clauses and sentences are linked together in order to convey meaning and transfer messages through which people can express their ideas, thoughts, and emotions.

2. To Teach or not to Teach Grammar

Grammar has always been subject to controversy in that many researchers still debate the issue of whether one should teach grammar in the classroom or not. At one extreme, there are those who maintain that grammar does not need to be taught since it does not contribute to the process of language acquisition. Krashen (1985) made a clear distinction between two independent systems of foreign/second language (henceforth, L2) development, acquisition and learning, respectively. Language acquisition, on the one hand, refers to the process through which a language is naturally, intuitively, and subconsciously assimilated, similar to the way children go through when acquiring their native language. Language learning, on the other hand, is quite the opposite. It refers to the process through which a language is consciously developed with a focus on understanding the structure of the language, the grammar rules and on building knowledge about it.

Krashen (1981) stated that language acquisition "requires meaningful interaction in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterance, but with the message they are conveying and understanding" (p. 1). This means that, a L2 should be acquired through natural exposure and not learned through formal instruction. This position, which is called by Ellis (1995, 1999) the 'zero position', is strongly emphasised by Krashen (1982) who claimed that grammar contributes little to the acquisition of communicative competence in a L2. He further argued that grammatical competence can only be acquired if learners are exposed to comprehensible, meaningful, and relevant L2 input material. Thus, grammar teaching is held insufficient in L2 acquisition while exposure to comprehensible input is deemed necessary. Nassagi and Fotos (2004) pointed out that: "It was therefore believed that formal grammar lessons would develop only declarative knowledge of grammar structures, not the procedural ability to use forms correctly" (p. 127).

In sharp contrast, there are those who are in favour of grammar instruction. One of the most prominent claims which support putting grammar in the foreground in L2 teaching is that grammar is viewed as a fundamental basis of any language. In this concern, Azar (2007) when reviewing the literature mentioned that one important aspect of grammar teaching is that: "it helps learners discover the nature of language i.e., that language consists of predictable patterns that make what we say, read, hear, and write intelligible" (p. 2). That is to say, grammar teaching provides learners with the structures needed to organise and get their messages and ideas across owing to the fact that words are just words until people learn how to organise them. As such, grammar teaching will make learners better listeners, speakers, readers, writers and communicators. Within this view, Ellis (2006) wrote:

> Grammar teaching involves any instructional technique that draws learners' attention to some specific grammatical form in such a way that it helps them either to understand it metalinguistically and/or process it in comprehension and/or production so that they can internalise it (p. 84).

To delve into more details regarding the role of grammar in learning, Schmidt in his journey of learning Portuguese in Brazil concluded that noticing is required for acquisition. While the grammatical instruction he had previously received was insufficient to convert him into a fluent Portuguese speaker, it had primed him to notice what could have gone unnoticed and so had influenced his learning. It had served as a type of prior organiser for his later acquisition of the language (Thornbury, 1999).

Another reason why grammar needs to be taught is that learners should have a solid knowledge of grammar rules in order to comprehend the target language and communicate meaningfully. If learners are not grammatical, they will certainly fail to use the language correctly which may result in fossilization. Richard and Renandya (2002) stated two good

reasons for teaching grammar. The first is comprehensibility which refers to knowledge about how to construct and use certain structures in order to produce comprehensible output. Such grammatical structures, therefore, need to be identified and taught as well. The second is acceptability which refers to the correct use of language. That is, in some social contexts, when learners deviate from native-speaker norms, others may have negative impressions on them which may result in hindering integration. For that reason, learners should be grammatically correct.

3. The Importance of Grammar in Language Teaching and Learning

Grammar, as an important element of language learning and teaching, plays a substantial role in the mastery of a language. All language skills - speaking, writing, reading, and listening - cannot be enhanced without a deep knowledge of grammar (Canale & Swain, 1980). Paying no attention to grammar, students cannot gain the four language skills completely and cannot improve themselves in real communication. Correspondingly, a decent mastery of grammar can make it easier for language learners to communicate and articulate their thoughts coherently (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Additionally, a deep knowledge of the grammatical rules gives the learner the potential or rather the ability to manipulate and combine a variety of basic sentence structure. Arguably, many researchers (e.g., Thornbury, 1999) state that grammar, after all, is a description of the regularities in a language, and knowledge of these regularities provides the learner with the power to generate a potentially tremendous number of original sentences.

All in all, grammar is an instrumental tool that does not only enable the learners to create a wide variety of sentences. But also equip them with the needed instruction as to how to combine and manipulate these sentences to best suit their purpose.

4. Pedagogical Grammar

As stated by Richard (2007), pedagogical grammar, also called PED grammar or teaching grammar, is the grammatical analysis and instruction designed for second and foreign language learners. Thornbury (1999) defined PED grammar as: "rules that make sense to the learners, while at the same time, providing them with means and confidence to generate language with a reasonable chance of success" (p. 12). To put it another way, PED grammar refers to the rules that are designed specifically to be taught in classes and meet the learners' needs so as to acquire the new language. Besides, PED grammar, according to James (1998), aims at preventing and repairing errors. To meet what has just been mentioned, teachers need to draw a clear picture of the learners' proficiency level, age, and needs before presenting them with rules.

In short, the term pedagogical grammar is used to refer to the description of the language system using diverse grammatical rules, sources, references, materials, and activities with the aim of promoting learners' language development i.e., increasing their fluency and accuracy of speech, rather than affecting their theoretical knowledge (Newby, 2005). However, one cannot doubt that the careless application of these rules leads to considerable oversimplification, meaning that, depending on the students' proficiency level, teachers may oversimplify the targeted grammatical rules to make them more learnable and teachable i.e., they may not explain all the exceptions to that rule. In this case, students may believe that this rule can be applied in all situations. For example, teachers may explain to students at a beginner level that 'some' is to be used with affirmative sentences. This rule helps them to produce correct sentences such as "I have some cupcakes". However, it is not fully correct because one can also say "would you like some lemon juice?" (Harmer, 2007).

5. Ways of Teaching Grammar

The teaching of grammar and its significant role in the field of L2 instruction is a topic of widespread concern to researchers, teachers, and students alike. Thereupon, two methods have been suggested within L2 learning contexts, namely explicit and implicit grammar teaching and learning i.e., learning grammatical structures consciously either deductively or inductively, or learning them unconsciously.

5.1. Explicit Grammar Instruction

Proponents of explicit grammar instruction view language as a series of distinct linguistic elements arranged in a particular order and restricted by a finite set of rules. According to Harmer (1987), explicit grammar instruction is an approach through which grammatical rules are clearly presented. Respectively, it adopts the traditional teacher-centred instruction where teachers provide learners with a direct spell-out explanation of the grammatical rules and drill these into the students using rote practice (Rhalmi, 2009). Therefore, learners become aware of the learning process and able to verbalise what they have learned given their training in memorising activities (Ellis, 2009). An example method through which grammar is taught explicitly is the Grammar-Translation method where the use of the mother tongue is strongly needed to elicit the meaning of the target language, by translating the target language's forms into the native language (Thornbury, 1999).

Explicit grammar instruction is important for many learners because it can help them to comprehend the grammatical forms of a given language, and thus to construct explicit knowledge of different structures of grammar. Additionally, Schmidt (1990, as cited in Tutunis, 2012, p. 122) pointed out that explicit grammar teaching raises awareness and yields conscious learning and noticing. Notwithstanding its importance, explicit grammar teaching has many disadvantages, one of which being that learners do not have much opportunity to practice the target language (Thornbury, 1999). In other words, learners merely master a

restricted range of knowledge through memorizing content or applying rehearsed formulas. Consequently, students are unable to use the language appropriately in contextualised scenarios.

Broadly speaking, in teaching grammar explicitly, there are two core approaches that can be applied: deductive and inductive. That is, grammar rules can be either presented first or discovered by the end of the lesson.

5.1.1. The Deductive Approach (Rule-Driven Learning). According to Thornbury (1999), a deductive approach involves rules which are presented first and then applied. Within this view, when we use deduction, we reason from the general to the specific.

In the field of grammar teaching, Crystal (2003) referred to deductive grammar teaching as "top-down, direct and explicit ways of making students aware of grammatical structure" (p. 191). That is, deductive grammar instruction requires an explicit presentation of the metalinguistic information by instructors to students at the onset of the lesson (Mallia, 2014). The input, therefore, is provided in a systematic manner, often through the use of grammatical terminology (Golling, 1999). After that, the instructor shows the presented rule in its natural setting within the target language examples. Once learners understand the rule, they are required to apply it in various examples of sentences. Eventually, the learners are expected to reproduce the desired patterns. Harmer (2007) stated that these "explanation and practice sequences are usually PPP-like" (p. 203), where PPP refers to the presentation, practice and production sequence, enabling students learn in linear, step by step sequences.

The deductive approach has both advantages and disadvantages as shown in Table 1.1 bellow:

Table 1.1

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Deductive Approach (Adapted from Thornbury, 1999).

Advantages	1. The deductive approach is a time saving since the rules of form are directly explained. 2. It enables the instructor to deal with language issues as they arise, rather than anticipating and preparing for them in advance. 3. It acknowledges the value of cognitive processes in language acquisition and respects the intellect and maturity of many students, particularly adult students. 4. It meets many students' expectations about classroom learning, especially for those who learn analytically.
Disadvantages	1. Beginning the lesson with a grammar presentation may be off-putting forsome learners, especially young ones. 2. Grammar explanation promotes a teacher-fronted, transmission-style classroom, which may reduce student immediate participation and interaction. 3. Explanation is rarely as memorable as other forms of presentation (for example, demonstration). 4. The deductive approach promotes the notion that learning a language is just a matter of knowing rules.

5.1.2. Inductive Approach (Rule-Discovery Learning). According to Felder and Henriquez (1995), an inductive reasoning involves a reasoning progression which starts from particulars to generalities. The former refers to "observations, measurements or data" while the latter refers to "rules, laws, concepts or theories" (p. 26). To put it in a nutshell, when we use induction, we observe a set of specific examples and from them we derive a general principle or concept (Thornbury, 1999).

In the field of grammar teaching, inductive grammar instruction suggests a bottom-up approach in which the instruction starts by providing learners with some examples which contain a certain grammatical structure in different contexts. Students observe, understand, and workout the rules by themselves from the given examples. Next, the learners apply the inferred rules with various exercises in different contexts to learn how they actually work in real language use. To put it another way, learners shift from the specific to the general with varying degrees of guidance from the teacher.

Similar to the deductive approach, the inductive approach has many advantages and disadvantages as seen in the Table 1.2 bellow:

Table 1.2

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Inductive Approach (Adopted from Thornbury, 1999)

Advantages	1. Rules that students find for themselves are more likely to fit their current mental structures than rules that they are provided with. This, in turn will make the rules relevant, remembered, and useful.
	2. Students are more actively involved in the learning process rather than passively receive information. This way, they are likely to be more attentive and more motivated.
	3. When problem-solving is done collaboratively and in the target language, learners gain the opportunity for extra language practice.
	4. Students are trained to be familiar with rule discovery; this can promote students' autonomy and self-reliance.

Disadvantages	1. The approach is time and energy-consuming as it leads learners to have the appropriate concept of the rule. 2. The time and attention spent developing rules may lead students to believe that rules are the goal of language learning rather than a means. 3. The concepts given inductively may lead the students to have the wrong concepts of the rule taught, or their interpretation of the rule maybe either too broad or too narrow in its application. 4. It places heavy demands on the teacher in planning a lesson. It requires a careful selection and organisation of the data.

5.2. Implicit Grammar Instruction

For Rutherford (1988), the implicitly-oriented language teacher does not view language as a static system, but as a means of communicating ideas. Implicit grammar instruction, which is also known as "skill-oriented approach" or "covert instruction", refers to the exposure to grammatical structures through meaningful instruction without actually discussing the rules or explicitly explaining them (Ur, 2011). Harmer (1987) viewed this approach as teaching grammar where grammatical facts are hidden from students. That is, implicit grammar teaching comprises methods, techniques and contexts that provide the language learner with a set of grammatical and lexical principles through natural language experience. In the same stream of thought, Ling (2015) pointed out that implicit grammar teaching requires the natural acquisition of language, meaning that learners learn grammar rules unconsciously.

When teaching grammar implicitly, teachers emphasise the semantic and communicative dimensions of the language over its rule-governed systematic nature. Therefore, teachers present grammar in such a way that the fundamental focus is on meaning (Ellis, 2009). That is, teachers introduce the grammatical rules indirectly through

communicative tasks with no attempt to explain them explicitly; the grammatical rules are often presented through different examples that the learners have to comprehend by themselves and acquire unconsciously, "without intention to learn and without awareness of what has been learned" (Dekeyser, 1998, p. 314).

According to Thornbury (1999), implicit grammar instruction is of a great importance because it allows the learners to take part in their own learning process in the sense that it gives them opportunities to be active, attentive and motivated participants. Notwithstanding its importance, Ellis (2009) argued that this method prevents learners from verbalising what they have learned, though it is palpable in their 'behavioural responses', since they are completely unaware of the learning process.

6. Grammatical Competence versus Communicative Competence

Canal and Swain (1980, 1981) defined grammatical competence in terms of Chomsky's linguistic competence as the knowledge of linguistic codes of the language including: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, spelling, word formation and the ability to manipulate correctly and accurately its patterns and structures. That is, grammatical competence is the ability to comprehend and produce well-formed phrases and sentences in accordance with a set of grammatical principles governing a language. Again, Canal and Swain (1980) stated that grammatical competence consists of "knowledge of lexical items, rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology" (p. 29). In addition, Binoy (2014) in reviewing the literature said that grammatical competence is the capacity to master the different grammatical instructions, considering it as an aspect that any writer should have.

Contrariwise, communicative competence, which was introduced by Hymes (1972), includes the speakers' knowledge of linguistic and sociolinguistic rules as well as their ability

to use this knowledge in interaction. Put another way, communicative competence is the knowledge that does not merely include grammatical competence but also the capability of being able to practise grammatical competence in diverse communicative circumstances. In line with Hymes' ideas (1972), Saville-Troike (2003) stated that in addition to knowledge about the language, communicative competence involves the ability to communicate a message appropriately in any particular context; added to that, it involves sociocultural knowledge which enables speakers to use and understand different language forms. Thus, viewing the communicative aspect of language as the focal point of interest does not imply that grammar should be discarded (Widdowson, 1990).

7. Assessing Grammar

Hyland (2003) defined assessment as "the variety of ways used to collect information on a learner's language ability, or achievement" (p. 213). It refers to the range of academic practices examiners carry out in order to grade the learners' abilities in a given task. It determines learners' current levels and assists teachers in forecasting future achievement. Grammar is a cornerstone of all languages, and it plays a vital role in language teaching and assessment. As a result, assessing learners' grammatical system in the language they are learning is important. Grammar assessment is not a new concept. What has changed across time is what instructors have chosen to assess under the umbrella of grammar and how they have carried out these assessments (Purpura, 2004).

In the traditional approach to assessing grammar, "testing is typically done by means of decontextualized, discrete-point items" (Larsen-Freeman, 2009, p. 533). Grammar knowledge could be inferred from the ability to choose a grammatically correct answer from numerous alternatives on a multiple-choice test, to insert a grammatically correct word or phrase into a paragraph or conversation, to combine grammatically correct sentences, or to provide judgments regarding the grammaticality of an utterance, etc. (Purpura, 2004).

However, these tests measure grammar knowledge, but they do not assess whether task takers can use grammar correctly in real-life speaking or writing situations (Larsen-Freeman, 2009).

In the 1970s and 1980s, a significant contribution of the communicative approach, also called the proficiency-based approach, was a switch from viewing language proficiency in terms of knowledge of structures to the ability to integrate and use that knowledge in performance, which could best be assessed through the production and the comprehension of written texts as well as face-to-face interaction under real-time conditions (McNamara & Roever, 2006). In the latter, raters generally assess grammatical performance using scales that measure grammatical accuracy, complexity, and the range of grammatical structures utilised (Larsen-Freeman, 2009).

In sum, as the concept of what it means to 'know' the grammar of a language has evolved and teaching methods have changed, language educators have assessed grammar in a variety of ways over the years.

8. Grammar and the Productive Skills

Grammar refers to the rules that structure the language, and one cannot deny its importance because it is an essential aspect in promoting language skills, and in particular the productive skills i.e., writing and speaking.

On the one hand, it is asserted by Emery et al. (2011) that the more you know about the form and the function of the parts that make up the large units, the better equipped you are to recognize and to construct well-formed sentences. That is to say, the mastery of the different grammar rules enables writers to enhance their writing competence. Moreover, it would be nearly impossible for the writer to articulate his thoughts and make them intelligible for the reader without grammar literacy.

On the other hand, grammar has a role, to some extent, at determining whether learners can have a good grip on oral production or not. Thornbury (1999) argued that grammar is the fundamental discourse machine and generator in every language in general. Without good grammar knowledge, learners will never be certain of what to speak and how to speak which in the end will result in a very halting speech. That is, good grammar ability may lead to a higher articulation rate and a better fluency.

In short, language use can become chaotic and incomprehensible without grammatical structures. This concern will be deeply discussed in the coming sections.

SECTION TWO: The Speaking Skill

1. Definition Speaking

Speaking is one of the four skills that are considered to be fundamental areas of building a language. However, it is seen as a complex, multifaceted construct, and unique to humans (Nazara, 2011). The concept of speaking is difficult to be defined; for that reason, a great many definitions have been presented by different scholars.

To begin with, speaking refers to the production of a combination of sounds that convey meaning. It is manifested by using the organs of speech, including the lungs, the vocal tract, the vocal cords, the teeth, the tongue, and the lips. It is viewed as a way in the language system through which people produce utterances to attain various purposes with a particular end, involving: expressing ideas, wishes, or opinions, solving problems, or establishing and maintaining relationships (McDonough et al., 2013).

Speaking is considered as a process of building and sharing meaning based on the use of verbal and nonverbal symbols in different contexts (Chaney and Tamara, 1998). Thornbury (2005), focusing on nonverbal language, demonstrated that "speaking is also a multi-sensory activity because it involves paralinguistic features such as eye contact, facial expressions, body language, tempo, pauses, voice quality changes, and pitch variation'' (p. 9). Nunan (2003), focusing on the verbal language, stated that speaking is a productive skill that involves oral language to produce systematic verbal utterances to express meaning.

Furthermore, Hedge (2000) asserted that speaking is "a skill by which [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed'' (p. 261). It means that one's speaking mirrors one's behaviours, feelings, and attitudes. Hedge put forth that speaking "is an art of transmitting thoughts, beliefs, ideas, feeling, meaning, and events" from the speaker to the hearer (p. 261). This means that speaking is a process between speakers who produce speech

and listeners who try to understand it. Within this context, Luoma (2004) referred to speaking as the expression of meaning via interaction that includes producing, receiving, and processing information. Moreover, it depends on the situation, the people involved, the physical setting, and the purpose of speaking. It is usually spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving.

Nevertheless, some researchers defined speaking as a complicated skill in language learning. Luoma (2004) argued that speaking in a foreign language is not an easy task, it takes a long time to be developed due to the fact that it involves many components, such as grammar, strategy, sociolinguistics, and discourse; speaking is more than simply making the right sounds, choosing the right words, or getting the constructions correct (Chastain, 1988).

To cut it short, speaking seems to be an interactive process and a means for individuals to express and negotiate meaning through verbal and non-verbal symbols. This way, it is influenced by the speakers' intentions, goals, and objectives.

2. Aspects of Speaking

The mastery of the speaking skill in a foreign language depends on how fluent and accurate speakers are. In this context, Harmer (2001), and Gower et al. (1995) suggested that speaking has different aspects including two main areas such as fluency and accuracy. The former refers to the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously, while the latter involves the correct use of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

2.1. Fluency

The main goal teachers wish to achieve in teaching speaking is fluency; it is the main characteristic of a speaker's performance. Fluency in the view of Hedge (2000) is the ability to speak coherently through linking words, sentences, and ideas effectively in an appropriate way; as he put it, "The term fluency relates to language production and it is normally reserved

for speech. It is the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation" (p. 54).

Hughes (2002) defined fluency as the capacity to express oneself in an intelligible, reasonable, and accurate way without hesitation, otherwise the listeners will lose their interest and communication will break down. He further added that the term fluency refers to the speakers' ability to produce language at a normal level of continuity, rate, and effort to link the ideas together in a coherent way.

The majority of EFL learners believe that being fluent in speaking entails speaking rapidly without pauses. Thornbury (2005) argued that speed is an essential factor in fluency and pausing too because speakers also need to take a breath. Native speakers also need pauses in order to let the interlocutors catch what they say. Additionally, Richard, Platt, and Weber (1985) described fluency as "the features which give the speech the qualities of being natural and normal, including native-like use of pausing, rhyme, intonation, and interpretation" (p. 108).

To put it in a nutshell, fluency implies that the speaker pays attention to the prosodic features (stress, intonation, and rhyme) and linking words rather than worrying about grammatical mistakes or thinking of relevant vocabulary in a specific context.

2.2. Accuracy

An accurate speaker is the one who has the ability to use grammar correctly. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) defined the term accuracy as "how well the target language is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language" (p. 139). That is to say, without accuracy the speaker will produce erroneous utterances; as a result, he will not be understood by interlocutors who might lose interest. As such, accuracy is the extent to which correct pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar are used. It can be achieved only if learners'

utterances do not contain errors affecting the phonological, syntactic, and semantic or discourse features of a language. In this regard, it is vital to be aware of the linguistic norms.

2.2.1. Pronunciation. In Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2013), pronunciation is defined as the way we pronounce and utter words that should be understood by others; it is about how words are pronounced. In speaking, communicators need to produce words and phrases using individual sounds as well as pitch, intonation, and stress in order to convey various meanings (Harmer, 2001).

Therefore, learners should practise pronunciation overall. They should be aware of different sounds, their features, where words should be stressed, when to use falling intonation and when to use it otherwise. If pronunciation is not correct, the message may not be conveyed appropriately and the speaker may not be understood. This is to mean that when pronunciation is not secured, accuracy is partly not achieved.

2.2.2. Vocabulary. Vocabulary is defined as "all the words that a person knows or uses" (Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, 2013, p. 1662). Achieving accuracy in terms of vocabulary refers to the appropriate selection of words. EFL speakers often find some difficulties when they try to express their ideas effectively. For instance, they lack the appropriate vocabulary and they sometimes misuse words, in the case of synonyms, which may result in a communication breakdown. Learners then have to be able to use words and expressions accurately. For this, language teachers should focus on enriching their students' vocabulary so that they can put it into productive use. "If the receptive vocabulary is rather limited, learners can hardly put the receptive vocabulary knowledge into productive use. (…) without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (Nation, 2001, p. 129).

2.2.3. Grammar. Hughes (2002) defined grammatical accuracy as the ability to use grammatical structures in appropriate ways and situations, including the control of the length

and complexity of utterances. Many EFL learners, who are good enough at grammar, reading, and writing, often make mistakes in their spoken English. As Larsen-Freeman (2001) said that it is rather difficult for EFL learners to transfer the correct grammar to their speaking.

By the same token, Thornbury (2005) stated various items of spoken grammar which go as follows:

➢ A command of the present and the past simple, and the ability to use the latter to sequence narratives.

➢ Familiarity with the use of the continuous and perfect aspect forms of verbs.

➢ Knowledge of the most frequently occurring modal and semi-modal verbs.

➢ The ability to formulate yes/ no questions but also wh-questions.

➢ Some basic conjunctions (and, so, but) in order to string together sequences of clausal and non-clausal units.

➢ One or two all-purpose quoting expressions, of the he said….and then I said….type (P. 34).

Accordingly, achieving accuracy in terms of grammar requires the learners' ability to arrange the different parts of speech appropriately in order to communicate their ideas. Therefore, knowing how to use the grammatical structures in spoken language is indispensable.

3. Types of Speaking

The types of speaking are primarily determined by purposes of speaking. Brown (2004) identified five major types of speaking into which any piece of speech falls: imitative speaking, intensive speaking, responsive speaking, interactive speaking and extensive speaking.

Imitative oral performance refers to one's ability to parrot back (mimic) what others say (Brown, 2004). It is heavily based on imitating words, phrases, or even sentences. It is a purely phonetic level of oral performance; however, it may include some particular elements of language form as grammar and lexis.

Intensive speaking refers to the production of short stretches of discourse. It aims at demonstrating competence in a limited set of grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationships such as intonation, stress, rhythm, and juncture (Brown, 2004).

Responsive speaking involves interaction, in the form of "very short conversations, standard greetings and small talk, simple requests and comments, and the like" (Brown, 2004, p. 141). It is a kind of short replies to a teacher or student-initiated questions or comments, giving instructions and directions that are usually comprehensible and sufficient.

Interactive speaking is an extended form of responsive speaking, which is often lengthy and complex. It includes multiple exchanges and/or multiple participants. This type can take two forms: transactional language or interpersonal exchanges. The former aims at exchanging certain information, while the latter aims at maintaining social relationships.

Extensive speaking refers to practising speaking in the form of reports, speeches, or summarising pieces of language orally, where interaction on the listener's part is limited. This form of language is characterised by a formal language style for extensive tasks.

4. The Importance of Speaking

The ultimate aim of EFL learners is to attain proficiency in productive and receptive language skills i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, the speaking skill seems to have earned a crucial stance among a large number of EFL learners. In this regard, Ur (1996) held that:

Of all the four skills [listening, speaking, reading and writing], speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as 'speakers' of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing, and many if not most foreign language learners are primarily interested in learning to speak (p. 120).

As a matter of fact, in this demanding age of globalization, learners are eager to develop their speaking skill in order to communicate and step forward in the world. Along similar lines, Nunan (1991) claimed that "To most people, mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning second or foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language" (p. 39).

Recently, most second language learners give the speaking skill priority in their language learning as if they master this skill, they will be considered as if they have mastered all the other language skills. Furthermore, speaking is important, not just inside the classroom, but also outside where most of the companies and organizations look for people who master a foreign language and have a good speaking ability. For instance, in job interviews, the interviewees are often asked "do you speak English?" but not "do you write English?" We conclude that most individuals take speaking and knowing a language as synonyms. Lazaraton (2001) argued that "for most people the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication" (p. 103). For that reason, Harmer (1984) emphasised that it is very important to stick to the target language in the classroom in order to develop the capability of using it not just inside the classroom but also outside.

5. Speaking in Some Language Teaching Methods and Approaches

A large number of methods and approaches have dominated language teaching throughout history by offering a number of procedures and techniques. The coming space will be devoted to reviewing a set of methods and approaches and how each one treats the speaking skill. The main approaches and methods we will focus on are: the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, the Audio-lingual Method, the Communicative Approach, and Task-Based Language Teaching.

5.1. The Grammar Translation Method

One of the oldest language teaching methods is the Grammar Translation Method (GTM), also known as the traditional method. It was largely utilised in teaching Greek and Latin. As its name suggests, GTM focuses on the systematic analysis of grammar, which represents the nucleus of this method, and relies heavily on translation as a technique.

In this method, students often overuse the mother tongue rather than the target language and memorise vocabulary and grammatical rules by heart (Richards and Rogers, 2001). This method foregrounds the mastery of writing and reading while the speaking is put in the background. Along this vein, Brown (2000) postulated that GMT "does virtually nothing to enhance a students' communicative ability in the language" (p. 19).

Consequently, the inability to generate effective speakers in the target language under this method lays the ground for other methods in language teaching like the Direct Method.

5.2. The Direct Method

The Direct Method (DM) comes as a reaction to the GTM. It emerged in Germany and France in the 20th century and became quite widely known and practised in the mid-20th century. In contrast to GTM, the DM gives more importance to the speaking skill. That is, it is held that speaking proficiency is a sign of mastering a language. In this method, students are

directly exposed to the target language, which is actively used in the classroom in order to help students induce its grammatical rules through encouraging its direct and spontaneous use.

Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983, p. 102) summarised the principles of DM as follows:

➢ Learners should be exposed to good models of language by listening.

➢ Phonetics should be practised in the classroom and the teachers should be trained in it.

➢ Words should be properly pronounced and presented in meaningful context.

➢ Grammar should be taught inductively.

Notwithstanding, this method has some downsides. First, it is characterised by its naturalistic view of L2 acquisition, let alone the difficulty of implementing it in large classes. Second, it requires either teachers who are native speakers or those who are fluent, which prevents its full implementation in certain foreign language learning settings.

5.3. The Audio-lingual Method (Aural-Oral Approach)

The Audio-lingual Method (ALM) came into being during the Second World War and reached its peak in the 1960s. It is based on the behaviourist approach and its ultimate goal is to allow students to communicate orally. Furthermore, this method gives much importance to the learning of structures, sounds, and words through the use of drills, repetitions, and memorisation as an effective way to form good verbal habits (Harmer, 2007). Put differently, learners are supposed to produce linguistic behaviours closest to real situations, through the use of dialogues in the target language that are usually followed by the teachers' corrective feedback since good verbal habits are not acquired by incorrect responses. Additionally, the use of the mother tongue is not allowed and grammar rules are learned through the structures without being explained by the teacher.

Despite its promises, ALM was criticised for its failure to form competent communicators due to the fact that it emphasises language structures rather than developing

learners' functional and communicative language potential. Besides, learners are passive and have no control over learning. Consequently, this method initiated the emergence of the Communicative Approach.

5.4. The Communicative Approach

In reaction to the methods that are mentioned before, a new approach was born known as 'the communicative approach' (CA) which was developed at the beginning of the 1970s. This approach is a mosaic of several learning theories like constructivism and cognitivism that are the crux of several theories of language teaching and learning. This approach revolutionised the world of language teaching by introducing the concept of communicative competence. Communicative language teaching assumes that learners need to know when, where, and how to say what to whom in a social context (Harmer, 2007).

CA covers all the language skills, yet the speaking skill occupies a primary position as much as the primary goal is to communicate in different contexts. This approach calls for the use of group work, collaborative learning, and negotiating meaning in order to enhance students' communicative competence, hence oral production.

5.5. Task-Based Language Teaching

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) emerged in the 1980s as a reaction to the PPP-model and a refinement of the CA (Ellis, 2003). It uses the concept 'task', which was defined by Nunan (2004) as "what the learners will do in the class rather than in the world outside the classroom" (PP. 2-3). Richards and Rodgers (2001) further added that tasks are the gist of language teaching.

TBLT, according to Cook (2008), is a language teaching approach that requires teaching and learning to be organized around a series of tasks. It emphasises communication through interaction in the target language, providing opportunities for learners to focus on

both the target language and the learning process in order to achieve a goal or complete a task (Nunan, 2004). It seeks to develop the students' interlanguage through providing tasks and then having the students use language to solve them. These tasks require students to work collaboratively, asking and answering questions to their peers as well as to the teacher, seeking clarifications and explanations, all in the new language (Harmer, 2007).

The foregoing historical account has provided an overview of how speaking was held by the various methods and approaches to language teaching and learning.

6. EFL Students' Difficulties in Speaking

During speaking classes, EFL learners encounter many problems that detain their learning process. Among these difficulties, we shed light on the students' pronunciation, poor vocabulary, fear of negative feedback, and poor grammar.

6.1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is necessary for language learning since it enhances EFL students' communication skills. Morely (1991) argued that "intelligible pronunciation is an essential component of communication competence" (p. 488). However, many students use words without taking into account their correct pronunciation. In addition, there is the interference between British and American accents which causes learners to be perplexed about their pronunciation. Besides, the insufficient oral expression sessions for practising speaking lead students to be less aware of their pronunciation mistakes.

6.2. Poor Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a set of words for a particular language, a set that individual speakers of a language might use (Hatch and Brown, 1995). It is essential for second and foreign language use because without vocabulary knowledge learners will be unable to access their background knowledge, express their ideas, and communicate effectively. In effect, many students lack

vocabulary, which prevents them from sharing their opinions with others at ease. The primary causes of this problem are the lack of reading, the rarity of language use outside the classroom, and the non-use of dictionaries, and the like.

6.3. Fear of Negative Feedback

Fear of negative feedback refers to the learners' estimation of how they will be criticised by their classmates, as well as by their teachers. The feelings of fear experienced during EFL speaking classes are due to the students' beliefs about their dis/abilities; they are usually unsure of themselves, of what they say, and of whether they are able to induce a positive impression. In addition, they might not consider their mistakes as a natural part of the learning process but as a threat to their image and a source of negative evaluation either from their teachers or their peers (Tsiplakedes & Keramida, 2009).

6.4. Inhibition

In EFL speaking classes, learners may have good knowledge about the target language, but when it comes to expressing their ideas, they are likely to face difficulties such as inhibition and anxiety (Littlewood, 1999). Such factors refer to the feeling of shyness, fear of receiving negative feedback, making errors, and being subject to mockery.

6.5. Grammar difficulties

Many EFL students are unable to form correct grammatical sentences due to the ignorance of the rules among other reasons. More often than not, the inappropriate use of grammar leads to a misunderstanding of utterances which may hinder communication and may cause confusion in the part of the listener. Still, it remains insightful to ask whether or not grammar literacy promotes speaking ability in the learners.

To conclude, most EFL learners face many difficulties in performing in the foreign language. Therefore, teachers are required to explore those difficulties and minimise them to a

maximum by preparing a suitable environment for interaction, using strategies that encourage students to speak comfortably, and providing them with different opportunities to practise the language and express themselves freely.

7. Assessing Speaking

Assessing students' speaking plays an important role in the language teaching process since it gives the teacher an estimate regarding the students' overall performance (Bachman, 1990). It involves taking into consideration grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and students' ability to communicate effectively. However, the teacher decides on the type of speaking assessment depending on many factors, such as the number of students, the time allotted, the learning objectives, whether it is an individual or a collective assessment, etc. Thornbury (2005) suggested that the most commonly used types of speaking assessment are: interviews, live monologues, record monologues and dialogues, role plays, collaborative tasks, and discussion.

Additionally, Bachman (1990) and Thornbury (2005) stated two basic kinds of speaking assessment, the holistic and the analytic ways. The former focuses on the way the overall situation is handled by the student in a given speaking task and it takes the form of a single score. The latter focuses on some predetermined language points, such as grammar, pronunciation, rhythm, tone, and the like, and it requires giving a separate score for different aspects of the students' performance.

To conclude, assessing speaking is of great importance in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. Without assessment, achieving the goals and objectives of the speaking lessons remains incomplete since testing raises the students' awareness of the importance of their oral sessions, which may render them more serious and sincere enough to perform properly.

8. Grammar and Speaking

      Speaking is traditionally considered as a difficult and demanding skill to master in the field of English as a foreign language. In order to develop this skill, mastering the rules of grammar is likely to help; that is, grammar can affect the students' speaking proficiency. In this regard, Priyanto and Amin (2013) conducted a research entitled "The correlation between English grammar competence and speaking fluency", at Senior high school, with a sample of fifty students of eleventh grade. The researchers gave a grammar test to find out how good the students were in grammar. They also gave a speaking test to examine the students' speaking ability. The results showed that the correlation was significant. This is evidence that there is a relation between students' grammar competence and the speaking skill.

SECTION THREE: The Writing Skill

1. Definition of Writing

Writing is a lifetime language skill that has gained a great deal of interest from scholars and researchers like Bloomfied (1933) and White (1991). Unlike speaking, writing is a skill that needs specific ways to master because it is gained neither naturally nor spontaneously (White & Arndt, 1991). Writing envelopes a multitude of definitions and can be addressed from different perspectives, and none could cover all existing writing systems (Bouguern, 2011).

Writing is defined, according to Merriam Webster Dictionary, as "the act or process of one who writes: such as the act or art of forming visible letters or characters". Generally, writing refers to words in a group of letters or symbols written or marked down on a surface as a means of communication (Collins, 2003). For Bloomfield (1933): "writing is not language, but merely a way of recording language by means of visible marks" (p. 21). What is left unsaid in these definitions though possibly inherently implied is the fact that writing, being the activity of generating a piece of written language, is supposed to be read.

However, the meaning of writing does not stop on the boundaries of graphic symbols or visual marks. Just as speech is more than generating sounds, writing is much more than the production of graphic symbols. In other words, the letters have to be arranged in certain ways and conventions to form words, sentences and paragraphs using grammar and punctuation, ending up with a product that is an adequate means of communication (Byrne, 1988). Richards and Renandya (2002) claimed, on their part, that writing does not involve generating and organising ideas only but also translating them into readable texts.

2. Elements of Writing

In order for the student to produce a good piece of writing, he/she must consider several elements of the writing skill, including the following:

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of writing provides the student with the goal that he/she wants to achieve or what he/she wants the readers to grasp. Accordingly, the purpose statement at the very beginning of the writing process is among the tools which help the writers to follow the set goal.

2.2. Organisation

Throughout the writing process, information should be provided to readers in an organised way; even short pieces of writing should have regular and predictable patterns of organisation that allow the audience to clearly follow the writer's focal points and chain of thoughts. Organisation enables readers "to see how various points you make in your [piece of writing] work together and how they support your thesis" (Starkey, 2004, p. 2). Organisation relates to using techniques that precede the actual act of writing. In other words, before engaging in the actual act of writing, the student should decide about the order of his/her written work using several prewriting techniques, including free-writing and brainstorming.

2.3. Content

Content is another element of writing that involves information, ideas, examples that make up a text. The ideas included in a text should be relevant, clear, original and understandable (Dang et. al., 2005). That is to say, the writer should use personal ideas, avoid plagiarism, and be brief and concise.

2.4. Word Choice

Due to the fact that words are an important element a student uses to communicate, the best way to accurately convey his/her ideas in writing is to use the proper terms that are related to the issue being addressed. Word choice includes the use of concrete particular language, awareness of denotation and connotation, and the use of suitable lexicon (Rebitaille and Connelly, 2007).

2.5. Mechanics

Mechanics refers to the rules governing punctuation, spelling and handwriting. Kane (1988) sustained that "in compositions, mechanics refers to the appearance of words, to how they are spelled and arranged on paper" (p. 12). For Starkey (2004), mechanics or writing conventions are considered as the most prominent element of writing. They reflect the appearance of words and represent the technical aspects of writing like grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalisation.

3. The Importance of Writing

Writing is particularly significant since it serves a range of educational purposes, such as reinforcing what students have learned about grammatical structures and vocabulary (Raimes, 1983). In other words, writing engages the learners in the exploration of vocabulary and grammar thereby exposing them to the language. Also, it serves as a tool that allows language learners to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences and, at the same time, to share them with others, especially for those who cannot express themselves orally as McArthur et al. (2006) pointed out that "writing provides an important means to personal self-expression" (p. 1).

In addition, it is commonly known that good writing promotes good thinking. When students try to write, they should automatically think while developing their ideas and

sometimes revise what they have written. Besides, writing allows students to experience a genuine connection with the new language via the eye, hand, and brain. Moreover, it provides an opportunity for the learners to be adventurous in the language (Raimes, 1983).

To push further, most examinations require students to use their writing skills. Students' academic success is partially, if not wholly, influenced by their writing abilities. Besides, most jobs require writing.

In a nutshell, writing is intended to express thoughts, ideas, and feelings in simple and lucid language. Students should understand the art of effective writing in order to excel at both academic and professional levels. Good writing skills are needed for all the students in order to fulfil their educational and employing requirements.

4. Writing as a Process or a Product

Writing has become a cardinal element in language learning and education. To help better comprehend and teach the intricacies of the writing skill, several approaches have been developed by scholars; two such approaches are writing as a process or as a product. Each one of these approaches encompasses a specific focus. While the process approach casts light on the stages a writer must go through during the writing process, the product approach accentuates the value of the final product.

4.1. The Product-Oriented Approach

The product approach, also named 'the current-traditional rhetoric', is a teacher-based instruction that was dominant during the audio-lingual era, i.e., from the mid-1940s to the mid-1960s, and that is still in use in some EFL classrooms. In this approach, students are expected to imitate, copy, and transform teachers' model texts that are usually presented and analysed at an early stage in order to produce a resembling product at the end of the writing task. The focus then, as the name of the approach under discussion suggests, is on the final

product instead of the process of constructing it (Nunan, 1991). The final product should be readable, grammatically correct, and contain a variety of discourse conventions.

Even though this approach attempts to enhance the students' accuracy and reduce their error (White and Badger , 2000), it devalues and restrains the learners' linguistic and mental potential since it hinders their creativity as they become less likely to write in a personal and meaningful manner. In addition, it gives importance neither to the audience nor to the purpose of the writing. It is an approach which does not give importance to the writing steps (Sommers, 1980). The antecedent shortcomings of the product approach gave birth to a new approach, which is the process approach.

4.2. The Process-Oriented Approach

In the 1970s, there was a paradigm shift in the field of writing instruction, from a product-based approach to a process-based approach. The latter is learner-centred where learners' needs, expectations, objectives, learning styles, knowledge, and abilities are taken into account. Zamel (1983) saw writing as a "complex, recursive, and creative process whereby the writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning" (p. 165). In other words, this approach does not regard writing merely as an act of applying grammatical rules to generate correct written sentences; rather, writing is viewed as a journey of finding and shaping meaning (White, 1988). Therefore the process approach to teaching writing appreciates students' creativity in writing rather than blindly imitating assigned models. It turns out that it allows students to decide which ideas to include in their writing and how to express them (Hyland, 2003).

The focus of this approach is indicated by Hyland (2003) as follows: "The process approach to writing teaching emphasises the writer as an independent producer of texts, but it goes further to address the issue of what teachers should do to help learners perform a writing task." (p. 10). The role of the teacher is seen as that of feedback provider, guide, and

facilitator (Atkinson, 2003). Similarly, Hyland (2003) limited the role of the teacher in the writing process to guiding students through all the stages of writing in order to help them avoid paying attention to form and give much importance to content and ideas. He also offers several educational strategies employed in process-oriented classes, like brainstorming, planning, multiple drafts, peer collaboration, etc. The ultimate focus of the process-oriented approach is not on the final product only but on the process of writing itself. Proponents of this approach agree that writing is a complex skill which cannot be mastered overnight. The final product can be achieved through methodological and recursive stages, as discussed below.

4.2.1. Prewriting. Prewriting is the first stage of writing in which the writer outlines ideas and collects information about the topic. Whatever ideas come to mind, the writer jots them down. The core principle behind this stage is to keep the thoughts flowing easily and smoothly without worrying about appropriateness, structure, syntax, and spelling because the emphasis is on quantity instead of quality (Oskourt, 2008). Before starting to write, the writer should be clear about the message he/she wants to convey, the aim of writing, and the audience he/she is targeting (their knowledge, background, expectations etc), as these elements influence the choice of ideas, organisation, and language. Prewriting techniques may include brainstorming, freewriting, clustering, visualising, mapping, or listing through classroom activities such as discussions, interviews, talking, thinking, reading, listening to tapes and records, that can be done individually or in groups.

4.2.2. Drafting. Often referred to as writing proper, drafting is the second stage where the writer puts the gathered ideas at the prewriting stage on paper in textual format, more technically, a draft. Harmer (2004) referred to a draft as "the first version of a piece of writing" (p. 5). At this stage, the focus is on fluency of writing and not grammatical accuracy or the neatness of the draft (Galko, 2002). Moreover, students should take into consideration

the thesis statement, the goal, and the ideas. In addition, they should decide which writing genre to use (narrative, descriptive, expository, or persuasive).

4.2.3. Revising. As the term indicates, revising is the process in which the writer makes whatever changes he/she deems necessary i.e., this phase aims at polishing the written work; it invites modifications, changes in the writing mechanics, and improvement in terms of omission, addition, clarification, and rearrangement of ideas. In some cases, the writer may start over completely. According to Glatthorn (1981), and other researchers, this stage might be more effective with the help of instructor's feedback and peers' responses to each other's pieces of writing.

4.2.4. Editing. The editing stage is complementary to the previous one; it is a stage in which students should check again the mechanics of writing to make sure if their work is done as it should be (Vallis, 2010). In other words, students should pay more attention to some features such as: grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Along the same line of thought, Johnson (2008) held that:

> Basically 'editing' means making your piece as reader-friendly as possible by making the sentences flow in a clear, easy-to read way. It also means bringing your piece of writing into line with accepted ways of using English: using the appropriate grammar for the purposes of the piece, appropriate punctuation and spelling, and appropriate paragraphing. (p. 167)

4.2.5. Publishing. Publishing is the final stage of the writing process where the student submits his/her final product to the intended audience. The latter may include parents, peers, and teachers. This act fosters a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment (Hale, 2009).

Therefore, publishing serves as the writing motivator. It encourages students to do their best so that they produce a wonderfully polished piece of writing that may be enjoyed by others.

After discussing the characteristics of both the product-oriented and the process-oriented approach to writing, one can conclude that teachers must keep the balance of both approaches. In other words, students must first learn about the writing organisation before shifting their attention to grammar issues. However, the approach to use is heavily influenced by the style of writing itself. For example, when creating a professional letter or postcard, the product approach is likely to be preferred because the characteristics of these are more fixed, and the emphasis is not on style or organisation and grammar however important these may be.

5. EFL Students' Difficulties in Writing

Writing is a complicated skill for a great many EFL students since they face many difficulties during writing. The following are the most common issues encountered by students during the writing process.

5.1. Lack of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is said to be an essential part of writing ability. Strakey (2004) stated that: "one of the best ways to accurately convey your ideas in your essay is to choose the right words" (p. 21). In doing so, students may guarantee that their writing will be understood by their readers. That is, choosing the appropriate words allows writers to persuade and attract the readers' interest and attention to read.

Generally, students face difficulties in their use of vocabulary items, in terms of failure to recall on important words and/or failure to utilise appropriate terms and poor vocabulary. Knowing words typically implies understanding their meaning, form, and distribution (Lado,

1955), which can be perplexing for students at times, knowing that vocabulary serves as a key for thoughts to flow in the appropriate direction.

Given the foregoing, vocabulary can have a strong influence on students' writing due to the value it adds to their writing abilities. Therefore, students are expected to recognise new terms and have willingness to learn new vocabulary items in their context of occurrence while seeking to comprehend their meanings.

5.2. Coherence and Cohesion

Coherence and cohesion are two components that link sentences and make them both accurate and meaningful. However, many EFL learners have difficulties in writing when it comes to these two components.

Coherence is defined as the ability to construct meaningful and proper sentences by using suitable vocabulary items and adhering to certain rules of word arrangement (Brown & Yule, 1983). This concept denotes the smooth and logical flow of thoughts across a piece of writing, allowing the reader to appreciate it (Favero, 2010; Lee 2002). Whereas coherence refers to the reader's understanding of the text, cohesion relates to the existence or absence of explicit clues in the text that allow the reader to draw links between its concepts. According to Bailey (2003), text cohesion refers to the clarity and readability required by the writer to build a relationship via the use of numerous cohesive techniques such as reference, ellipsis, substitution, conjunctions, and lexical cohesion.

Generally, EFL students face difficulties during writing introductions, thesis statements, topic sentences, and conclusions, not knowing how to utilize different sorts of sentences, and misusing various coherence devices. Additionally, they focus on language matters rather than meanings, and they frequently translate ideas from the mother tongue into

the target language, which alters the meaning and the structure of the text. As a consequence, they produce a piece of writing which is neither understood nor connected.

Thus, students should be aware of coherence and cohesion since they enable them to create appropriate and well-organised paragraphs, essays, and extended compositions.

5.3. Spelling

Spelling is one of the common difficulties learners experience when writing. The main cause of spelling errors is irregularities of the English spelling system (Bancha, 2013). An example is the homographs, words that sound the same but are spelled differently and contain distinct meanings, like 'there' and 'their', and 'pray' and 'prey'.

Harmer (2001) stated that the reason spelling is challenging for students is "(…)the fact that not all varieties of English spell the same words in the same way" (p. 256). For example, the spelling of the word "behavior" in American English differs from that of "behaviour" in British English. Furthermore, Bancha (2013) noted that spelling mistakes might occur when students are less attentive because of tiredness or carelessness about the correctness of words. In this sense, Harmer (2001) proposed extensive reading as a remedy for students to overcome spelling difficulties.

5.4. Punctuation

No doubt, punctuation in itself carries meaning. According to Betham (2011), punctuation is more important than spelling. Along with this view, Truss (2006) stated that punctuation marks are just like traffic signals, they guide readers through telling them when to go and when to stop. Be that as it may, it induces difficulty for learners. Caroll and Wilson (1993) presented three punctuation-related issues. The first is that punctuation rules are not always exact; punctuation is complicated, and it depends on one's style to determine the meaning. The way students punctuate writing can radically change the meaning because each

punctuation mark provides a distinctive way of interpreting the meaning. As a result, students must pay close attention to the way they use punctuation, which is frequently an obstacle for them.

5.5. Poor Grammar

Grammar is strongly intertwined with writing (Hartwell, 1985). It contains a variety of norms and rules such as tenses, prepositions, word class, voice, and many more that students need to be familiar with in order to transmit ideas to intended readers in a relevant and acceptable manner (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Therefore, students have to master grammar since it is the key to arranging correct sentences in written English, assisting the writer in producing effective writing, and ensuring that the reader understands it. However, most EFL learners encounter grammatical problems in:

➢ Constructing meaningful sentences,

➢ confusing the terms phrase, sentence, and clause,

➢ the incorrect use of comparative and superlative adjectives,

➢ verb tenses,

➢ structuring sentences using suitable punctuation,

➢ inability to form reported speech and passive/active voices, and

➢ using conjunctions and connectors.

6. Assessing Writing

Assessing writing is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. It has clear pedagogical aims since it may directly influence teaching and encourage learners' progress, as well as inform teachers about their own effectiveness and the impact of their courses.

Assessment is mainly of two types: formative and summative (Lippman, 2003). Formative assessment is initiated in the classroom, and is tied to a particular class. It values

learners' writings during the writing process. Its primary goal is to assist learners polish up their writing, and offer strategies intended to promote learning. Summative assessment, on the other hand, takes place at the end of a pre-set period, learning cycle, or study programme. It considers the progress made, the amount of knowledge acquired, and the skills handled so far by learners, in order to determine the extent to which students have completed the written task successfully.

In order to assess writing, teachers may use different types of writing tests or select one type based on what they want to evaluate: mechanics (including spelling and punctuation), vocabulary, grammar, appropriate content or word selection, cohesion, organisation, and so on (Hyland, 2003). These tests include asking students to construct a piece of writing like essays or paragraphs, order sentences to get a coherent paragraph, and summarise a material.

7. Grammar and Writing

Grammar is one of the components that must be mastered to produce good writing. It is nearly impossible to generate an accurate piece of writing without a thorough understanding of grammar. Several studies have been conducted in order to show the correlation between students' grammar mastery and their writing ability.

Hidayah (2007), for example, conducted a study entitled "A correlation between students' mastery of past tense and their achievement in writing recount" which aimed to find out the significant correlation between students' grammar mastery and writing competence. The sample was 50 students of the second grade. This research used a grammar test to find out how good the students' grammar was and a writing test in the form of an essay that requires subjective scoring. The results were significant i.e., there was a significant positive

relationship between students' mastery of past tense and their achievements in writing recount.

Conclusion

Learning grammar is a key component in mastering a foreign language. Therefore, EFL learners are required to be aware of such fundamental element in order to enhance their speaking and writing ability. For that reason, this chapter presented key areas that are relevant to our thesis. We shed light on the importance of teaching grammar, speaking, and writing, main methods and approaches to teaching them, as well as ways of assessing them. In addition, we focussed on the relation between grammar and these two productive skills.

CHAPTER TWO: Using Grammar Grades as a Predictor of Writing and Oral Ability

Introduction

While the first chapter attempted to review the literature on the variables of the topic at issue, this chapter takes a different orientation as it is devoted to the field work of the present research. It aims to provide an answer to our research questions and to test the corresponding hypotheses. First, it advances the aims of the study, along with the research questions and hypotheses. It, then, describes the population and the data collection tools and procedures. Furthermore, it offers a detailed analysis, discussion, and interpretation of the gathered information and the main findings. At last, it outlines some limitations and recommendations for students, teachers, and further research.

1. Aims of the Research

The present study aims, in the first place, at determining whether second year university EFL students' grammar grades can be used as a basis for predicting their ability in writing and speaking. It, then, attempts to back up the findings, based on teachers' beliefs, about the relation between the variables in question, namely grammar, speaking and writing abilities.

2. The Research Questions

This study raises the following research questions:

1. Based on students' grades, does grammar help in predicting EFL learners' oral ability?

2. Based on students' grades, does grammar help in predicting EFL learners' writing ability?

3. Based on teachers' beliefs, is the proportion of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in speaking the same as the proportion of those who think otherwise?

4. Based on teachers' beliefs, are the proportions of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in writing and those who do not the same?

5. Based on teachers' beliefs, is grammar needed more in speaking or in writing?

3. The Hypotheses

We hypothesise that:

1. Grammar helps in predicting EFL learners' oral ability.

2. Grammar helps in predicting EFL learners' writing ability.

3. The proportion of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in writing is the same as the proportion of those who think otherwise.

4. The proportions of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in speaking and those who do not are the same.

5. Grammar is needed more in writing than in speaking.

4. Population and Sampling

The present research is carried out at the University Centre of Mila, Institute of Letters and Languages, Department of Foreign Languages. The population with which the study is concerned involves second year EFL students in their academic year 2020/2021 and EFL teachers who taught one or all of the following: grammar, oral expression, and written expression. The population of this study consists of 216 sophomores, who are assigned to 10 groups and who altogether constitute the sample of this research. Second year students are opted for instead of third years because, at this level, they study grammar as a separate module in addition to oral expression and written expression, unlike third years who do not have grammar as a module. Moreover, they are selected instead of first year students because it is assumed that, at this level, they have built a larger baggage in English grammar in addition to a comparatively acceptable level in speaking and writing in the target language, not to mention their familiarity with the English language in general.

The sample of teachers includes 70 participants who have taught grammar, oral expression and written expression, belonging to different university institutions: Mila, Algiers, Setif, Naama, Jijel, and Biskra, respectively.

5. Data Collection Tools

In order to answer the research questions, prove or disprove the set hypotheses, and achieve the aims of the present study, a quantitative mixed-methods design is used. As aforementioned, we used students' grades to directionally predict one variable from another, and a questionnaire as a data collection instrument to determine whether or not there is a relation between the variables under study.

6. The Students' Grades

The use of the students' grades aims at investigating whether or not high scores in grammar could predict high scores in speaking and writing.

6.1. Description of the Students' Grades

The opted for grades are those of the third semester of second year students of Mila University Centre; we could not wait for the issuing of the fourth semester scores because by then the academic year will be over for us, not to mention that the administration refused to hand us grades of previous years on account of some unreasonable pretext. These grades are of three different modules: grammar, speaking, and writing (see Appendix 1)

6.2. Analysis of Students' Grades

To test the first and second hypotheses and answer the corresponding research questions, data were computed in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software (version 21). Simple Linear Regression was used as a hypothesis-testing tool to predict the outcome variable from the predictor variable; that is, to explore if there is any

statistical forecasting relationship between grades in grammar and oral expression, and between those in grammar and written expression.

6.3. Results and Discussions

6.3.1. Grammar and Oral Ability. Table 2.1a below represents the descriptive statistics. A quick look at this table will indicate that the means of the two subject matters are almost the same (M = 10.8594, SD = 3.44406 for oral expression; for grammar, M = 10.7228, SD = 3.40306).

Table 2.1c represents the summary of the model, providing the value of R and R^2. For these data, R has a value of .568 and because there is only one predictor, this value represents a simple bivariate correlation between grammar and oral expression (one can confirm this by looking at Table 2.1b where R represents the correlation itself). The value of R^2 is .322, which indicates that grammar achievements can account for 32.2% of the variation in oral expression achievements.

Table 2.1d, reporting the analysis of variance (ANOVA), shows the various sums of squares and the degrees of freedom associated with each. The most important part of this table is the F-ratio and the associated significance value of that F-ratio. For this data, F is 101.738, which is significant at $p < .001$.

In most statistics texts, the regression equation is $Y' = a + bX$. Y' represents our dependent variable which is oral ability, and X represents our independent variable which is grammar achievement. In table 2.1e, the values of both a and b are found in the B column. The first value, 4.699, is the value of a, labelled constant. The second value, .574, is the value of b (labelled grammar). Thus the prediction equation for our model is oral expression ability = 4.699 + .574 (grammar).

Table 2.1a

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Oral Expression	10.8594	3.44406	216
Grammar	10.7228	3.40306	216

Table 2.1b

Correlations

		Oral Expression	Grammar
Pearson Correlation	Oral Expression	1.000	.568
	Grammar	.568	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Oral Expression	.	.000
	Grammar	.000	.
N	Oral Expression	216	216
	Grammar	216	216

Table 2.1c

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.568[a]	.322	.319	2.84202

a. Predictors: (Constant), Grammar
b. Dependent Variable: Oral Expression

Table 2.1d

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	821.746	1	821.746	101.738	.000[b]
	Residual	1728.490	214	8.077		
	Total	2550.236	215			

a. Dependent Variable: Oral Expression
b. Predictors: (Constant), Grammar

Table 2.1e

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.699	.641	.568	7.336	.000
	Grammar	.574	.057		10.087	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Oral Expression

A Simple Linear Regression was calculated predicting the students' oral ability on their grammar achievements. A significant regression equation was found (F (1, 214) = 101.738, p < .001), with an R² of .322. Students' predicted oral expression ability is equal to 4.699+ .574 (Grammar). As such, we can conclude that the result is significant i.e., there is statistical evidence for the hypothesis that grammar can predict oral ability. As previously stated, the value of R² indicates that grammar achievements can account for 32.2% of the variation in oral expression achievements which means that 67.8% of the variation of the oral expression achievements cannot be explained by grammar alone. Therefore, there must be other factors that may affect students' oral ability.

6.3.2. Grammar and Writing Ability. Table 2.2a presents descriptive statistics. A quick look at this table will indicate that the means of the two subject matters are almost the

same where written expression received a mean of 9.8986 with a standard deviation of 3.65204, whereas grammar received a mean of 10.7228 with a standard deviation of 3.40306.

Table 2.2c represents the summary of the model. As can be seen, R has a value of .581 and because there is only one predictor, this value represents a simple correlation between grammar achievements and writing ability (one can confirm this by looking at Table 2.2b where R represents the correlation itself). The value of R^2 is .338, which indicates that grammar achievements can account for 33.8% of the variation in writing ability.

Table 2.2d reports the analysis of variance (ANOVA). The summary table shows the various sums of squares and the associated degrees of freedom. The most important part of this table is F-ratio and the associated significance value. For this data, F is 109.222, which is significant at $p < .001$.

The regression equation is $Y' = a + bX$. Y' represents our dependent variable which is writing ability, and X represents our independent variable which is grammar achievement. In Table 2.2e, the B column represents the values of both a and b. The first value, 3.209, is the value of a (labelled constant). The second value, .624, is the value of b (labelled grammar). Thus our prediction equation for our model is writing ability = 3.209 + .624 (grammar).

Table 2.2a

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Written Expression	9.8986	3.65204	216
Grammar	10.7228	3.40306	216

Table 2.2b

Correlations

		Written Expression	Grammar
Pearson Correlation	Written Expression	1.000	.581
	Grammar	.581	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Written Expression	.	.000
		.000	.
	Grammar	216	216
N	Written Expression	216	216
	Grammar		

Table 2.2c

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.581[a]	.338	.335	2.97854

a. Predictors: (Constant), Grammar
b. Dependent Variable: Written Expression

Table 2.2d

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	968.988	1	968.988	109.222	.000[b]
	Residual	1898.546	214	8.872		
	Total	2867.534	215			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Grammar
b. Dependent Variable: Written Expression

Table 2.2e

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.209	.671	.581	4.780	.000
	Grammar	.624	.060		10.451	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Written Expression

A Simple Linear Regression was calculated predicting the students' writing ability on their grammar achievements. A significant regression equation was found ($F_{(1, 214)} = 109.222$, $p < .001$), with an R^2 of .338. Students' predicted writing ability is equal to 3.209+.624 (grammar). Thus, we can conclude that the result is significant i.e., there is evidence for the hypothesis that grammar can predict writing ability. As previously stated, the value of R^2 indicates that grammar achievements can account for 33.8% of the variation in oral expression achievements which means that 66.2% of the variation of the oral expression achievements cannot be explained by grammar alone. Therefore, there must be other factors that may affect students' writing ability.

In a nutshell, the results obtained from submitting the students' grades to a Simple Linear Regression Test reveal that grammar helps in predicting EFL learners' oral and writing abilities.

7. The Teachers' Questionnaire

First of all, it is important to mention that the questionnaire is regarded as a set of questions or statements through which the researcher collects information about the topic of the research. Brown (2001) stated that: "questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from existing answers" (p. 6).

7.1. Description of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The present questionnaire is designed to explore the teachers' opinion about whether their students' level in grammar reflects their level in the productive skills, namely speaking and writing, and if grammar is needed more in writing or in speaking. The respondents were informed that the questionnaire was strictly confidential, anonymous, voluntary, and were promised that their responses will be used only for research purposes. Also, they were kindly asked to tick the appropriate box (see Appendix 2).

The questionnaire consists of six items split into two sections, one about demographics and the other containing categorical questions. Concerning the first section, "Teachers' Background Information", it is composed of three questions about gender, the professional degree that the targeted university teachers hold, and teachers' years of experience. It was thought that demographic information, though not of direct relation to the aims of the present study, might be informative to the interested reader.

The second section, "Grammar and the Productive Skills", addresses the variables in our research. It consists of three questions. The first and second questions are devoted to investigate whether the level of students in grammar reflects their level in speaking and writing. The third question seeks to know the teachers' opinion about whether grammar is needed more in speaking or in writing.

7.2. Administration of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed in two formats: Google form format and Word printed format in the academic year 2020/2021. The former was sent via email and the latter was administered hand to hand to the targeted teachers. The process of collecting data has taken about three weeks to reach the current sample number, which is 70 teachers belonging to

different university institutions: Mila, Algiers, Setif, Naama, Jijel, and Biskra, respectively. Due to the limitation of time, we could not collect a larger sample.

7.3. Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The collected data from the questionnaire was analysed quantitatively. The first section, 'Background Information', was analysed in terms of percentages whereas the remaining information was coded into a numerical form, and was analysed using a computer software, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), respectively.

7.3.1. Background Information

Q1: What is your gender?

Table 2.3

Teachers' Gender

Options	Number	Percentage
Male	16	22.9%
Female	54	77.1%
Total	70	100%

Table 2.3 above demonstrates that out of 70 participants, 54 participants who represent 77.1% of the whole sample are female, while 16 participants representing 22.9% are male.

Q2: Which degree do you hold?

Table 2.4

Teachers' Professional Degrees

Option	Number	Percentage

Master	27	38.6%
Magister	12	17.1%
Doctorate	31	44.3%
Total	70	100%

As shown in Table 2.4 above, 31 respondents (44.3%) are PHD holders, 27 respondents (38.6%) hold a Master degree while the remaining 12 teachers (17.6%) hold a Magister degree.

Q3: How long have you been teaching English at university?

Table 2.5

Teachers' Years of Experience

Options	Number	Percentage
[1-10]	53	75.7%
[11-20]	12	17.1%
More than 20	5	7.2%
Total	70	100%

Table 2.5 indicates that 53 teachers (75.7%) have been teaching at university for less than 10 years (1-10 years). 12 teachers (17.1%) reported that the period they have spent teaching at university ranges from 11 to 20 years. The remaining 5 teachers (7.2%) are said to have a longer experience in the field of teaching going for more than 20 years.

7.3.2. Grammar and the Productive Skills. The variables are categorical; each test item was dichotomously responded to, and the data were coded on a 0 to 1 point scale.

To answer our research questions and to test the corresponding hypotheses, the raw data were coded and computed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software (version 21). The Chi-square is the appropriate hypothesis-testing tool given that the

variables in our study are categorical. The raw data were submitted to a Chi-square test for Goodness of Fit to compare the proportion of cases and test if there is a difference between the respective categories i.e., to determine if grammar is more needed in writing or in speaking and whether the students' grammar level reflects their writing and speaking abilities.

7.4. Results and Discussion

Tables 2.6a, 2.7a, and 2.8a below give the frequencies (observed number) in each of the categories. The expected value is given, along with the difference of the observed from the expected value (i.e., the residual). Tables 2.6b, 2.7b, and 2.8b give the results of the Chi-square test.

Q1: Does the level of your students in grammar reflect their level in speaking?

Table 2.6a

Frequencies

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
No	44	35.0	9.0
Yes	26	35.0	-9.0
Total	70		

Table 2.6b

Chi-Square Test

	Relation between students' grammar and speaking levels
Chi-Square	4.629[a]
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.031

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 35.0.

To test the third hypothesis and answer the respective research question (determining if the proportions of teachers – those who believe that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in speaking and those who do not – are different), a Chi-square test for Goodness of Fit was used. The test indicated a significant difference between those who chose 'yes' (26 out of a total of 70) and those who chose 'no' (44 out of 70), $\chi2$ (1, $n = 70$) =4.629, $p < .05$ (see Table 2.6a & Table 2.6b above). The Sig. value of .031 is smaller than the alpha value, so we can conclude that the result is significant i.e., there is a statistical evidence that the proportion of teachers who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in speaking is different from the proportion of those who think otherwise. However, the proportion of those who answered in the negative is larger this time.

Q2: Does the level of your students in grammar reflect their level in writing?

Table 2.7a

Frequencies

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
No	17	35.0	-18
Yes	35	35.0	18
Total	70		

Table 2.7b

Chi-Square Test

	Relation between students' grammar and writing levels
Chi-Square	18.514[a]
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 35.0.

In an attempt to test the fourth hypothesis and answer the respective research question (determining if the proportion of teachers, who think that the level of students in grammar reflects their level in writing, is the same as or different from the proportion of those who think otherwise), a Chi-square test for Goodness of Fit was used. The test indicated a significant difference between those who chose 'yes' (53 out of a total of 70) and those who chose 'no' (17 out of 70), $\chi 2$ (1, $n = 70$) = 18.514, $p = .000$ (see Table 2.7a & Table 2.7b above). The Sig. value of .000 is smaller than the alpha value, so we can conclude that the result is significant i.e., there is statistical evidence for us to prove the first hypothesis that the two proportions of teachers are different.

Q3: Is grammar more needed in speaking or writing?

Table 2.8a

Frequencies

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
No	5	35.0	-30
Yes	65	35.0	30
Total	70		

Table 2.8b

Chi-Square Test

	Need for grammar: more in speaking or in writing?
Chi-Square	51.429[a]
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 35.0.

In order to test the fifth hypothesis and answer the respective research question (determining which of the two productive skills requires grammar more), a Chi-square test for Goodness of Fit was used. The test indicated a significant difference between those who chose writing (65 out of a total of 70) and those who chose speaking (5 out of 70), $\chi2$ (1, $n = 70$) = 51.429, $p = .000$ (see Table 2.8a & Table 2.8b above). The Sig. value is smaller than .001, so we can conclude that the result is significant i.e., there is a statistical evidence to prove the third hypothesis that writing ability requires grammar more than speaking does.

8. General Discussion

Upon analysis of both the students' grades and the teachers' questionnaire, a general discussion is very much warranted.

The students' grades that were submitted to a Simple Linear Regression Test allow one to obtain insightful glimpses into the predictive power of grammar. The results were statistically significant revealing mainly that grammar achievements can be used to predict the students' oral and writing abilities.

To back up the foregoing findings, the teachers' answers that were submitted to a Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test proved also informative. The results were statistically significant revealing mainly that the students' level in grammar reflects their level in speaking and writing. In addition, the results show that grammar is more needed in writing than in speaking.

The previously discussed findings highlight that grammar is an essential component of any language, which students need to master in order to enhance their speaking and writing abilities.

9. Limitations and Recommendations

9.1. Limitations of the Study

This study, as any piece of research, has limitations and does not claim perfection. When undertaking a study, limitations may appear due to unexpected problems. The following is an outline of some limitations that have exerted some unfavourable influences on the current research:

1. The exceptional circumstances that the country went through due to the COVID-19 pandemic made it challenging for us to go to other Algerian universities and look for resources in their libraries.

2. The administration refused to provide us with the students' last year grades of both the third and the fourth semesters for some unreasonable pretext; consequently, we were obliged to work with the grades of the third semester only and wait until the teachers post them on Facebook groups or on the university website.

3. One of the data collection tools used in this study, the teachers' questionnaire, was delivered to only 70 EFL teachers which might not be that representative. In fact, we administered the questionnaire to more than 200 teachers via email but not all of them were answered. A larger sample was not possible because we could not get hold of more emails of EFL university teachers in Algeria.

9.2. Recommendations

Relying on the analysis of the obtained results, some recommendations and suggestions for students, teachers, and further researcher are provided in this part:

9.2.1. Recommendations for Students

- Students should be aware of the importance of learning grammar since it is a language component which correlates highly with other components.

- Students should practise the grammatical rules in order to be more accurate in their oral and written production.

9.2.2. Recommendations for Teachers

- Teachers should increase students' awareness of grammar and motivation to master it from a very early stage.

- They should, as well, persuade students that grammar is one of the fundamental components of language, and that without it the speaking and writing skills cannot be enhanced.

- They should explain grammar rules and increase the students' comprehension by using suitable methods and approaches.

- Last, but in no way least, teachers should give room for students to take part actively in the learning process and to build more accuracy and fluency; this might enable them to master the language skills rapidly.

9.2.3. Recommendations for Further Research

- Researchers in this topic need to utilise more tools of data collection and maximise the sample of students as well as of teachers in order to investigate it more deeply.

- Researchers may conduct further research studies regarding the relation between language skills and other factors that might account for their achievements.

- They are also recommended to conduct research about the predictive power of grammar in the receptive skills.

Conclusion

For reminder purposes, this chapter is devoted to the practical part of the current study. It is concerned with describing, analysing, and discussing the data gathered from the two tools of the research, namely the students' grades and the teachers' questionnaire for the purpose of testing whether grammar can be used as a predictor of oral and writing abilities. Indeed, the

results obtained show that the students' grammar achievements can predict their oral and writing abilities. Besides, they show that grammar is needed for writing more than in speaking.

General Conclusion

The present work consists of two main parts. The first part covers the literature review. The second part, the field work, describes the tools of the research, analyses the gathered data, and discusses the results.

The focal problem of this study revolves around the predictive power of grammar. Thus, the main aim of the research is to cast some light on the possibility of using grammar achievements as a tool for predicting writing and oral abilities. Moreover, it seeks to establish an association, based on teachers' beliefs, between the variables under study. For that, we used second year EFL students' grades at Mila University Centre, and we administered a questionnaire to 70 EFL teachers from different universities in Algeria.

The obtained results are a confirmation of our previously set hypotheses. They reveal that the students' grammar achievements can predict their oral and writing abilities. They also reveal that the students' grammar level is significantly related to their writing and speaking abilities.

It is worth mentioning that we should not restrict ourselves to the present findings. This study is of a limited scope and its results can be probably open to discussion and critique, but it can be a basis for further research on the relation between grammar and language skills. Indeed, we believe that much work remains to be done in this area.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

The Students' Grades:

	Grammar	Oral Expression	Written Expression
1	8.75	8.0	10.0
2	10.25	7.5	15.0
3	0.0	0.0	0.0
4	8.5	8.5	3.0
5	6.75	9.75	7.0
6	14.63	13.75	15.0
7	12.0	12.25	13.13
8	8.0	9.0	8.63
9	9.75	7.0	12.0
10	13.75	14.0	13.0
11	12.13	10.0	6.0
12	9.0	4.0	5.13
13	16.75	7.5	14.0
14	12.0	12.5	11.25
15	10.25	13.5	10.0
16	10.0	10.75	9.25
17	10.0	14.0	14.0
18	14.25	13.0	14.75
19	8.5	10.0	4.63
20	10.0	8.25	11.0
21	10.75	13.0	5.25
22	8.25	12.0	10.5
23	10.0	8.25	10.25
24	14.5	8.0	13.25
25	2.0	0.0	1.88
26	15.5	12.25	11.13
27	9.5	7.5	9.5
28	13.75	9.5	13.63
29	7.38	10.25	3.0
30	10.5	13.0	11.63
31	0.0	0.0	3.75
32	11.0	9.5	9.63
33	14.25	14.0	5.25
34	8.75	8.5	0.0
35	11.0	14.0	15.0
36	10.0	8.0	7.88
37	11.5	12.0	10.0
38	10.75	13.88	11.25
39	13.75	11.25	13.0
40	11.13	10.0	8.5
41	13.75	13.0	15.0
42	16.5	15.0	12.5

43	16.0	8.75	12.38
44	9.63	12.0	10.5
45	4.25	0.0	0.0
46	14.25	15.0	13.0
47	12.5	10.25	12.25
48	13.38	15.0	11.5
49	17.75	14.0	11.13
50	10.25	11.25	7.38
51	14.5	12.0	10.0
52	7.38	12.75	9.5
53	14.5	14.0	9.25
54	7.13	8.0	7.5
55	10.0	6.75	12.5
56	11.5	15.0	0.0
57	9.5	10.5	8.88
58	8.0	8.75	14.25
59	8.75	7.0	7.5
60	16.0	11.0	14.5
61	10.25	15.0	10.5
62	11.5	8.75	5.25
63	9.13	14.0	10.5
64	11.88	14.0	12.13
65	11.0	5.25	8.0
66	6.5	12.75	5.75
67	11.5	16.0	10.5
68	7.75	16.0	11.5
69	15.75	15.0	13.5
70	7.88	10.25	7.25
71	3.0	1.5	0.5
72	16.03	15.0	11.0
73	10.0	6.5	13.0
74	4.5	6.5	7.25
75	4.5	9.5	9.0
76	10.5	12.25	7.25
77	14.0	10.0	11.13
78	8.25	11.0	10.25
79	11.25	9.5	12.75
80	12.0	7.5	9.38
81	9.0	6.5	7.75
82	13.0	16.0	8.25
83	11.25	11.0	11.75
84	9.75	13.0	10.0
85	9.0	13.0	10.75
86	10.5	16.0	9.5
87	1.5	9.5	0.0
88	10.0	14.0	14.0
89	7.0	7.25	11.5
90	15.0	8.25	9.13
91	16.0	12.0	7.75
92	6.0	10.0	10.25
93	12.75	14.0	10.25
94	15.0	14.0	12.0

95	11.38	14.0	11.5
96	12.75	15.0	14.0
97	9.13	6.0	6.75
98	14.25	16.0	13.5
99	14.75	12.0	12.0
100	6.88	11.0	8.75
101	11.0	12.0	11.0
102	10.13	14.0	11.5
103	15.38	14.0	14.5
104	16.0	14.0	13.38
105	12.5	13.0	9.0
106	15.75	16.0	10.0
107	12.25	8.5	10.0
108	11.88	8.0	12.5
109	12.75	13.0	8.5
110	5.5	10.25	9.63
111	11.88	11.5	10.25
112	8.63	10.0	9.5
113	10.13	8.0	4.25
114	10.0	10.0	12.5
115	6.63	10.0	8.75
116	15.0	14.0	10.38
117	10.5	8.75	9.88
118	11.75	15.0	14.0
119	13.25	11.0	11.25
120	17.5	15.0	8.88
121	16.0	12.75	11.63
122	13.38	9.75	13.0
123	12.75	13.0	10.5
124	13.5	6.25	14.13
125	1.5	3.25	1.5
126	12.5	14.0	13.25
127	11.38	6.5	6.5
128	13.13	15.0	12.5
129	11.13	14.0	13.0
130	16.25	16.0	13.0
131	8.0	10.5	12.75
132	7.5	10.0	5.5
133	9.0	13.0	11.5
134	11.75	10.0	12.5
135	10.5	6.0	12.25
136	13.5	13.0	7.63
137	11.75	8.0	12.25
138	9.63	16.0	14.0
139	11.75	14.0	14.0
140	6.75	7.0	11.25
141	14.5	5.25	10.63
142	11.75	10.5	10.0
143	13.5	11.5	11.5
144	11.0	12.0	6.75
145	11.5	14.5	10.25
146	11.0	8.0	9.88

147	10.25	7.25	11.0
148	12.38	14.0	13.0
149	9.0	14.0	11.0
150	9.13	8.5	16.75
151	10.38	10.5	10.38
152	13.0	14.25	18.0
153	8.13	12.25	9.63
154	8.25	5.5	11.5
155	11.5	6.5	11.0
156	8.5	6.5	9.75
157	6.5	6.25	6.5
158	0.0	5.75	0.0
159	8.5	13.0	11.0
160	10.25	8.5	8.88
161	10.25	10.0	11.75
162	7.5	8.75	7.75
163	13.63	11.5	13.25
164	11.13	7.0	8.25
165	14.38	12.0	10.5
166	12.5	6.75	10.38
167	11.5	14.0	14.0
168	14.25	13.38	10.63
169	11.38	9.0	9.0
170	9.25	14.0	15.0
171	12.0	13.0	10.0
172	14.25	8.0	9.63
173	15.5	15.0	10.63
174	8.0	10.5	9.38
175	16.63	15.0	15.0
176	8.75	9.75	10.25
177	13.63	16.0	14.0
178	12.25	10.0	9.75
179	4.5	8.0	1.75
180	5.25	6.5	5.5
181	10.0	10.5	8.75
182	9.0	12.0	12.25
183	17.5	14.0	14.38
184	11.0	14.0	4.0
185	10.25	12.0	13.5
186	10.13	15.0	11.0
187	7.25	6.5	9.25
188	10.0	9.0	11.5
189	10.0	13.0	10.5
190	11.0	13.0	5.0
191	11.88	17.0	13.0
192	10.63	14.0	11.5
193	7.25	9.0	6.25
194	12.5	15.0	10.0
195	10.0	13.75	14.0
196	12.75	11.0	10.5
197	10.5	11.75	5.13
198	8.88	11.0	2.0

199	10.63	6.5	0.0
200	4.0	7.0	0.0
201	5.5	8.0	11.5
202	9.63	6.0	1.5
203	8.5	12.5	9.13
204	10.0	11.0	10.88
205	6.75	7.0	7.0
206	12.0	13.0	10.13
207	8.0	10.0	8.75
208	6.25	7.5	5.5
209	8.75	7.0	9.5
210	9.5	10.25	10.63
211	17.75	16.0	15.25
212	19.5	14.0	17.5
213	12.0	15.0	11.38
214	10.0	13.88	8.5
215	12.38	15.0	14.5
216	11.75	15.0	11.5

Appendix 2:

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is conducted for the completion of a Master's thesis in English. You are kindly requested to devote some of your valuable time to respond to the questions through which we attempt to explore the possibility of an association between students' level in grammar and writing/oral ability. The information you provide will be strictly confidential, anonymous, and used only for the purpose of this study.

Please, read the items carefully and give your first reaction by putting a (√) in the box according to your opinion.

Your collaboration is very important and greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance.

Section One: Teachers' Background Information.

1- What is your gender?

a. Male ☐   b. Female ☐

2. Which degree do you have?

a. Master ☐

b. Magister ☐

c. Doctorate ☐

3. How long have you been teaching English at university?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Section two: Grammar and the Productive Skills.

1. Does the level of your students in grammar reflect their level in speaking?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

2. Does the level of your students in grammar reflect their level in writing?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

3. Is grammar more needed in:

a. Speaking ☐   b. writing ☐

Thank you again for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

ملخص

تتطلع هذه الدراسة الي التقصي حول القوة التنبئية للمعرفة النحوية، حيث تهدف إلى تحديد ما اذا كانت انجازات الطلاب في النحو يمكن أن تساعد على التنبؤ بقدراتهم الكتابية و الشفوية. للحصول على هذا، تم طرح خمس أسئلة بحثية: (1) استنادًا على درجات الطلاب، هل يساعد النحو في التنبؤ بالقدرات الشفوية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية؟ (2) استنادًا على درجات الطلاب، هل يساعد النحو في التنبؤ بالقدرة الكتابية لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية؟ (3) حسب رأي الأساتذة، هل نسبة الاساتذة الذين يعتقدون أن مستوى الطلاب في النحو يعكس مستوى كتابتهم هي نفسها نسبة أولئك الذين يعتقدون عكس ذلك؟ (4) حسب راي الاساتذة، هل نسبة الاساتذة الذين يعتقدون أن مستوى الطلاب في القواعد يعكس مستواهم في التحدث وأولئك الذين لا يعتقدون ذلك هو نفسه؟ (5) بناءً على راي الاساتذة، هل النحو ضروري أكثر في الكتابة أم في التحدث؟ للإجابة على هذه الأسئلة تم اعتماد الطريقة الكمية المختلطة في الدراسة الحالية. تم جمع البيانات اللازمة من خلال اداتي بحث رئيسيتين؛ درجات طلاب السنة الثانية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (في المركز الجامعي عبد الحفيظ بوالصوف ميلة) و استبيان اجاب عليه 70 استاذا. تمت معالجة البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها من علامات الطلاب باستعمال الانحدار الخطي البسيط بينما تمت معالجة البيانات التي تم الحصول عليها من الاستبيان باستعمال مربع كاي عن طريق برنامج SPSS. كانت النتائج ذات دلالة احصائية و كشفت بشكل اساسي انه يمكن استخدام الانجازات النحوية للتتنبؤ بقدرات الطلاب الشفوية و الكتابية. تم تقديم قيود الدراسة و التوصيات الخاصة بالبيداغوجيا و البحث المستقبلي.

Résumé

L'étude actuelle tente d'examiner le pouvoir prédictif de la grammaire. Elle vise à déterminer si les acquis grammaticaux des étudiants peuvent prédire leurs capacités orales et écrites. Pour ce faire, cinq questions de recherche ont été posées: (1) En se basant sur les notes des étudiants, la grammaire aide-t-elle à prédire leurs capacités orales? (2) En se basant sur les notes des étudiants, la grammaire aide-t-elle à prédire leurs capacités d'écriture? (3) Selon les opinions des enseignants, la proportion d'enseignants qui pensent que le niveau des étudiants en grammaire reflète leur niveau en écriture est-elle la même que la proportion de ceux qui pensent le contraire? (4) Selon les opinions des enseignants, les proportions d'enseignants qui pensent que le niveau des étudiants en grammaire reflète leur niveau en expression orale et ceux qui ne le pensent pas sont-elles les mêmes? (5) Sur la base des opinions des enseignants, la grammaire est-elle plus nécessaire à l'écrit ou à l'oral? Nous avons opté pour une méthode quantitative mixte dans la présente étude. Les données ont été collectées à l'aide de deux outils de recherche principaux: les notes des étudiants de deuxième année Anglais (au Centre universitaire Abdelhafid Boussouf de Mila) et un questionnaire auquel 70 enseignants ont répondu. Les données obtenues à partir des notes des étudiants ont été soumises à un Test de Régression Linéaire Simple, tandis que les données obtenues à partir du questionnaire ont été soumises à un Test de Chi-Carré en utilisant SPSS. Les résultats sont statistiquement significatifs et révèlent principalement que les résultats en grammaire peuvent être utilisés pour prédire les capacités orales et écrites des étudiants. Les limites de l'étude et les recommandations pour la pédagogie et la recherche sont proposées.