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Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research  
Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret  
Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of English



**Investigating English Language Proficiency in University Setting  
At Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret  
The Case of Master 1 Students at Ibn Khaldoun University**

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirements for the Master's Degree in Linguistics

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# Dedication

First and foremost, a special feeling of gratitude to my beloved parents who have always loved me unconditionally and have taught me to work hard to achieve my dreams. Happy to share with them this celebration and be proud of my success.

To my supportive sisters

To the soul of my brother may he rest in peace

To my supervisor **Dr. SIMERABET Mohamed Larbi** for the help he gave me, I would like to sincerely express my gratitude for his guidance, support, and patience throughout this dissertation.

**Naima**

## Acknowledgments

Thanks to Allah the Almighty, for providing me with strength, patience, and knowledge to accomplish this work.

The realization of this dissertation would not have been possible without the help of many persons, thanks to everyone who has assisted me.

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor **Dr. Mohamed Larbi SIMERABET** for all of his assistance and support throughout this difficult process. Special thanks to the board of examiners **Dr. TOBEIDA Mostapha** and **Dr. BELAIDOUNI Djilali** who have devoted their valuable time to reading and evaluating my research work, their valuable remarks will be taken into consideration to refine my dissertation.

My thanks go as well to all of my colleagues who studied with me during my university cursus.

A great feeling of gratitude to the head of department of Political Sciences **Dr. OUADHAHI Miloud** for his help and encouragement.

To all of my teachers at the department of English at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.

## **Abstract**

This dissertation aims to evaluate the English language proficiency of master 1 students at Ibn Khaldoun University setting and the head attitudes toward mastering the English language. In an attempt to contribute to the previous research done in this field, this dissertation draws on an empirical investigation, using mixed methods both qualitative and quantitative. Data collection was done using a learner's questionnaire and an interview with the head of department, the questionnaire shows that most of the participants confirm that they are proficient in using English language in the university environment. However, they face some challenges such as poor English language proficiency which might reflect the true picture of the educational system, they proposed some suggestions that help them to develop their language. On the other hand, the interview with the head of department shows that students use English language in university environment, but when they communicate with him, they make some errors because of their language level, which is described weak and less than the average. This phenomenon is due to the lack In Algeria, English is taught in various educational institutions. However, even though English is taught at every level, from middle school to university, its use has been disappointing of efforts, so he proposed solutions to raise the level of English such as Practice which is an essential ingredient for success, and reading which is so important for students to perform better in English.

**Keywords:** Language proficiency, teaching strategies, theories of language proficiency, university environment

## Table of contents

**Dedication**

**Acknowledgments**

**Abstract**

**Table of contents**

List of Tables .....	4
List of figures .....	5
List of abbreviations .....	6
1. Introduction .....	14

### Theoretical part

#### Chapter I: Literature Review, English Language Proficiency

1.1. General Concepts of English Language Proficiency .....	15
1.2. Importance of English Language Proficiency .....	16
1.1.3. Aspects and Factors Influencing English Language Proficiency: .....	17
1.2. Domains of English Language Proficiency .....	20
1.2.2. Productive language .....	21
1.3. English Language Proficiency Levels .....	22
1.4. English Language Teaching Programs in Universities.....	26
1.4.1. English Language Teaching Programs: .....	26
1.5. Teaching strategies .....	27
1.5.1 Types of teaching strategies .....	28
1.5.2. Types of Learning Strategies .....	30
1.6. Challenges of Learning English in Universities .....	31
1.6.1 Language Complexity .....	32
1.6.2. Length of the Text .....	32
1.6.3. Cultural Issues .....	33
1.6.4. Text Selection.....	33
1.7. Enhancing Student's Cultural Awareness .....	34
1.7.2. Criteria for text selection .....	34

### Practical part

#### Chapter II: Research Methodology, Data Analysis, and Results Discussion

Introduction .....	38
2.1. Methodology.....	38
2.2. Population and sampling .....	39

2.3 Research Instruments.....	39
2.4. Description of Tools .....	39
2.4.1. Description of Students' Questionnaire:.....	39
2.4.2. Description of the interview with the head of department of English:.....	40
2.5. Presentation of the results.....	40
2.5.1 analysis of the students' questionnaire .....	40
2.5.1.1. Part one: Personal Information .....	40
2.5.2. The Interview.....	54
2.6. Discussion of results.....	57
2.6.1. Discussion of student's questionnaire.....	57
2.6.2. Discussion of the interview .....	57
2.7. Findings and discussion of the hypotheses.....	57
2.8. Conclusion.....	60
General conclusion .....	62
Bibliography .....	67
Appendices .....	71

## List of tables

<b>Table 1: : English language proficiency Assessment .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Table 2: The use of English in communicating .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Table 3: The use of English in Classmates' discussions .....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Table 4: : The use of English in communicating with teachers .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Table 5: Dealing with the head of department in English .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Table 6 Using English language in multiple contexts.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Table 7: Contribution in conferences and seminars presented in English.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Table 8 Reasons for learning English .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Table 9: Difficulties When Studying English .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Table 10: Suggestions for learners of English .....</b>	<b>49</b>

## List of Figures

<b>Figure 1: Students' Gender.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Figure 2: Students' Age.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Figure 3: Learning Experience.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Figure 4: English Proficiency .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Figure 5: Skill Master Effectively.....</b>	<b>39</b>



## **List of abbreviations**

<b>BICS</b>	Basic interpersonal communicative skills
<b>CALP</b>	Cognitive/academic language proficiency
<b>CEFR</b>	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
<b>SCT</b>	Socio-cultural theory
<b>L2</b>	Level 2
<b>UG</b>	Universal grammar
<b>ACTFL</b>	The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
<b>ELT</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>ESP</b>	English for specific purposes
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of proximal development
<b>PBL</b>	problem-based learning



# **General introduction**

Learning foreign languages in general, and English in particular is indispensable in our lives since English is mostly used in communication, economics, media, education, politics, tourism, and other different fields. According to Rose et al. (2021): “*English is an international language widely used across the globe and is the primary language in terms of communication*”. Due to this fame and importance, learners all over the world are encouraged and excited to learn English, to use it in different contexts and for different purposes (academic, and professional....).

Algerian decision-makers makers given importance to teaching foreign languages in general and English in particular since the independence in 1962. As a result, English is taught in various educational institutions from middle school to university, and recently Algerian educational authorities started to teach English from primary school in the academic year 2022/2023, so learners start learning English nearly at the age of 8 years old rather than 11 years old in the past years. Although English is considered a foreign language, different reforms and changes have occurred since 2001 concerning its teaching, and the adoption of the Competency-Based Approach (CBA) as an approach for teaching is the best example, since the old methods and approaches used for teaching English focused more on the mastery and the acquisition of the rules of usage (i.e. grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation...etc.) rather than the rules of use (i.e. using English in real life situations), so, there this a shift from teaching English as a system in isolation towards teaching English as communication. In addition, English is taught as a compulsory subject from primary school to university. Essentially, what can be notably said about CBA is the inevitable dependency on the communicative approach for which meaningful communication is the central objective of the approach itself (Hamidi, B. 2021). This effective and appropriate use of English requires language proficiency. This latter means different things for different people. The notion of “*proficiency*” is generally taken for granted in English Language Teaching ELT. It is widely assumed that proficiency is the goal of language learning and teaching, as is suggested, for example, by the title of the Cambridge “*Certificate of Proficiency in English*” (CPE), now known as “*Cambridge English: Proficiency*” (Weir, Vidakovic, and Galaczi 2013 in Harsch, C. 2017).

In Algeria, even though English is taught at every level, from primary school to university, its use has been disappointing, and that’s why I worked on proficiency among university students by

## **General introduction**

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investigating English language proficiency among Master 1 students at the Department of English in Ibn Khaldoun University.

The Department of English Language offers an opportunity to students to learn and graduate in the English Language, however, the need to investigate language proficiency among Master 1 students becomes a necessity to measure how proficient Master 1 students are in using English in a university setting and how effective they are when communicating in terms of speech and writing.

### **Reasons for Choosing this Theme of Research**

Proficiency in English is often a requirement for higher education and many professional fields. Understanding the factors that contribute to language proficiency can help to develop effective language instruction.

Personal motivation is related to my own experiences with learning English.

### **Background Significance**

Language Proficiency theories help us to understand the way individuals use language and these theories have a wide scope because they serve as a framework for many research projects in different fields such as schools, universities, workplaces, and business.

### **Statement of the Purpose**

Bearing in mind that language proficiency is crucial for academic success. It has been noticed that the using the English Language in a university setting decreased, this phenomenon pushed me to investigate, to explain how proficient are master one students and what challenges they may face in using English in the university setting.

### **Aims and objectives of the study**

This study aims at:

1. Shedding light on language proficiency used among Master 1 students at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.
2. It aims to provide insight into interpreting constraints in using English language students.

## **General introduction**

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3. The ultimate objective is to better understand how proficient are master 1 in using English.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions are to investigate this study

1. How competent are Master 1 students in using English in the university setting?
2. Do master students show maturity in English use at university?
3. Do master students face any challenges in using English in a university setting?

### **Research hypotheses**

To answer the above-mentioned questions. The following hypotheses are suggested

1. Master 1 students show proficiency in using English in a university setting.
2. Master 1 students are mature enough to use English in a university setting.
3. Master 1 students face challenges in using English in university settings.

### **Research Design**

This study is based on descriptive and analytical design. In order, to answer the research questions and test the suggested hypotheses.

Mixed methods research that combines elements of quantitative research and qualitative research is used to answer the research questions

Data collection tools include a questionnaire directed to the students and an interview with the head of the department of English language

The sample of this study is precisely 100 students of Master One Linguistics and Didactics.

### **The Structure of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is composed of two parts: the theoretical part and the practical part.

The first part deals with the different theories of language proficiency. It contains historical background, Language proficiency domains, factors influencing language proficiency, and also Language proficiency levels

## **General introduction**

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Finally, part two involves the methods used to conduct this research, data collection, data analysis of the questionnaire, and the interview. Discussion of the findings, referring to limitations of the study and suggesting directions for future research.



# **Theoretical Part**



**Chapter I**  
**Literature review**



**1. Introduction**

English language proficiency refers to an individual's ability to read, write, speak, and comprehend English effectively. It encompasses a range of skills, from basic communication to advanced academic and professional capabilities. Proficiency in English is crucial in globalized settings, especially in higher education and the workforce, where it can significantly impact academic performance and career opportunities. Achieving high proficiency involves not only understanding grammar and vocabulary but also mastering the cultural nuances and practical usage of the language in various contexts.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section aims to shed light on general concepts of English proficiency. Besides, it attempts to bring a comprehensive account and provides some definitions and descriptions of aspects and factors influencing English language proficiency and the theories of language proficiency.

The second section is intended to demonstrate teaching strategies and challenges of learning English in universities.

In brief, this chapter is more concerned with two major concepts: concepts of English proficiency and methods to minimize the challenges facing students learning English in universities.

### 1.1. General Concepts of English Language Proficiency

Language Proficiency has been increasingly investigated by many scholars from different perspectives. According to Richards and Schmidt (2013): “*language proficiency encompasses a range of skills and competencies that allow individuals to communicate successfully in a second language*». This means that to be proficient in a language, learners must master the four basic skills of language, which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as using them in different real-life situations with different people. This definition is supported by (Rubio & Hacking, 2019), who stated that: “*a person is a language proficient if he can spontaneously apply the rules and components of language in real-world contexts...*”. The application of the rules and components of language mentioned in the above quotation is explained by Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, (2000) who defined language proficiency as “*the ability to use language accurately and appropriately in its oral and written forms in a variety of settings*”.

Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, (ibid) succinctly capture the essence of language proficiency, emphasizing the importance of being able to use language rules and components spontaneously and appropriately in real-world contexts. True proficiency isn't just about knowing grammar and vocabulary; it's about applying this knowledge fluidly in conversation, adapting to different social situations, and communicating effectively.

Bearing in mind that attaining language proficiency is one of the key goals of teaching languages, Mutua. D (2023) suggests that: “to improve their proficiency levels; language learners should practice the four modalities which are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing...”. Further, this practice is essential to communicate meaningfully, effectively, and creatively in their target language for real-life purposes.

In the same line, Bachman and Palmer (1996) stated that language proficiency refers to “*the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in real-life situations*”.

Bachman and Palmer's (ibid) influential conceptualization of language proficiency built on the earlier work of Hymes (1972) and Canale and Swain (1981).

While the two earlier models described different aspects of what is needed to communicate appropriately in a language, that is, sociolinguistic and discourse competencies besides

linguistic knowledge (for example grammar and vocabulary), Bachman and Palmer 's (ibid) model is more comprehensive and better related to actual performance, it specifically acknowledges the intertwined Ness of pragmatic, textual, strategic, and grammatical competences and their mutual dependence on context, persons, and purpose. According to this conceptualization, proficiency can be regarded as the purposeful and appropriate application of one's communicative competencies. Kern (2000) proposed a conceptual model for understanding language proficiency, this model includes three components which represent: linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural dimensions of academic literacy. So, to be proficient in a language, learners must not only rely on knowledge and skills of linguistic components, but also rely on background knowledge, critical thinking, and metacognitive skills, as well as understanding and applying cultural nuances, beliefs, and practices in context.

Thus, proficiency is the practical application of what is learned (rules of language usage and rules of language use). There is always a chance of improvement in it whereas achievement reflects the theoretical side of it. It measures the knowledge of specific information that is what a person knows while proficiency measures what an individual can do with what he or she knows.

## 1.2. Importance of English Language Proficiency

According to Crystal (2003): *“English is a crucial language for gaining access to other cultures since it dominates the global entertainment sector, from television and film to literature and video games»*. This idea was supported by Fishman (1996) who stated that it is not possible to separate society and language because both have an impact on each other. In the same line, Kramsch, C. (1998, p03) argued that: *«language is the principal means whereby we conduct our social lives. When it is used in contexts of communication, it's bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways.”*

From the above-mentioned quotations, one can understand that language and culture go hand in hand, and this requires that learners and students must be proficient in English to interact with people from other cultures and understand them. Since a poor level of proficiency is an obstacle to effective communication.

The English language plays a crucial role in our lives by facilitating communication. It is the primary language for studying various subjects worldwide. For students, English is

significant as it broadens their perspectives, enhances their skills, and improves their quality of life by opening up job opportunities.

Authors and scholars have various perspectives on the importance of English language proficiency:

- a. **Communication and Globalization:** Many authors emphasize the role of English as a lingua franca in global communication and its impact on fostering understanding among diverse cultures.
- b. **Power Dynamics:** Some authors discuss how English proficiency can create power dynamics, influencing economic and political relationships between countries and individuals.
- c. **Cultural Hegemony:** Critics argue that the dominance of English may overshadow indigenous languages and cultures, potentially leading to cultural homogenization.
- d. **Education and Access:** Scholars often highlight how English proficiency facilitates access to educational resources, academic opportunities, and economic mobility, particularly in developing countries.
- e. **Personal Identity:** For some authors, language proficiency is tied to personal identity and heritage, raising concerns about the preservation of linguistic diversity in the face of English dominance.

Overall, the views on English language proficiency range from seeing it as a tool for global communication and opportunity to recognizing its potential impacts on cultural diversity and identity. Different authors offer nuanced perspectives based on their cultural, linguistic, and academic backgrounds.

### **1.1.3. Aspects and Factors Influencing English Language Proficiency:**

English language proficiency is influenced by a multitude of aspects and factors that shape an individual's ability to comprehend, speak, read, and write in English effectively. These aspects encompass both internal and external elements, ranging from personal motivation and cognitive abilities to social environments and educational resources. Understanding these factors is crucial in assessing and enhancing language skills across

diverse contexts. This section explores the various dimensions that influence English language proficiency.

### **1.1.3.1. Aspects Influencing English Language Proficiency**

In the Learning process proficiency may be influenced by a set of aspects “Learning motivation in a second language comes from three different possible sources:

The learners’ internal desire to become an effective L2 user, social pressures coming from the learner’s environment to master the L2 and the experience of being engaged in the L2 learning process «. (Dörnyei & Chan, 2013).

Scholars determine these aspects as follows:

#### **a. Motivational aspects**

- Motivation is regarded as an essential component of language learning
- Motivated individuals devoted efforts to learning a language whether for academic purposes or professional.

#### **b. Language environment and Exposure to language**

Proficiency is influenced by exposure to English, which includes the use of the English language daily, such as:

- Media, and interactions with fluent speakers and even native speakers via the internet.
- Individuals who are exposed to English acquire more fluency in this language.

#### **c. Instruction Quality aspects**

Skilled and qualified teachers can influence the quality of Instruction: Language Proficiency is impacted by the quality of language training and materials.

#### **d. Practice Language Opportunities:**

Consistent Practicing in speaking, listening, reading, and writing enhances language proficiency skills

**e. Cultural Aspects:** Knowing the cultural background of a nation can enhance language proficiency. It is important to know social standards and communication nuances

Language aptitude: The ability of individuals to acquire new languages varies. Language intelligence, memory, and cognitive skills are some of the factors that affect language proficiency quickly.

**f. First Language Influence**

Influence of first language: first language's structure and characteristics of individuals might help their ability to learn English, however, differences can present difficulties between English and learners' mother tongue.

**g. Socioeconomic Status aspects**

Individuals who belong to Higher socioeconomic backgrounds can help them to benefit from high-quality instruction, and materials to acquire a language.

**h. The use of New Technologies:**

Technology facilitates learning the English language such as platforms, online classes, and virtual instructors all these aspects can offer the opportunity for individuals to improve their language skills.

**1.1.3.2. Factors Influencing English Language Proficiency**

There are five types of factors that affect the language learning process: cognitive, affective, personal, environmental, and cultural. All of these factors affect language learning in different ways. (Aoyama, K., et al, 2008).

a. Cognitive factors have to do with how your mind helps you learn a new language. Learners with high intelligence, memory, and language aptitude can learn languages more quickly because they are skilled at paying attention and making connections in the brain. (Harley, B. et al, 1990).

b. Affective factors have to do with your feelings, values, beliefs, and attitudes towards learning a language. Positive affective factors like motivation influence how willing you are to start and keep learning a new language, as well as how much effort you put in. Learners with

high levels of motivation may end up becoming more proficient than those with lower motivation. Negative affective factors tend to slow down language learning. For example, language learning anxiety can distract you and prevent you from picking up on new words and grammar. (Harley, B. et al, 1990).

c. Personality factors have to do with how you prefer to interact with your environment. Your personality partly determines which language learning activities are most suitable for you. For example, learners who work well with others excel in classrooms and when cooperating with others. (Mora, J.C., & Valls-Ferrer, M. ,2012).

d. Environmental factors have to do with where and how you learn your language. In general, language learning can take place in an immersion setting or non-immersion setting. Learners who study a language through immersion tend to learn a lot of vocabulary and communication skills quickly (within a few months) and develop good intuitions about how and when to use a language. However, immersion has been shown to sometimes lead to lower levels of grammatical accuracy, which can persist for years after leaving immersion. Learners who learn in non-immersion settings (like traditional language classrooms), on the other hand, tend to develop a good knowledge of vocabulary and grammar but may have trouble applying that knowledge in the real world (e.g., in natural conversations). (Muñoz, C, 2006).

e. Cultural factors can be thought of as social factors. These include feeling accepted by the community of the target language and your attitudes towards learning languages. Cultural factors affect your motivation to learn a language, as well as how successful you are at language learning. (Saito, K., &Hanzawa, K, 2018).

## 1.2. Domains of English Language Proficiency

*"The capacity to use language correctly and responsibly in both written and oral forms in a range of circumstances is known as language competency". (Cloud, et al 2000).*

Cloud et al define "language competency" as the ability to use language accurately and appropriately in various contexts, both in writing and speaking. It implies that a competent language user can communicate effectively across different situations, adapting their language use to fit the specific circumstances. This includes using correct grammar, vocabulary, and

syntax. So, they think that Individuals who use a language in both written and oral and in different contexts are regarded as proficient.

*"Language learning is not just a matter of internalizing linguistic forms; it is also about engaging with the social and cultural contexts in which those forms are used. It involves understanding how meaning is constructed and negotiated in various settings, and developing the ability to participate effectively in those communicative practices."*(Cloud, et al 2000).

According to Cloud et al (ibid), to be proficient you should know about the language and its components taking into consideration its social and cultural aspects.

Language domains are speaking writing listening and reading the four language areas are speaking, writing, listening, and reading. Despite their links, these four areas develop independently. These four areas can be classified as oral or written, receptive or productive.

### **1.2.1 Receptive language**

Receptive language is when individuals acquire language by reading or listening it is called receptive.

#### **Listening**

Is seen as a skill that helps individuals to interpret information. Effective listening is an important way for effective communication to learn a language Listening is seen as an active process based on understanding. Learners understand and communicate messages to fulfill needs

#### **Reading**

Is defined as the ability to interact with written text. Reading is important because it improves individual vocabulary and develops communication. Most of the language experts emphasize that reading is the best way of learning a language and developing vocabulary.

### **1.2.2. Productive language**

Is defined as the ability to communicate ideas using a language like when an individual writes or speaks.



**Speaking**

Is defined as oral competence which uses language to communicate orally using verbal or non-verbal symbols in different contexts. This competence can be improved through learning.

**Writing**

When individuals communicate ideas in writing, they write to express themselves, inform and persuade their reader, English language learners may have cultural influences on their writing

There are differences in a language's proficiency among the four skills. There are English Language learners who are better at speaking listening, and writing while others are not better at speaking. Teachers are required to understand these four language domains to satisfy their learner's needs.

**1.3. English Language Proficiency Levels**

Language proficiency levels are determined and described using many references/scales (CEFR proficiency scale, ILR scale, and ACTFL proficiency scale). These scales may be beneficial in professional or academic settings

**a. The Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR)**

Is an international measure of language competency and understanding. This standard provides six levels: A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C 2

**A1 level**

Refers to speakers with a basic understanding of the English language.

The one who is at the A1 knows basic English. He can ask and answer simple questions.

How are you? What is your name?

To understand he needs people to talk slowly this level is for those who have just been learning English for a short period, or who have not practiced English consistently

### **A2 level**

At A2 level, individuals can communicate in complete sentences about simple themes. the vocabulary is bigger if compared to A1 individual interaction is limited to direct information.

Despite his listening skills having improved individual needs others to talk slowly, this level is typical for individuals who study English for the first year or have not studied it for many years

### **B1 – Intermediate (Independent)**

When an individual reaches B1 level English, he has “intermediate” English skills. He can communicate and understand English in everyday situations. He can also provide much more details about his experiences. Finally, in very simple language, he can discuss more subjective such as hopes, dreams, or opinions.

This level is typical of individuals who have been studying English for more than a year or who have the opportunity to practice English semi-regular.

### **B2 – Intermediate (Independent)**

The B2 level is commonly known as the "upper intermediate level." As a B2 English speaker, an individual can engage in conversations on a wide range of tangible issues. He may not have a large technical vocabulary, but he can express difficult thoughts, experiences, and notions with moderate correctness.

This level of English competence is frequent among adults who have been studying the language for some years and practiced regularly.

### **C1 – Advanced (Proficient)**

When an individual reaches the C2 level, he is considered an advanced student of English.

He has an understanding of more complicated grammar structures, and individuals can speak

and practice English competently in any setting. Even if he will make mistakes, they will most likely be infrequent.

To obtain the C1 level, the individual will need to study English formally for several years and regularly practice speaking and reading English. This level of English proficiency is frequent among individuals who have lived in an English-speaking country for a significant period.

### **C2-Advanced Proficient**

C2 is considered as the highest level. Individuals of this level will be able to understand spoken and written English. Even if he may make occasional errors, his ability is comparable to that of a native English speaker. Even in complex texts, he may make little differences in tone and word choice.

Individuals of C2 level have been studying English for many years, practicing with native speakers regularly and daily.

#### **b. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).**

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL).

Is a scale or standard to describe an individual's language skills in terms of proficiency in four domains listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

#### **ACTFL Levels of Language Proficiency**

##### **b.1. novice level**

- **Novice Low:** It is the beginning level of language acquisition. At this level, the individual can understand and produce words or phrases. often with significant errors
- **Novice Mid:** At this level, individuals can express basic personal information and needs, p through memorized words and phrases.
- **Novice High:** an individual can communicate short messages about familiar topics and can create sentences based on memorization.

**b.2. Intermediate level**

- **Intermediate Low:** Individuals at this level can manage simple communication used in daily context for instance: personal information basic needs.

Individuals can ask and answer questions but may find difficulties in understanding native speakers

- **Intermediate Mid:** individuals at this level can communicate tasks in straightforward social situations. They can ask and answer questions with some details about themselves. Language is characterized by simple grammatical structures.
- **Intermediate High:** Individuals at this level can communicate in social situations requiring an exchange of information related to their work, school, and recreation, they can be understood by native speakers despite errors. He can produce pieces of writing in the past, present, and future

**b.3. Advanced Level**

- **Advanced Low:** Individuals can communicate for work, academic, or social situations, but their native language still interferes with the use of false literal translations, and paragraph structure, and their speech may include a self-correction.
- **Advanced Mid:** At the Advanced-Mid level, an individual can communicate and exchange, and he can be understood by a native speaker
- **Advanced High:** At the Advanced-High level, an individual can communicate with accuracy and fluency in the language, expressing themselves in most informal and formal settings. He may make mistakes in low-frequency or highly complex grammatical structures. but he has strategies that compensate for vocabulary gaps.

**b.4. Superior**

An individual can speak the language with near-native fluency in formal and professional conversations.

**b.5. Distinguished:**

An individual demonstrates fluency and accuracy in the language exceptional native-speaker fluency and accuracy in the language, His language is extended and is organized.

**1.4. English Language Teaching Programs in Universities**

English Language Teaching (ELT) programs in universities vary widely in their structure, curriculum, and focus areas.

**1.4.1. English Language Teaching Programs:****a. Program Structure:**

ELT programs in universities often offer a combination of theoretical coursework, practical teaching experience, and research opportunities. Courses may cover topics such as linguistics, language acquisition theories, pedagogical approaches, curriculum design, assessment methods, and teaching English for specific purposes (ESP). Harmer,2007).

**b. Practical Teaching Experience:**

Many ELT programs require students to complete practicum experiences or teaching internships in real classroom settings. These experiences provide students with hands-on teaching practice under the supervision of experienced instructors. (Richards, & Rodgers,2014).

**c. Language Assessment and Testing:**

Some ELT programs include coursework on language assessment and testing, focusing on principles of test design, administration, and evaluation. Students may learn about different types of language hyus, such as proficiency tests, achievement tests, and diagnostic assessments. (Bachman, & Palmer,2010).

**d. Technology in Language Teaching:**

With the increasing role of technology in education, many ELT programs integrate coursework on the use of technology in language teaching. Students may learn how to incorporate digital tools, multimedia resources, and online platforms into their teaching practice. (Chapelle, 2010).

**e. Specialization Areas:**

Some ELT programs offer opportunities for students to specialize in particular areas of interest, such as teaching young learners, teaching English for academic purposes (EAP), or teaching English for specific professions. (Basturkmen, et al, 2004).

**f. Research and Scholarship:**

ELT programs at the graduate level often emphasize research skills and scholarly inquiry, encouraging students to engage with current issues and trends in the field. Students may have the opportunity to conduct original research projects or contribute to ongoing research initiatives. (Nunan, 2015).

**1.5. Teaching strategies**

Teaching strategies are defined as a set of methods; and techniques that teachers use in classrooms. This process can be presented in different ways depending on the context to achieve effective teaching goals.

According to Jim Cummins (1996) *"When students' language, culture, and experience are ignored or excluded in classroom interactions, students are immediately starting from a disadvantage. Everything they have learned about life and the world up to this point is being dismissed as irrelevant to school learning; there are few points of connection to curriculum materials or instruction and so students are expected to learn in an experiential vacuum. Students' silence and nonparticipation under these conditions have frequently been interpreted as lack of academic ability or effort, and teachers' interactions with students have reflected a pattern of low expectations which become self-fulfilling."*

Cummins highlights the negative impact of excluding students' language, culture, and experiences in the classroom. When these aspects are ignored, students face immediate disadvantages because their background knowledge and personal experiences are deemed irrelevant to their education. This disconnection creates a gap between the student's lives and the curriculum, making it harder for them to engage and find meaning in their learning. As a result, students may become silent or nonparticipative, which is often mistakenly viewed as a lack of academic ability or effort

### 1.5.1 Types of teaching strategies

Teachers use a set of different strategies to achieve effective outcomes, they are explained as follows:

#### 1.5.1.1. Building culturally responsive relationships strategies

It gives importance to students and focuses on their customs, characteristics, and experience for good classroom instruction.

There are steps to make the learning environment in classrooms more culturally responsive.

##### **a-Assess learner personal biases**

Academic assessment bias refers to assessments that influence student based on their characteristics, such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, religion

##### **b- Get to know his students**

Knowing student help teachers to adapt their way of teaching to their learner's needs and refine materials used in the classroom for effective outcomes.

##### **c. Adapt his teaching and curriculum.**

Teachers should adapt the curriculum according to the needs of their students taking into account their strengths and weakness.

##### **d. Elevate the students' culture and native language.**

Through giving flexibility and freedom to students practicing cultural sensitivity and respecting every student.

#### 1.5.1.2. Using Teaching Language Skills across the Curriculum Strategies

Is a method that gives importance to learning language and content.

Teachers should teach language skills like listening, reading, writing, and speaking to achieve language proficiency.

### **1.5.1.3. Collaborative learning strategies**

According to Vygotsky “*By giving our students practice in talking with others, we give them frames for thinking on their own*”

Learning is regarded as a social process in which a learner interacts with his peers in different contexts and different experiences.

Learning is viewed as a social act that results from the relationship between social interaction and the cognitive development of an individual.

### **1.5.1.4. Teaching practices strategies**

Tools and techniques to improve teacher to improve teaching practices are listed as follows:

#### **a-Using latest technology**

Technology plays an essential role in teaching it encourages Personalized Learning through online resources and educational resources

#### **b-Ask for feedback and use it**

Academic performance among students in class reflects the positive impact of teaching on learning outcomes.

#### **c-Networking and building professional relationship**

It helps teachers to stay current with research and guides them.

The teacher should be up-to-date with educational changes that lead them to improve their teaching methods.

#### **d-Professional development**

Teachers should collaborate and work in teams for professional development. They should participate in seminars and workshops



**e-Teacher reflects on his work**

The teacher should think critically about their way of teaching before during and after a lesson is done.

**f-Ensure his curriculum knowledge**

Teachers should use resources and materials designed by pedagogues and education experts that are aligned with the curriculum to achieve specific goals.

**1.5.1.5. Scaffolding Teaching Strategy**

Scaffolding as a teaching strategy originated from Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and his concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). "The zone of proximal.

"The zone of proximal scaffolding teaching strategy provides individualized support based on the learner's ZPD " (Chang Sung& Chen, 2002).

Scaffolds facilitate the learner's development.

The scaffolds facilitate a student's ability to build on prior knowledge and internalize new information.

«Scaffolding instruction is just beyond the level of what the learner can do alone "(Olson &Pratt, 2000).

**1.5.2. Types of learning strategies**

Learning strategies are defined as the specific actions or techniques individuals take to learn.

**1.5.2.1. Problem-Based Learning**

Is defined as a learning strategy based on collaborative learning, which is a central element of problem-based learning (PBL) is based on Collaborative learning, it requires several group practices and dynamics.

*"While ideal group dynamics include cooperation and mutual engagement"*(Bruffee, 1999; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Slavin, 1996).

PBL's principle is to promote collaborative learning, all group members should actively and equally participate in group discussions.

#### **1.5.2.2. Individual Learning**

Learners work on their own or they work individually to do a task or solve a problem

#### **1.5.2.3. Group Work**

Students work in groups; they practice important social skills. they discuss what they are going to do, how, and why. This helps them develop many skills.

#### **1.5.2.4. Summarizing**

Summarizing is a very useful technique to improve comprehension. It helps students to memorize for instance; the student reads a passage. Then, they identify the main ideas in the passage. At the end, they write a summary in their own words.

#### **1.5.2.5. Discussion**

Discussion is a technique to bring learning to the classroom. Teachers can ask to listen to student opinions.

They learn how to express their ideas and defend It.

#### **1.5.2.6. Brainstorming**

A brainstorm is a way to get a read of what your students know about a topic. However, it's important to set some rules before brainstorming. Accepting all ideas this technique led students to be open-minded.

#### **1.5.2.7. Modelling and Examples**

Most teachers use this learning strategy in the classroom. It's a vital one for success! In this strategy, the teacher models an example problem or assignment. With the example, children have a clear guide of what they're expected to do.

### **1.6. Challenges of Learning English in Universities**

Despite the diverse study programs, as well as the Algerian authority's interest in teaching English to students, and the Algerian state's interest in teaching the English language

starting from the primary school classrooms, some major difficulties must be taken into account when teaching English as a foreign language. The problem usually arises from the inability of students, and university students in particular, to understand some literary texts due to the language used in these texts, the length of the text, cultural issues, and other challenges facing university students.

We will try to address these challenges by shedding light on the most important of them.

### **1.6.1 Language Complexity**

Language is the most common problem faced when using literary texts. Many EFL students find literature as an obstacle since the literary language is seen as incomprehensible. This challenge is closely connected to the nature of English Literature that pertains to a different historical, geographical, ethnic, philosophical, and religious backgrounds, leading to great difficulty in understanding, imagining, and interacting with them. English literature contains a considerable amount of difficult vocabulary, and some of them are obsolete.

Moreover, some grammatical structures are often considered to be too complicated. As Widdowson (1982) states, literature can provide ‘misleading models’ and this disruptive use of language, stimulating and refreshing for native speakers, might lead to possible confusion in the case of EFL learners.

Also, some ideas and concepts in poetry are so complex to the extent that they need to be explained and illustrated so that they can be clear and understandable to the students, as well as the diversity in the styles of the English authors requires the students to adapt themselves to it. EFL students frequently find that the language used in some literary texts does not adhere to more traditional usages, but violates and even distorts established concepts in new and unexpected ways. (Widdowson, 1982).

### **1.6.2. Length of the Text**

The length of the text is additionally considered by some scholars as one of the main difficulties. Although most of the learners feel anxious when they are exposed to long texts, some others find shorter texts harder to handle, according to Maley and Duff (1990).

*“They don't offer extended contextual support and repetition which longer texts do”.*  
(Duff & Maley, 1990).

Duff & Maley suggest that shorter texts or materials typically do not provide the same level of extensive contextual support and repetition as longer texts. In educational or learning contexts, longer texts have the advantage of delving deeper into topics, providing more detailed explanations

### **1.6.3. Cultural Issues**

Cultural issues also end in some problems when it involves the use of literary texts in EFL classes. Consistent with McKay (2001), literature is soaked with cultural notions which may annoy and discourage the inexperienced reader. For Duff and Maley (1990), cultural aspects might present difficulties to the point of making it impossible for an outsider to completely comprehend and share the scope of references of an insider. “Undesirable cultural connotations” conveyed by some literary texts may additionally restrain the utilization of certain texts (Collie & Slater, 1987). Especially when there's no agreement among language teachers and designers of materials on the question of the culture —L1 Vs. L2— EFL students should be exposed to.

### **1.6.4. Text Selection**

Text selection is also considered a hard task for both teachers and learners. According to Khatib, Rezaei, and Derakhshan (2011), many factors should be taken into consideration when selecting a text like a student's age, gender, background knowledge, and language proficiency. McKay also believes that language teachers and educators should give appropriate consideration to pick the most suitable literary works. There are, of course, many authentic texts written within the target language that aren't appropriate for the extent of EFL students at both the cultural and linguistic levels. These factors are important as Lima (2005) points out,

“teachers' desire to supply students with a literary experience can also end in a source of conflict just because students don't have the linguistic, literary and cultural competence to tackle the text” (Lima, 2005).

### 1.7. Enhancing Students Cultural Awareness

Considering culture's important role in understanding literary texts, a more practical improvement of the literature teaching pedagogy is to bridge the cultural gaps between the readers and the literary works studied. Specifically, the subsequent approaches may be applied to facilitate cultural understandings of literature texts: (a) consider readers' cultural context; (b) provide students with opportunities to watch and observe characters' experiences or provide access to first-hand resources that would reflect the authentic culture within the text; (c) orient students to exploring a specific cultural issue or theme after an in-depth reading of 1 or more literary works; and (d) support students' inquiry towards a specific culture and facilitate cross-cultural communication within the learning process. (McKay, 1982).

To sum up, students will learn the language quickly and in a better manner by learning the culture of the target language, which is English, since that information will familiarize students to a good degree with the English language. In fact, cultural understanding as a method of teaching literature in professional practice is essential to be considerate from language teachers when dealing with literature in ELT classes. The importance of using approaches to cultural understanding is as follows: First, it could demonstrate a form of unique cultural value that may not occur to students. The attitude that each literary text gives to students has to some degree special culturally accurate characteristics. Second, it encourages students to explore a multiplicity of cultural perspectives. (McKay, 1982).

#### 1.7.2. Criteria for text selection

The ELT experts suggest some criteria that should be taken into consideration while selecting any material for an EFL class. And when it's about selecting any literary text for a communicative classroom in an EFL context, it noticeably necessitates more care and interest. For instance, McKay (1982) attributed the success of implementing literature within the classroom to the appropriateness and suitability of the teaching materials being used; she opines that:

*“The key to success in using literature in the ESL class seems to me to rest in the literary works that are selected”.*

(Lazar also, 1993, cited in Alam, 2015) opines that:

*“students’ cultural background, their linguistic proficiency, literary background, length of the text, the text’s exploiting ability, and fitting with the syllabus must be considered before selecting the literary composition in the language classroom”.*

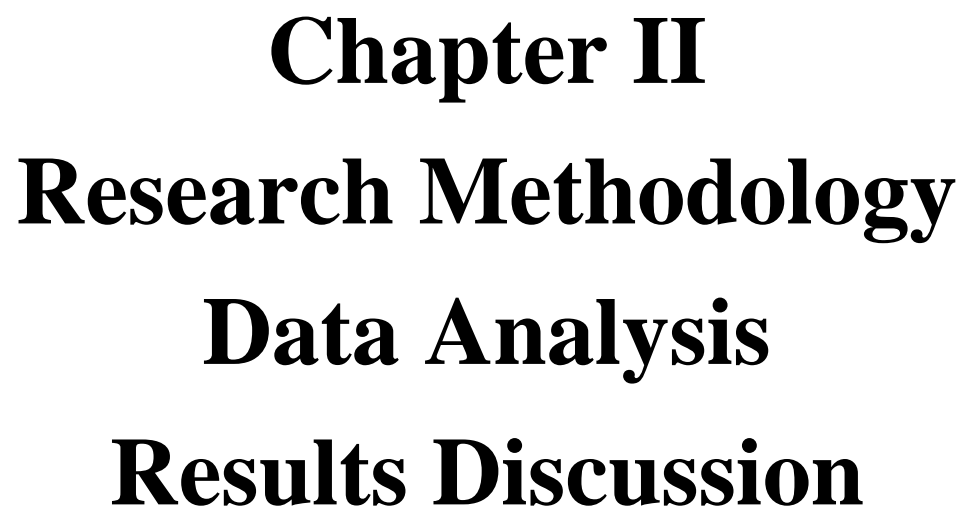
Other researchers like Collie and Salter (1987) also suggest more or less equivalent sorts of criteria to be considered before choosing any literary text for language classes like literary text’s ability to motivate the learners’ involvement and interest; texts relevant to the life experiences, emotions, or dreams of the language learner.

Generally teaching and reading literature in language classes will certainly encounter difficulties, especially in EFL contexts, unless the above-mentioned criteria are carefully considered before selecting any literary text.

However, despite the challenges; the advantages and justifications for incorporating literature in EFL classes under these circumstances several for instance it enables the young learners in developing critical thinking, analytical ability, and intercultural awareness also as well as help them to enhance communicative competence. This is a brief explanation of the main parameters and criteria for text selection frequently discussed by authorities on teaching literature.



**Practical part**



**Chapter II**  
**Research Methodology**  
**Data Analysis**  
**Results Discussion**



## Introduction

The current research study investigates English language proficiency in the university settings at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part describes the research design and the method used, the participants, and the research instruments chosen for data collection.

The second part deals with the presentation of the results of the content analysis of the textbook, the head department of English interview used in this research. Then a discussion of the results is provided, followed by some recommendations made based on the findings of the study to help students improve English language proficiency in university settings at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.

Based on the linguistic cognitive and social-cultural approach to language proficiency. This study aims to shed light on language proficiency use among Master One students at the Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret. It aims to provide insight into interpreting constraints in using the English language. The ultimate objective is to better understand how proficient is master one in using English.

### 2.1. Methodology

A qualitative approach was chosen to address this study issue. The development of explanatory theories is one of the goals of the qualitative approach. According to Morse (1996), a qualitative approach calls for an attempt to make sense of reality and explore its depth to make meaningful conclusions. It is the main method by which the theoretical foundations of social sciences can be built or re-examined. For instance, researchers may use an interview to collect data from teachers, or/and questionnaire also from teachers or both teachers and students to be discussed and interpreted qualitatively.

Qualitative data analysis is the explanation, the understanding, and the interpretation of situations and people under investigation. In this context, Cohen et al (2007) state that; *“Qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories, and regularities”*. In this respect, we seek to obtain qualitative data since we are interested in collecting data about investigating English language proficiency in university settings at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.

## **2.2. Population and sampling**

The population of this study is purposefully sampled since we opted for the participation of master one students at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret, Algeria. All the participants share the same social and cultural background.

For the interview, the sample consists of the head of the English department.

## **2.3 Research Instruments**

In this research, two data collection methods are used namely content analysis of the questionnaire and an interview with the head of the English department. We rely on binary to provide an in-depth account of investigating English language proficiency in university settings at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret. Moreover, binary is a reliable perspective since the participants are equally important in providing us with reliable data about understanding our research problem.

## **2.4. Description of tools**

To accomplish the research work, the researchers used a questionnaire to the students and an interview with the head department of English to collect data from them, to be discussed and interpreted qualitatively.

Students' questionnaire was handed out online in April 2024, in the academic year 2023/2024. The questionnaire was given to 100 students of English at the University of Ibn Khaldoun-Tiaret in our country (Algeria). This questionnaire will enable us to shape an image of the situation within Algerian English departments and examine the effectiveness of students' attitudes to enhance students' writing skills.

### **2.4.1. Description of students' Questionnaire:**

To question EFL students about the issue under investigation, a questionnaire comprises two sorts of questions; the first one is a limited question that is a general information answer, or to indicate answers from numerous options. The second one is the open-ended questions; in which the questions require full answers, sort of reasonable grounds or justifications for the choices when necessary, or asking students to submit their opinions or ideas. This questionnaire consists of 2 sections with 16 clear questions which are arranged in such a way as to mirror the essence of the current research.

**2.4.2. Description of the interview with the head of department of English:**

The interview consists of 11 questions to check the head department of English opinions about investigating English language proficiency in university settings at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.

Moreover, it aimed to provide a global picture of the importance of investigating English language proficiency and to provide accurate information on the topic.

the questions were organized from specific to general, including some “yes” or “no” requiring questions, whereas, the last was a question requiring the head department of English to give his opinion and thoughts about further recommendations.

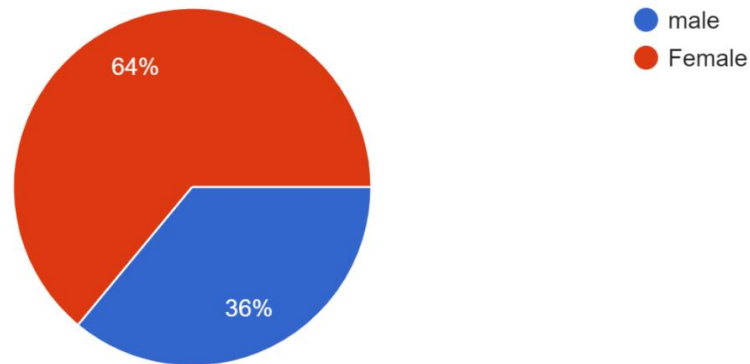
**2.5. Presentation of the results**

**2.5.1 analysis of the students’ questionnaire**

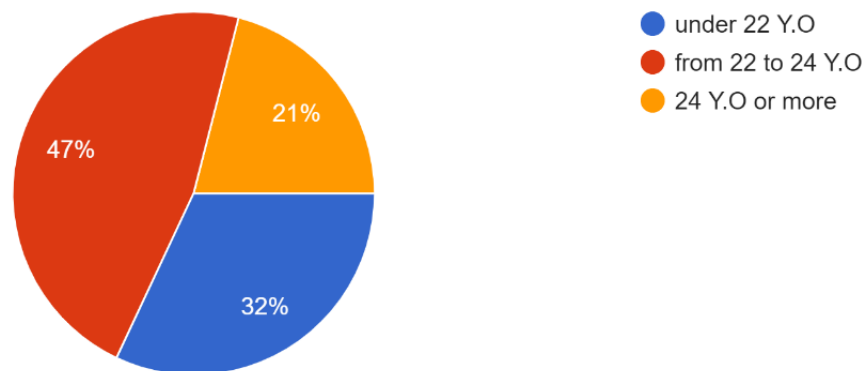
To have different points of view concerning the role of students’ attitudes and aptitude in writing and speaking skills, a questionnaire was addressed to students from Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret.

**2.5.1.1. Part one: Personal information**

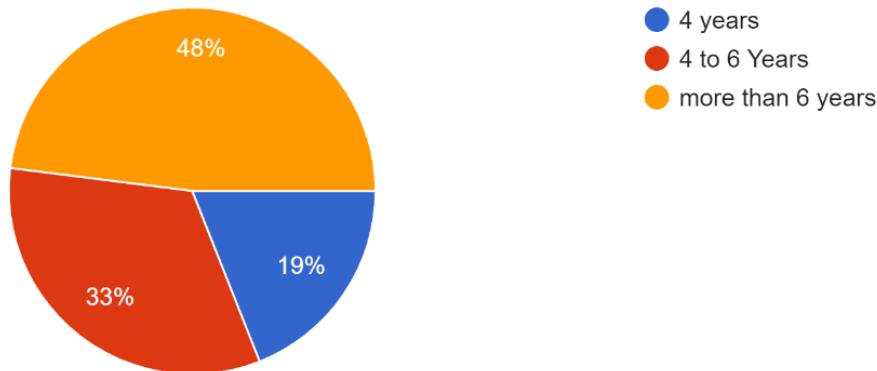
This part contains three questions that seek to know the student’s personal information.

**a. Section one:****Question 1: Specify your gender:****Figure 1: Students' gender**

Findings in the pie chart indicate that the majority of the participants are females with a rating of (64%), while on the other hand, (36%) rate of males.

**Question 2: Specify your age****Figure 2: Students' age**

The above pie chart represents students' age, varying between 22 to 24 years or more. (47%) represents the majority of students are between 22 to 24 years old. (32%) the ones who are under 22 years old, and (21%) stands for students who are 24 years old or older.

**Question 3: How long have you been learning English at the university?****Figure 3: Learning experience**

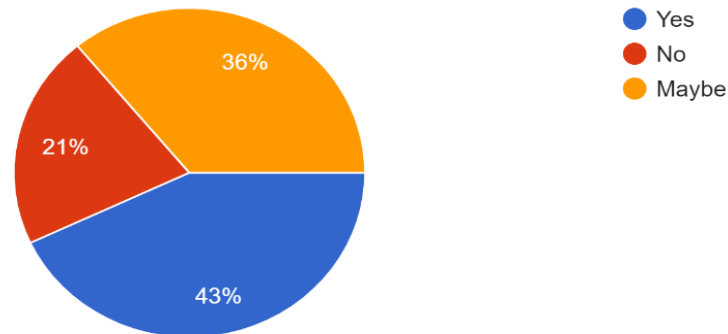
The numerical data in Figure 3 above show that most of the students have English experience learning more than 6 years with a rating of (48%). (33%) are students having experience within 4 to 6 years. While (19 %) rate of 4 years learning experience.

This indicates that most of students have good and long experience in English learning.

**2.5.1.2. Part two:** This part is divided into two sections:

**a. Section one: educational background**

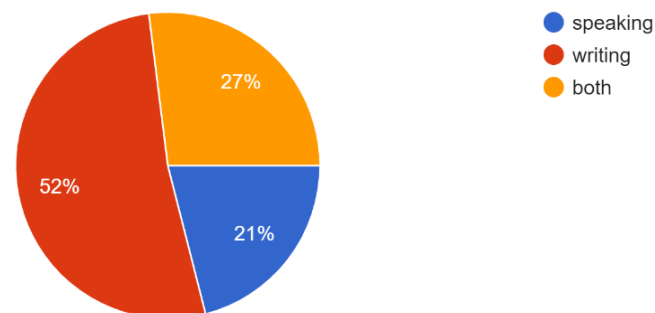
This section contains 8 questions. It aims at depicting students' opinions about their English learning experience.

**Question 1: Do you see yourself proficient English learner?****Figure 4: English proficiency**

In this question, the majority of the sample, 43%, claimed that they were proficient in English.

**Sub answer: explanation**

(21 %) of students believe that they are not proficient in the English language, even though this questionnaire is directed to first-year master students. This indicates that there is something wrong either in the educational system or in the students' scientific orientations to studying the English language.

**Question 2: Which skill do you master effectively?****Figure 5: Skill master effectively.**

The pie chart shows that the majority of the participants (52%) have good writing skills, then (27 %) answer that they are good at writing and speaking skills, and (21%) find that writing is an easy task to learn.

**Sub answer: explanation**

(52 %) of the participants responded that they were only proficient in writing English language. This large percentage indicates that the program for improving English pronunciation skills may need to be reconsidered, or new innovative educational methods should be found to apply the level of students in pronunciation and speaking skills using English.

**Question 3: How do you assess your English language proficiency?**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Excellent good	26	26%
Insufficient	16	16%
Average	31	31%
Sufficient	27	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 1: English language proficiency Assessment**

The question aims to know students' opinions regarding their English language proficiency. The majority of students' proficiency is average within 31% on the other hand (27%) of the participants claim that level is poor. However, only 26% of answers represent a good level of English.

**Sub answer: Explanation**

31 % of the participants believe that their level of English language skills is weak. This percentage indicates that these participants have problems related to how to use the best methods to improve their language skills.

This may be due to their lack of acceptance of studying the English language or because the academic program does not keep up with the development of methods of English language learning skills.

**Question 4: Do you communicate with your classmates in English?**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	16	16%
Sometimes	64	64%
Rarely	16	16%
Never	4	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 2: The use of English in communication**

As we can see in the table above, the majority of the participants (64%) answered that they sometimes communicate with their classmates, and (4%) claimed that any conversation using English with classmates.

**Question 5: Do you discuss your studies in English with your classmates?**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	68	68%
No	10	10%
Maybe	22	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 3: The use of English in Classmates' discussions**

As we can see in the table above, the majority of the participants (68%) answer that they communicate with their classmates in English studies, and (22%) claim that sometimes there is a conversation using English with a classmate



**Question 6: Do you use English when communicating with teachers?**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	55	55%
Sometimes	41	41%
Rarely	4	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4: The use of English in communicating with teachers**

This question asks if students use English when communicating with teachers. According to the table above we notice that most population (55%) participants always use English when communicating with teachers.

**Question 7: Do you deal with the head of department in English?**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	9	9%
Sometimes	38	38%
Rarely	31	31%
Never	22	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 5: Dealing with the head of department in English**

This question asks if students deal with the head of department in English.

According to the table above we notice that (38%) of participants sometimes deal with the head of department in English, while 31% of the population rarely deal with the head of department in English.

**Question 8: Do you use English in multiple contexts?**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Always	30	30%
Sometimes	60	60%
Rarely	10	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6: Using English language in multiple contexts**

As we can see in the table above, the majority of the participants (60%) answered that they sometimes use the English language in multiple contexts, and (30%) claimed that they always use the English language in multiple contexts

**b. Section 2: students' attitudes**

This section contains 4 questions. It aims to know the students' attitudes in the English language

**Question 1: Have you ever contributed in conferences and seminars that were presented in English?**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No	54	54%
Yes, and it was a very good experience	16	16%
Yes, and it was not a bad experience	28	28%
Yes, and it was a very bad experience	2	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 7: Contribution in conferences and seminars presented in English**

As we can see in the table above, the majority of the participants (54%) answered that they do not contribute to conferences and seminars that were presented in English, and (28%) claim that they contribute to conferences and seminars that were presented in English and it was not a bad experience

**Question 2: What motivates you to continue learning English?**

Option	Number	Percentage
Leisure	16	16%
Professional reasons	70	70%
Study abroad	14	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8: Reasons for learning English**

As we can deduct from the table above, the majority of the participants (70%) answer that professional reasons motivate them to continue learning the English language, and (16%) claim that leisure reasons motivate them to continue learning the English language; and the last category learn English to continue their studies abroad.

**Question 3: Have you faced any difficulties when studying English?**

Option	Number	Percentage
No	33	33%
Yes, I have difficulty communicating with others in English	26	26%
Yes, the intensive English program made me lose the joy of learning English	41	41%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 9: Difficulties when studying English**

As we can see in the table above, (41%) of the participants answered that they faced difficulties when studying English language at the English department in Tiaret as the intensive English program made them lose enjoying learning English, and (33%) claim that they didn't face any difficulties when studying English.

**Question 4: What do you suggest for learners of English?**

<b>Answers</b>
1. Practice
2. Enjoy and practice language
3. Provide the learners who gratuity with training to enhance their ability to be qualified teachers
4. Try to improve their language and practice their daily routine with family and friends...
5. Practicing skills and always using the language
6. I suggest all learn to read watch and communicate daily and never stop doing that
7. They should study well (work hard) by taking into consideration both writing and speaking skills as essential measures.
8. The more you practice the more you get the language
9. Fun activities
10. I suggest that they occupy themselves mastering the four skills of English and make the most possible use of ICT to develop their English learning proficiency
11. Learn English independently, find motivation to enjoy learning, and pursue personal satisfaction.
12. I encourage English language learners to keep learning and seek more knowledge through the language. Refrain from perceiving English as a language; it also serves other purposes. It can be your ticket to attain a specific goal and pave the way for incredible opportunities. It is not just a language; it is more than that if you look at it from different perspectives. Keep on learning. May the odds be in your favor.
13. It's all about practicing the language regularly by watching movies, reading books, and speaking English with natives.

14. To practice English otherwise they will never reach the level of professionalism
15. Practice more read and try it's not easy to sustain all the skills but do your best work yourself even if it's hard
16. To use English in their daily lives, they should surround themselves with English
17. Yes of course
18. More interesting topics to discuss
19. Making clubs speak much more in English and stop using Algerian dialectal Arabic
20. Read more and more and practice
21. I strongly recommend them to read books as much as they can.
22. To develop their English and not focusing only on the can of the department
23. Work harder and study everywhere not only in the university also try to use it a lot to be professional in it
24. Practice makes perfect
25. Learn more by speaking
26. Learn it outside the university and use it
27. Practice makes you perfect
28. as a learner I advise having a place, and clubs where they can share their knowledge when it comes to better communication
29. provide an opportunity to speak English
30. Concerning what?
31. To initiate thoughts in the English language, simply think in English even for the simplest and most absurd situations. Utilize their communication skills and what they have acquired over the years and let their mind loose as practice makes perfect.

32. provide tools and good situation study to the students
33. To read a lot. It will help them develop various competencies, help them enrich their vocabulary, reading, writing, comprehension, and eventually even their speaking.
34. I suggest a comfortable place for learning the English language because the English department in Tiaret is the last one in Algeria.
35. I suggest that they do their best to speak and write in English
36. I suggest that they should face their fair against the public speakers
37. Practice listening skills to improve your influence
38. developing English programs
39. Motivate students' conditions
40. provide good conditions
41. Out of class practice
42. I suggest that learners of the English language continue enhancing and developing their vocabulary and pronunciation
43. Reading and practicing English
44. Keep making efforts to reach your goals
45. Communicate with each other to improve your language
46. Spoon-feed your motivation and knowledge.
47. I suggest that we as learners should not Relay only on what we receive in university but should look for other sources where we can improve our English and take it to the highest level
48. Regularly dedicate time to reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. This helps in building confidence and fluency.

49. Practice and enjoy the language
50. Practice and enjoy your language
51. Practice their English not to lose it
52. For English language learners, I suggest using social media to expand their vocabulary. you can follow English learning pages, join language exchange groups, and interact with native speakers to practice. Social media can serve as a helpful tool for improving your language skills
53. Make clubs for the students who want to learn the skill of speaking
54. Continue
55. Develop your speaking skills. Try to speak and do not be shy because it is not your mother tongue.
56. Never give up
57. Practice is key
58. To read more and search for new information instead of relying on the teacher only
59. I suggest to them to be serious and to make efforts from the beginning of the path to in the English language (at university)
60. The English language is very good for you guys and it's very important in your lifestyle
61. I advise them to use the English language in their daily life. Besides, I advise them to watch English movies their translation is written in English also
62. To practice the English language more than just learn it
63. As students in Tiaret state, they must be patient in general They should work hard also try to avoid chatting GPT

64. As students in Tiaret state, they must be patient with everything because everything there motivates the student to stop learning, in general, they should work hard also try to avoid chat GPT in their research

**Table 10: Suggestions for learners of English**

The table presents students answers about What do they suggest for learners' English language,

It should be noted that we published the answers of the first master's students as they are without any grammatical or spelling changes, without modifying the answers or correcting them.

The answers are a comprehensive range of insights and advice from different perspectives, emphasizing practice, practical application, motivation, and the importance of a supportive learning environment such as:

1. **Repetition of Key Themes:** Many of the responses emphasize the importance of practicing English. The phrase "practice makes perfect" appears several times (answers: 25, 28, 32, 58). This highlights a shared belief among respondents that consistent effort is crucial for mastering English.
2. **Practical Suggestions:** Several entries suggest practical activities to improve language skills, such as reading books, watching movies, and daily communication in English (answers: 13, 20, 34, 46). These are practical, actionable steps learners can take to enhance their proficiency.
3. **Social and Environmental Factors:** Some responses recommend creating environments that facilitate English practice, such as clubs or comfortable learning spaces (answers: 19, 29, 54, 35). This indicates a recognition that the right environment can significantly impact language learning.
4. **Diverse Approaches:** The table includes various methods for improving English, from traditional study habits (answer: 7) to leveraging technology and social media (answer: 53). This diversity reflects the multiple avenues available for language learning.



5. **Motivation and Encouragement:** Many responses encourage and emphasize the importance of motivation and continuous effort (answers: 11, 12, 36, 45). This shows an understanding that maintaining a positive attitude and perseverance are essential in the learning process.
6. **Focus on Specific Skills:** Some answers highlight the need to focus on specific language skills like speaking, writing, and listening (answers: 23, 38, 56). This targeted approach suggests that different aspects of language proficiency require dedicated practice.
7. **Cultural and Contextual Awareness:** A few responses acknowledge the specific context of learners, such as the situation in Tiaret (answers: 35, 64, 65). This implies an understanding that local conditions can affect learning experiences and outcomes.

### **2.5.2. The interview**

**Question 1: Is face-to-face equivalent to a distant one? Yes or no**

**Answer:** NO

**Comment:** The Head of the department differentiates between face-to-face and distant interactions, indicating a belief that they are not equivalent. This might suggest that the respondent values the immediacy and possibly the non-verbal cues available in face-to-face communication, which might be less effective or absent in distant interactions.

**Question 2: Which type of contact highlights more proficiency? Distant or face to face?**

**Answer:** Face to face

**Comment:** Consistent with the previous answer, the head of the department views face-to-face interaction as more proficient. This could imply that in-person interactions better facilitate understanding, engagement, and proficiency, potentially due to more direct communication and immediate feedback.

**Question 3: Do students communicate in English with you? Yes or no, if yes how often?**

**Answer:** YES, ALWAYS

**Comment:** This response indicates that students are consistently using English in their communications with the department head. This suggests a high level of comfort or a mandatory practice within the department to use English in official communications.

**Question 4: Do they message you in English? If yes, how often?**

**Answer:** YES, ALWAYS

**Comment:** Similar to verbal communication, students are also using English consistently in written messages. This consistency reinforces the earlier point about the department's emphasis on using English.

**Question 5: Do you insist on using the English Language when extracting administrative documents from the department?**

**Answer:** YES, ALWAYS

**Comment:** The insistence on using English for administrative documents highlights a policy or strong preference within the department to maintain English as the primary language of communication. This can help ensure that students are continuously practicing their English skills.

**Question 6: How do you assess students' proficiency during the learning process in the classroom?**

**Answer:** LESS THAN THE AVERAGE

**Comment:** Despite the consistent use of English, the head of the department feels that students' proficiency in the classroom is below average. This indicates a gap between regular use and actual proficiency, suggesting that students might be struggling with more advanced aspects of the language.

**Question 7: As a Head of department, what do you think about students' proficiency in using English in a university setting?**

**Answer:** WEAK

**Comment:** The Head of the department views the overall proficiency of students as weak. This reinforces the need for more effective strategies and support systems to help students improve their English skills.

**Question 8: Does the English department offer assistance to help students improve their language proficiency? How?**

**Answer:** NO

**Comment:** The lack of assistance from the English department is concerning, especially given the perceived low proficiency levels. This suggests a need for the department to develop and implement support programs, such as tutoring, workshops, or language labs.

**Question 9: Can students express their needs using the English language?**

**Answer:** YES

**Comment:** Despite their perceived weak proficiency, students can still express their needs in English. This shows that while their proficiency might not be strong, they have a functional command of the language sufficient for basic communication.

**Question 10: What are the challenges facing students in practicing English effectively?**

**Answer:** They lack practice and they need to make more efforts to elevate their level.

**Comment:** This suggests that while students use English in official communications, they may not be engaging in enough practice outside of these contexts to develop their proficiency.

**Question 11: What do you suggest as a head of department to achieve an effective learning environment to master the English Language?**

**Answer:** Practice is an essential ingredient for success and reading is so important for students to perform better in English.

**Comment:** The suggestion emphasizes the importance of practice and reading. Encouraging students to engage more with English through regular practice and extensive reading can help improve their proficiency. The department could consider creating opportunities for immersive language experiences and access to a wide range of reading materials.

## **2.6. Discussion of results**

### **2.6.1. Discussion of student's questionnaire**

in this part we notice that most of the participants sometimes deal with the head of the department in English while they rarely deal with him using English this may have a negative to violating the instructions of the university systems, while they are in English language brunch, it is necessary to use it for overall academic movement to proceed in the best way. On the other hand, the majority of students answered that sometimes use English in multiple contexts but they are considered specialists so they must use it in multiple contexts.

### **2.6.2. Discussion of the interview**

The interview responses reveal that while English is consistently used within the department, there is a significant gap in students' proficiency. The lack of departmental support and structured opportunities for practice and improvement are key areas that need to be addressed. Implementing targeted support programs and fostering a more immersive English-speaking environment could help bridge the proficiency gap and enhance students' language skills.

The responses to the interview provide insight into the perceptions and experiences of a department head regarding English language proficiency among students in a university setting. The answers highlight issues related to the effectiveness of face-to-face versus distant interactions, the level of students' English proficiency, the department's role in supporting language improvement, and challenges faced by students in practicing English.

## **2.7. Findings and discussion of the hypotheses**

This part aims to discuss and analyses the findings of the questionnaire, we found answers to the research questions and hypotheses were raised at the beginning of the study which is:

- 1/ Master 1 students are nature enough to use the English language in university settings.
- 2/ Master 1 students show proficiency in using English in university settings.
- 3/ Master 1 students' proficient use is a challenge in university settings.

### **Hypothesis 1:**

**Self-assessment:**

- **Proficient Learners:** 43% of students consider themselves proficient in English
- **Proficiency Levels:** Only 26% of students rated their English proficiency as good or excellent, while 31% rated it as average, and 16% rated it as poor.

**Skills Mastery:**

- **Writing Skills:** 52% of students reported being proficient in writing, but only 27% felt proficient in both speaking and writing and 21% said that they are proficient in both speaking and writing .

**Classroom and Communication:**

- **Communication in English:** 55% of students always communicate with teachers in English, and 64% sometimes communicate with classmates in English.
- **Department head's View:** The head of department considers the students' proficiency to be weak and less than average during classroom interactions.

**Hypothesis 2:****Functional Use:**

- **Expression of Needs:** Despite perceived weak proficiency, students can still express their needs in English, indicating a functional command of the language necessary for basic communication.

**Regular Use:**

- **Administrative and Communication Practices:** Students always use English for extracting administrative documents and consistently communicate in English with department heads, suggesting a level of maturity in handling official matters in English.

**Hypothesis 3:**

**Challenges and Weaknesses:**

- **Classroom Proficiency:** The head of the Department considers students' proficiency as weak and below average, indicating significant challenges in mastering English in academic settings.
- **Practice and Support:** The lack of practice and departmental support are primary challenges. The department does not offer sufficient assistance to improve language proficiency.

**Assessment and Feedback:**

- **Proficiency Ratings:** A considerable proportion of students rated their proficiency as average or insufficient, highlighting the challenge they face in achieving higher levels of proficiency.
- **Department Head's Suggestion:** Emphasis on the need for more practice and reading to improve proficiency levels.

**2.8. Conclusion**

The findings of the practical study reveal that most of the students confirmed that they are competent and proficient in using the English language in the university environment on a large scale, that is they have sufficient ability to use the language in their university practices in various forms and aspects.

They also explained they are natural enough to use the English language in academic settings to express their need in university settings. In addition, most of the participants answered that they faced challenges when studying the English language at the English department as the intensive English program made them lose enjoying learning English and they faced some difficulties and obstacles in university settings which in turn hindered the effective progress of linguistic correspondence.

In addition, the responses to the interview provide insight into the perceptions and experiences of a department head regarding English language proficiency among students in a university setting. The answers highlight issues related to the effectiveness of face-to-face versus distant interactions, the level of students' English proficiency, the department's role in supporting language improvement, and challenges faced by students in practicing English.



**General conclusion**



## General Conclusion

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### General conclusion

The findings of the study reveal that the majority of students confirmed that they are competent and proficient in using the English language in the university environment on a large scale, which means, they have sufficient ability to use the language in their university practices in various forms and aspects.

They also explained that they are natural enough to use the English language in academic

Settings to express their needs in university settings, respecting the linguistic academy as well.

As. On the other hand, most of the participants answered that they faced challenges when studying.

English language at the English department as the intensive English program's theme lost the enjoyment of learning English, and they faced some difficulties and obstacles in university. Settings, which in turn hinders the effective progress of linguistic correspondence

- **Hypothesis 1** is partially supported, as a significant portion of students consider themselves proficient, especially in writing. However, overall proficiency, especially in speaking, is not universally strong.
- **Hypothesis 2** is supported by the student's ability to functionally use English and their maturity level, as indicated by their age and years of learning English.
- **Hypothesis 3** is strongly supported, with clear evidence from both, the head department assessment and the students' ratings indicating that proficiency remains a challenge and that there is a need for better support and practice opportunities to improve their English skills in university settings.

## General Conclusion

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### Recommendations and suggestions:

Based on the findings and the comparison with the hypotheses, these are some recommendations and suggestions to address the challenges and improve the proficiency of master one student using English in university settings:

#### a. Recommendations

##### Enhanced Language Support Programs:

- **Language Workshops:** Organize regular language workshops focused on academic English, covering writing, speaking, reading, and listening skills.
- **Tutoring and Mentorship:** Implement a tutoring program where proficient students or external tutors can provide one-on-one or group mentorship to those struggling with English.

##### Increased Practice Opportunities:

- **English Speaking Clubs:** Establish English-speaking clubs or conversation circles where students can practice speaking in a relaxed, informal environment.
- **Language Labs:** Utilize language labs equipped with software for interactive learning and practice.

##### Curriculum Integration:

- **English in Coursework:** Integrate English language support within the regular curriculum. For instance, incorporating language learning objectives in assignments and projects.
- **Multidisciplinary Approach:** Encourage collaboration between language departments and subject-specific departments to design integrated courses that address language needs within the context of students' specific fields of study.

##### Feedback and Assessment Mechanisms:

- **Regular Assessments:** Conduct periodic assessments to evaluate students' proficiency and progress in English, providing detailed feedback to guide improvement.

## General Conclusion

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- **Peer Review:** Implement peer review systems where students can provide and receive feedback on their language use in assignments and presentations.

### **Resources and Materials:**

- **Access to Learning Materials:** Ensure that students have access to a variety of English learning resources, including online platforms, textbooks, and multimedia content.
- **Reading Programs:** Initiate extensive reading programs where students are encouraged to read academic and non-academic texts to improve vocabulary and comprehension skills.

### **Supportive Environment:**

- **Cultural and Language Exchange Programs:** Promote cultural exchange programs where native English speakers and non-native speakers can interact and learn from each other.
- **Supportive Administration:** Encourage administrative support in facilitating English learning programs and providing necessary resources.

## **b. Suggestions**

### **Student Involvement:**

- **Student-Led Initiatives:** Encourage students to take initiative by forming study groups, organizing English practice sessions, and participating in language-related activities.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Create channels for students to provide feedback on their language learning needs and the effectiveness of existing support programs.

### **Leveraging Technology:**

- **Online Learning Platforms:** Use online platforms for supplementary English practice, including interactive exercises, language games, and virtual conversation partners.
- **Mobile Apps:** Recommend mobile apps that focus on different aspects of language learning, such as vocabulary building, grammar practice, and pronunciation.

## General Conclusion

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### **Promote a Culture of Reading and Writing:**

- **Reading Challenges:** Organize reading challenges and book clubs to encourage regular reading habits among students.
- **Writing Centers:** Establish writing centers where students can receive help with their academic writing and practice writing in English.

### **Monitor and Evaluate Programs:**

- **Program Evaluation:** Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of English support programs and make necessary adjustments based on student feedback and assessment results.
- **Research and Development:** Encourage continuous research into language learning needs and effective strategies to support master's students in improving their English proficiency.

Implementing these recommendations and suggestions can significantly enhance the proficiency of master's students in using English in university settings, helping them to succeed academically and professionally.



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# **Appendices**

## Appendices

### a. Student's questionnaire

#### Dear students,

This research is about "English Language Proficiency for Master 1 Students at university setting "  
"Case of Department of English at Ibn Khaldoune University -Tiaret"

Note: put across  to indicate your choice and justify your answers.

#### Part one: Biographical information

Gender male  Female  age

Learning experience: how long have you been learning English? For.....years

#### Educational background:

Question 1: Do you see yourself as a proficient English learner?

YES  NO

Question 2: Which skill do you master effectively?

Speaking  writing  both

Question 3: How do you assess your English language proficiency?

Excellent  good  average  sufficient  insufficient

Question 4: Do you converse with your classmates in English?

YES  NO

Question 5:

Do you understand and participate in discussions related to your studies in English with your classmates?

YES  NO

Question 6: DO you use English when communicating with a teacher?

YES  NO

Question 8:

Do you deal with the head of Department in English?

YES  NO

Question 9:

Do you use the English language in multiple contexts?

YES

NO

**Part two:**

**Students attitude**

**Question 1:**

Have you ever contributed to conferences and seminars that were presented in English?

If YES explain

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

**Question 2:**

What motivates you to continue learning the English language?

Leisure

Professional reasons

**Question 3:**

Have you faced any difficulties when studying the English language at the English department in Tiaret?

YES

NO

**Question 4:**

What do you suggest for learners' English language?

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

## **b. The interview**

### **To Dr. Belarbi, the Head of the Department of English**

I'm researching English language proficiency for Master 1 Students in a university setting "Case of study Department of English at the Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret".

I would be grateful if you could answer the following interview questions:

Question 1: Is face-to-face equivalent to a distant one? Yes or no

Question 2: Which type of contact highlights more proficiency? distant or face to face

Question 3: Do students communicate in English with you? yes or no, if yes how often?

Question 4: Do they message you in English? if yes how often?

Question 5: Do you insist on using the English Language when extracting administrative documents from the department?

Question 6: How do you assess students' proficiency during the learning process in the classroom?

Question 7: As a head of department, what do you think about students' proficiency in using English in the university setting?

Question 8: Does the English department offer assistance to help students improve their language proficiency? How?

Question 9: Can students express their needs using the English language?

Question 10: What are the challenges facing students in practicing English effectively?

Question 11: What do you suggest as a head of department to achieve an effective learning environment to master the English Language?