Interference of First Language in Second Language Acquisition: Considering the Cases of Rohingya Teachers in Bangladesh

Abstract

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Index terms—

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As a Language Trainer, I worked in Cox'sbazar in an international organization called Mercy Refugees House and my responsibility was to train the Rohingya camp school teachers in English Language. Moreover, all the teachers are graduate from Myanmar and I discovered some issues while training them. Furthermore, I personally observed the teachers for over two years while conducting one by one interview sessions. Since the geniuses of the two languages, viz. Bangla, i.e. Rohingya language is a dialect of Bengali, L1, and English, L2 is in many ways different externally, and because English is important in the national context -mainly as a language for national discourse, higher studies, business, and administration -the present study was considered worthwhile as it aims to gauge the extent to which L1, i.e. mother-tongue or Bangla interferes with the learning of English in the context of Bengali. When English is taught in Bangladesh's Bangla medium schools as L2, the teachers confront some major problems that hinder their learning of L2. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the linguistic zones where the interferences occur and also determine the extent of encroachment/cohabitation of these two languages. It is assumed that questions or items loaded with selected components (a mismatch between L1 and L2) are expected to be relatively difficult for a learner. In the present study, questions with differential loadings or mismatches have been identified and the nature of the difficulties of the items faced by teachers has been proved. The aim while constructing the questionnaire was to locate the areas of supposed mismatch between the epiphenomenal parameters of LI and L2 and to find out the nature of actual classroom interaction: The following suppositions were made: Agreement, Word order, Passivation, Tense, Tautology, Selection Restrictions, Supplesion or internal change, Yes-No Questions and WH-Questions. Keeping in mind areas of mismatch or difficulty and components stated before, a suitable psychometric model (Item Response Theory) was adopted to measure the learning achievement and component effect, **??**unan (1988). This paper tries to discover the areas of first language interferences of the Rohingya school teachers. This is a study on a group of Rohingya School teachers on writing errors focusing to find out the influence of their first language on their writing at teaching in the school level-(article, preposition, tense, sentence structure, etc.)

2 I. INTRODUCTION

Second Language Acquisition is contrasted with second language learning on the assumption that these are different processes. The term "acquisition" is used to refer to picking up a second language through exposure, whereas the term 'learning' is used to refer to the conscious study of a second language.

Successful learners of the English language have talked about various issues behind their success. There are two basic possibilities regarding which aspect of SLA is affected by individual learner factors. One is that differences in age, learning style, aptitude, motivation, and personality result in differences in the route along which learners pass in SLA. The other is that these factors London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences influence only the rate and ultimate success of SLA.

Successful learning depends on a variety of issues from one person to another. The identification and classification of the different factors have proved to be problematic. The main difficulty is that it is not possible

to observe some qualities directly such as aptitude, motivation, or anxiety. Successful learners have learned or acquired their second language successfully due to their ways of development as there is tremendous variety in the techniques employed by different learners.

Some learners have used one technique and some others have employed another technique. Naiman and Pickett (1978) have identified numerous study techniques. Here is a sample of those that learners reported they used to develop their vocabulary in the L2:

3   Preparing and Memorizing Vocabulary List

Individual learners appear to have highly idiosyncratic ways of coping with this. For instance one of Pickett's subjects kept a notebook in which he recorded first the English word, then the foreign word in phonetic transcription, and finally the orthographic version of the foreign word. He also reported having three vocabulary lists, which he kept going at the same time -one was arranged chronologically, the second alphabetically, and the third either grammatically or contextually.

4   Learning words in a contest

Some learners made no attempt to keep lists. They relied on picking out key vocabulary items from the contexts in which they were used.

5   Practicing Vocabulary

Various techniques fall under this heading deliberately putting words into different structures to drill oneself, reading to reinforce vocabulary, playing games such as trying to think of words with the same ending, and repeating words to oneself.

Techniques similar to these have been identified for other aspects of language learning such as grammar and pronunciation. Vocabulary is the area that the learners seem most conscious of. Working Together Peer editing is an opportunity for teachers to read, edit, and comment on each other's work while gaining reading and writing experience.

Time Allow sufficient time for all teachers to complete the assessment.

Fewer Exercises Consider the number of exercises you assign teachers for homework. It will take ELL teachers much longer to read and make sense of the exercises than native-English speakers. Often ELL teachers get so bogged down in reading comprehension that they never get to the mathematics. It will be much more meaningful and productive for both you and the teachers if you assign 5 or 6 well-designed exercises (and they'll be more motivated to try them), rather than a page or two of 10 to 20 exercises.

6   Collocation

A collocation is two or more words that often go together. These combinations just sound "right" to native English speakers, who use them all the time. On the other hand, other combinations may be unnatural and just sound "wrong". ??ook

7   III. LITERATURE REVIEW

It is a popular belief that SLA is highly influenced by the learners' First Language (L1). For instance, it is quite clear when a foreign accent in the second language (L2) speech of learners. When an Indian or a French speaks in English, his English sounds like French or Hindi. Moreover, his L1 also affects vocabulary and grammar which is immediate evidence of first-language interference.

It is believed that L1 interferes with the learning of L2 when some features are transferred from L1 to L2. A strong belief is that overcoming the process of L1 in order to cope with L2 is a complex web of systems.

Corder in 1978 referred to this view of SL as a "restructuring process". This process denotes that a learner uses his L1 language properties to structure and restructure a second language. Marton in 1981 said that there is never peaceful co-existence between two language systems in the learner and there continues warfare of newly learned ideas in memory.

Felix in 1980 mentioned that our data on L2 acquisition of syntactic structures in a natural environment suggest that interference does not constitute a major strategy but rather abandons London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences the notion of interference as a natural phenomenon in L2 acquisition.

It is necessary to examine the evolution of the notion of interference of L1 in L2 acquisition. Behaviorism has got two key notions: habits and errors. Behaviorist psychology holds that responses take place due to stimuli. The association of a particular stimulus constituted a response.

According to behaviorist learning theory, old habits get in the way of learning new habits. Grammatical apparatus programmed into the mind as the first language interferes with the smooth acquisition of the second language and this interference is called "Proaction Inhibition".

The noteworthy point is that previous learning prevents or inhibits learning of the new habits.

When the first and second languages share a meaning but express it in different ways, an error is likely to arise. Language transfer takes place from L1 to L2 and when there is proactive inhibition, error, and negative

language transfer will result. Interestingly, no errors will result when some linguistic elements between L1 and L2 will affect positive language transfer.

On the other hand, familiarity helps and unfamiliarity hinders when a learner tries to transfer linguistic elements from L1 to L2. Error Analysis is a traditional pedagogic technique to sequence linguistic items to find L1 and L2 distinctions and to devise remedial lessons.

[Understanding Second Language Acquisition-Rod Ellis (1985)

Here, we have gone through a study of over thirty Rohingya School teachers from an International organization to identify the interference of Bengali in language transfer from L1 to L2. I have tried to find out errors and mistakes in their written linguistic productions and followed a five-step process of Error Analysis.

? Collecting the data ? Identifying the error areas ? Describing their problems ? Classifying them to their hypothesized cause ? Evaluating their seriousness

The first language of the learner affects much of his learning second language learning. The teachers are told to write a paragraph about 'Their Ideas of Bangladesh' to study their interference of Bengali in using the English Language.

After collecting the samples, it is found that the teachers really depended on translation skills and most of the sentences are written on the basis of language transfer. [Research Methodology (Methods & Techniques) (1998-1999)C.R Kothari, Experimental Design, P-120-20]

In Corpus 1, one of the teachers has written, 'Bangladesh is a overpopulated country with its small length' In Corpus 2, another student has written Bangladesh is a beautiful country with its natural beauty quite common usually in Rangamati, Khagrachari, Cox'sBazar, Bandarban, etc.

In analyzing corpus one, It is actually found that the specific teacher tried to use the word-by-word translation technique. He is thinking about the sentences or ideas in Bengali when he attempted to write the paragraph most probably, he wanted to say, "Instead of its small size, Bangladesh is an overpopulated country".

And in corpus two, it is another interference of Bangla where the School teacher mentioned some places without any reference to those places and the beginning of the sentence is also redundant. He or she may specify two different ideas in separate ways like "Bangladesh is a country of scenic beauty and some of its beautiful places are Rangamati, Khagrachori, Cox'sBazar, Bandarban, Kuakata, Khulna, Sylhet, etc.

In Corpus Three, another teacher has written 'Bangladesh is a land of river with a lot of fishes available in those rivers usually caught by the fisherman' This teacher has also depended on translation skills, and probably in Bengali, he has been thinking "Different kinds of fishes are found in many rivers of Bangladesh as it is a land of rivers and the life of fishermen is really quite unique and risky as they remain busy in catching fishes.

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In Corpus Four, "Bangladesh got her independence in 16 December in 1971" He wanted to mean that Bangladesh achieved its independence on 16 December 1971. He has misused 'got' in place of 'achieved' due to the interference of his mother tongue Bengali.

In Corpus Five, another teacher has written "Bangladesh is developing day after day though it is an underdeveloped country" Here the teacher has probably wanted to say 'Being an underdeveloped country, Bangladesh is developing gradually". These five particular written sentences collected from them denote that there is a great interference of Bengali in their written production and the same case is true in their spoken production of the English Language. Moreover, due to the interference of Bengali, some specific problems like the article as in Corpus 1, Collocation as in Corpus 5, and preposition as in Corpus 4 are frequently functioning and inhibiting in Second language learners.

In Corpus Six, it is written, "We fill proud for our country". That student is completely hundred by Bengali and she probably meant that 'We "feel" proud "of" our country. Here, the teacher has gone through spelling mistakes and prepositional problems due to translation from Bengali to English.

In Corpus Seven, a teacher has written, "Every year we export crops, fishes, fruits, etc. abroad". Again, the student has come across a prepositional mistake due to the interference of the first language and he misuses a preposition before abroad. The correct sentence will be "Every year we export crops, fish, fruits, etc. abroad", In Corpus eight, another teacher has written, "Bangladesh is very beautiful country" The student omits the article 'a' here due to the interference of Bengali. The student thought that Bangladesh is very beautiful country appears correct. He hasn't understood that the indefinite article 'a' will be used before very. [Testing English as a second language.David-P. Harris (1969) Language Tests, Principal uses of P-2-4, Test Err, P ??17] In corpus nine, the teacher has written, "Professionally, most of the people in the village areas are farmers, but now people living in the city areas are drawn to working in the garments section".

The structure appears quite faulty due to the interference of Bengali. It can be written like this.

"Most of the people in villages are professionally formers, but those people, when start living in the cities, are getting involved in the garments and factories" This teacher has gone through collocation, punctuation, and article problems due to the inhibition of the first language.

In corpus Ten, It is found in one of her sentences; "There are about 16 crores people live our country" Due to a lack of understanding in language transfer skills, she has confused the sentence structure. She wanted to write

probably: "The total population of our country is approximately 16 crores. She has also omitted the use of the preposition 'in' before our country. In the 5th question, teachers asked to feel about the interest of their teachers in solving speaking practice from EFT where 12 teachers that mean 75% opined in favor of 'little interest', 3 teachers that mean 15% opined in favor of Ì?" much interest' and 1 teacher that mean 10% opined in favor of 'no interest Ì?" . In question number ten, the student are asked to prefer the medium of learn. 55% teachers chose to learn best in the 'class', 22% teachers chose to learn best with 'pairs', 14% teachers chose to learn best with 'alone' and 9% teachers chose to learn best in the 'outside class'.

9   London

10   Correction of Errors

The way of learning English In question number three, the teachers are asked to know about the way of learning English. Among 100 teachers 62% of teachers opined in favor of 'speaking', 25% of teachers opined in favor of 'reading' and 13% of teachers opined in favor of 'writing'. Among 100 teachers, most of them like 'speaking' the most.

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The preferred way of study Fig. **??**: . The preferred way of study In the fourth question, 54% teachers preferred to 'learning new words' of study English. 31% teachers opined in favor of 'teaching grammar' and 15% teachers opined in favor of 'practicing the sounds'. In the 3rd question, 6 teachers ticked on 'Neither good nor bad Ì?" , 5 teachers ticked on 'Good Ì?" and 5 teachers ticked on Ì?" weak' that mean 40% teachers opined in favor of 'Neither good or nor bad', 30% opined in favor of 'Good Ì?" and 30% opined in favor of 'weak Ì?" .

12   The importance of educational institutions

13   Errors in English made by Rohingya school teachers

While there is still a protective trend to not allow native language interference in English, interference is always there, and this makes learning difficult and/or faulty. More often than not, when Bengalis use English to communicate with others, they transfer the grammatical rules and regulations of their mother tongue to English, and, therein, lies the cause for their errors.

14   English Linguistic Problems of Bengali-Speaking Learners

It is a study while interrogative sentences are learned by the L2 learners from the micro level aspect of the language.

15   IV. THE INTERROGATIVE ADJECTIVES

The Interrogative Adjective occurs before the subject and modifies it. It can be used as an object also. But, in all cases, the Wh word comes first. Consider the following sentences: We see that the structure is similar. In other words, if the Interrogative Adjectives are used as subjects, and are followed by a verb, the Bengali and English Interrogative Sentences are alike in structure. If the sentence has an object, the object comes before the verb as it is seen in the sentence,-koon dukkha tumake byatita kareche ? (which misfortune you has upset).

In the same manner, if we look at the transliterated translation of the sentences numbering from xiii to xvi, we find them as – This structure is dissimilar from that of Bengali in the fact that the auxiliary verb comes before the subject of the sentence. But, here, it is to be noted that there is no trend of using any auxiliary verb in Bengali.

When What and Which are used as Interrogative Adjectives, both the Wh words give the same meaning in Bengali, whereas in English both the words are not alike in usage (Thomson A. J. & Martinet A. V. A Practical English Grammar, (4th edition), Oxford University Press, Delhi,1994; P-72).

16   Yes or No Questions

Apart from the Wh questions, there are other kinds of Interrogative Sentences to which the answer is given by Yes or No. To make this kind of sentence, we place the first auxiliary verb before the subject in English and to express this we have to use " ki " in Bengali. For example, "Have you read the book? " gives theBengali transliteration-Jahurul Islam **??**2003) Tumi ki boita padecha? you the book have read.

The second word " ki " in Bengali transliteration is the result of the shifting of the auxiliary verb before the subject. Here, it is necessary to note that Bengali has no corresponding word for English Auxiliary verbs. Only the Modal Auxiliaries show their appearance in Bengali.

17 Tag Questions

In addition to the above two cases of Interrogative Sentences, we also have another sort of question known as a Tag Question. For Question Tags, we have an affirmative question after a negative statement and vice versa. The Tag Questions are not unique to English. We also have it in Bengali. This type of tag question is used for the sake of confirmation or denial of any statement. In Bengali, we frequently use the term " tai na " (Rashid M. Harunur, English for Bangali Learners, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh, February 2001, p-32.). And this is similar to any kind of tag question in English. But, it is not a real question at all. Rather, through this sort of tag question, the speaker tries to find out whether he/she is in agreement with the listener (Rashid M Harunur, English for Bangali Learners, Bangla Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh, February 2001, p-32).

18 The Use of the Declarative Mood to ask Questions

It is true that Interrogatives are the principal means of asking questions. But it is not the only medium for asking a question. Sometimes, the declarative mood, in which we declare something in the manner of the proposition, acts as a question. The sentence -"Surely you remember that comrade?" in George Orwell's Animal Farm is undoubtedly a question. In written English, this is shown by a question mark and in the case of verbal communication by distinctive intonation (Thomson A.J. & Martinet A.V. p. 127).

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In other words, a declarative mood can become an Interrogative sentence because of the speaker's mood. In the same fashion, Bengali also we have this kind of question. The sentence Tumi mate football khela (You play football in the field), which is a Declarative sentence from a structural point of view and is in no way an Interrogative, can become an Interrogative sentence because of the emphatic and distinctive intonation of the speaker.

English-speaking people say the sentence "How do you do?" after an introduction. Originally it was an inquiry about other people's health. The expression is, from a structural point of view, an Interrogative. But now it is merely a formal greeting. But, we the Bengali-speaking people do not have any such expression.

19 Use of Interrogative Sentences

A good number of errors bear a strong resemblance to the characteristics of the learner's mother tongue. The use of Interrogative Sentences clearly reveals this phenomenon.

[Linguistics: An Introduction (1999) Andrew Radfond, Martin Atkinson, David Britain, Harald Clahsen, Andrew Spencer.Linguistic Variables and language use 53ff.] When we want to know something or inquire about something, we use sentences that are called Interrogative Sentences or Questions. Usually, we ask questions or inquire about some person or thing that either performed some action or activity or received the action. Questions are also asked about the manner, the reason, the time, and the place of the performance of the action. So, we have to be very sure about the thing or idea our potential question is aiming at and our use of the Interrogative Word should be based mainly on this knowledge.

20 Interrogative Sentences in English -Yes or No Type

In English, there are two common but contrasting ways of asking questions, one by which we ask for specific information and another by which we only want a simple yes or no as an answer (Freeborn Dennis, 1995, A Course Book in English Grammar. Palgrave, New York, 1995).

In the former case, in English, for specific information, we make use of a set of function words, and all these words except " how " begin with Wh. These Wh words demand specific information. They can not be answered with yes or no.

21 Wh words in English

The Wh words are grouped into three classes. The Wh words, the classes they belong to, their uses, and the transliteration of their Bengali substitutes are given below. It is also discovered that there are four special criteria to which teachers have agreed more and these are exposure to the English Language, basic development of grammar, breaking the fear of speaking, and reading story books. There are four other criteria which teachers have agreed the least and these are: confident learning environment, reading a text aloud, pronunciation practice, and practicing with a good peer.

Apart from these eight particular criteria, teachers have agreed on the other twelve factors as more on less having at least 50% to 70% importance.

Even then, it is found that a learned background knowledge, circumstance, surrounding environment, family education, and academic knowledge also play a very significant role in developing the skill in Second Language.

22 VI. CONCLUSION

From the above study, it appears that there are points of similarity and dissimilarity between English and Bengali Sentences which helped a lot in learning English. The principal similarity is seen when the Wh word acts as the subject of the sentence in the case of Interrogative sentences. The basic causes of dissimilarity are seen in the case

of Wh words when they act as objects, and also in the case of yes / no questions because in Bengali there is no Auxiliary verb in the case of interrogative sentences. In the matter of Question Tags, in comparison to English, we the Bengali-speaking people have our expression with the same objective as English. Thus in various ways of using Interrogative Sentences we, the Bengali-speaking people have some similarities as well as dissimilarities with the native speakers of English :Herbert H. **??**lark (1977) The foregoing explication, exemplification, analysis, and interpretation have made it clear that the Bengali-speaking EFL learner encounters phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic problems due to two fundamental causes.

The syllabus inevitably has to contain the linguistic items the learner lacks and wants in the sequence in which he/she will best learn and internalize them to use them correctly, appropriately, and spontaneously in his/her real-life communication. Corder (1973: In other words, the syllabus first specifies the linguistic items according to the learner's needs and wants. It then orders the items as per their difficulty level and priorities in communication. It is especially recommended that the items which pose serious problems to the learner should be given more emphasis and sufficient treatment in the syllabus.

The learner him/herself cannot automatically take responsibility for the learning task. The teacher is then the right person to equip the learner with the capability of taking responsibility for his/her learning. And to do that, the teacher has to have adequate qualifications coupled with proper and perfect training. More specifically, the teacher has to have a thorough knowledge of the linguistic elements and a solid command of all the skills of the target language, on the one hand, and adequate expertise in and experience in contrastive analysis, needs analysis, syllabus design, material construction, adaptation, and adoption, teaching methods, use of equipment and testing on the other. To specify the teacher's competence and role, Maniruzzaman [1]

Figure 1:

Figure 2: Fig. 1 :

Figure 3: Fig. 2 :Fig. 3 :
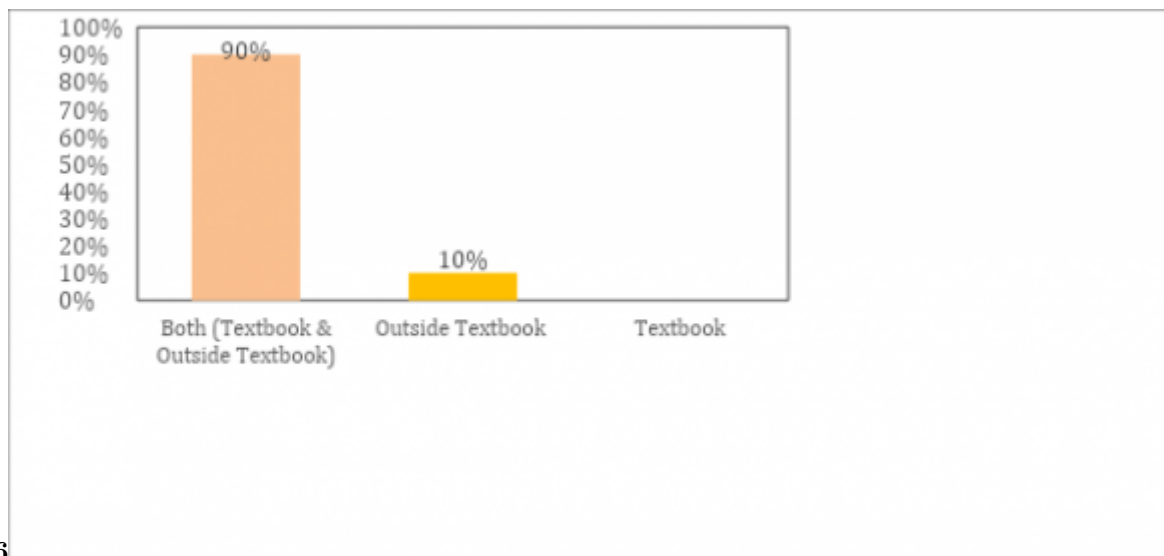
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Figure 4: Fig. 4 :Fig. 5 :

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Figure 5: Fig. 6 :

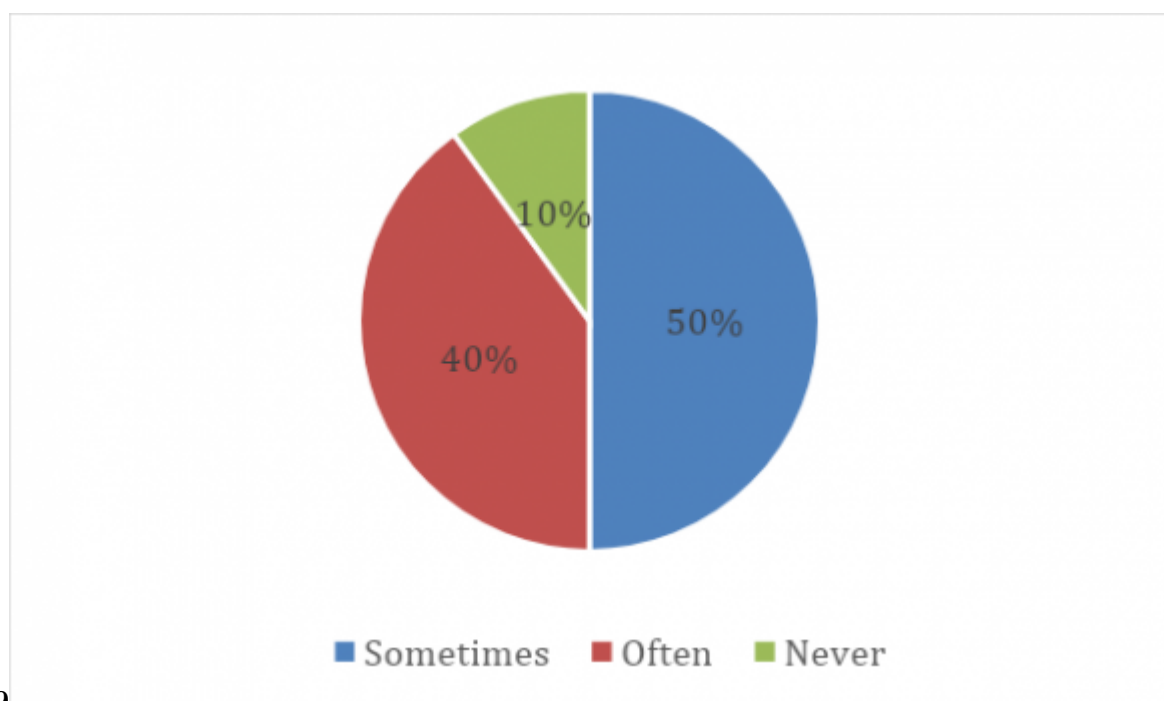**89**

Figure 6: Fig. 8 :Fig. 9 :
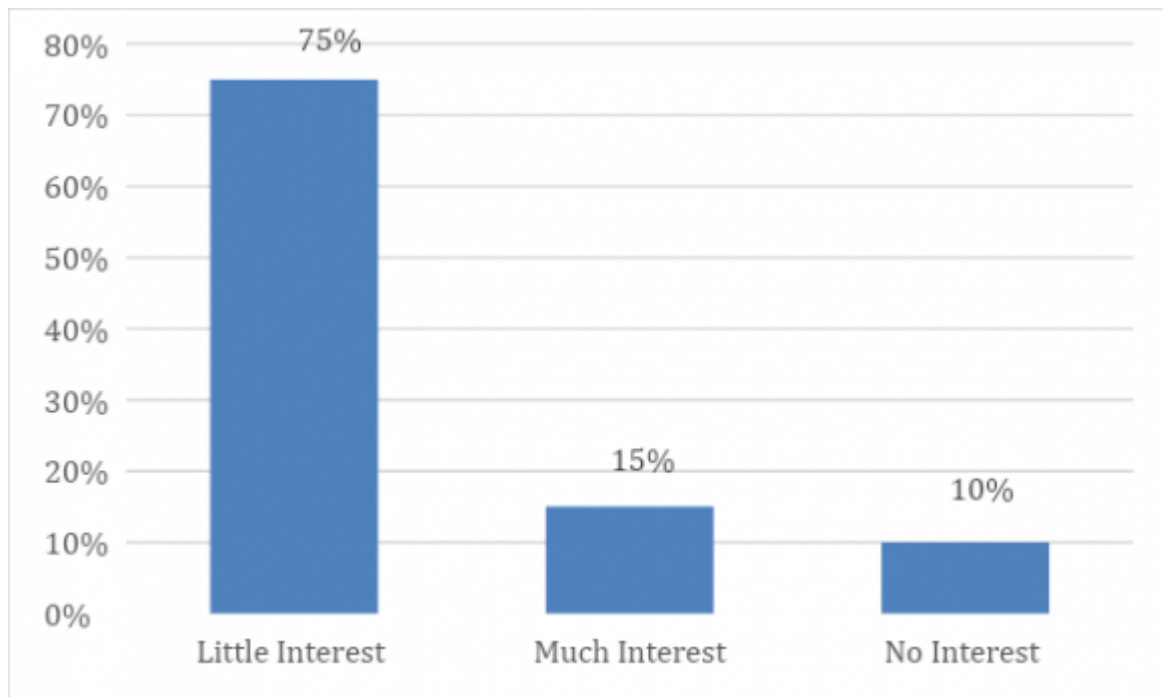
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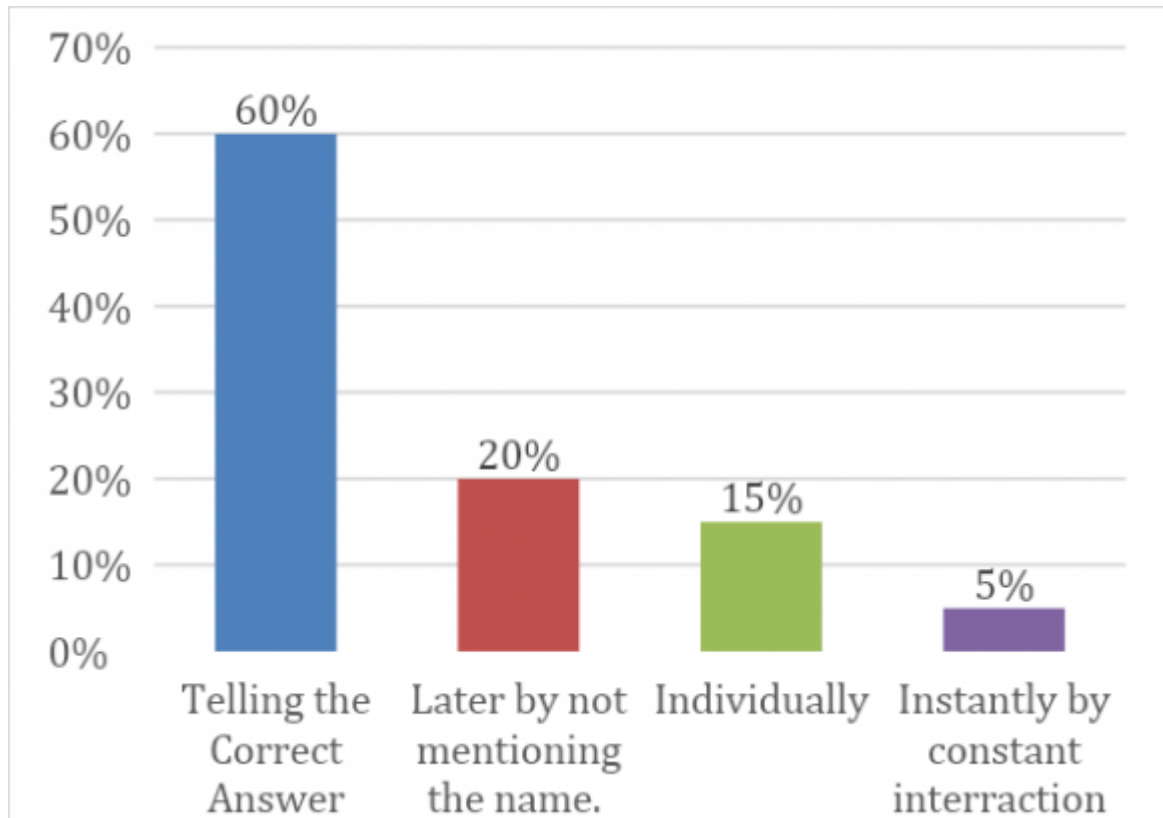Figure 8:
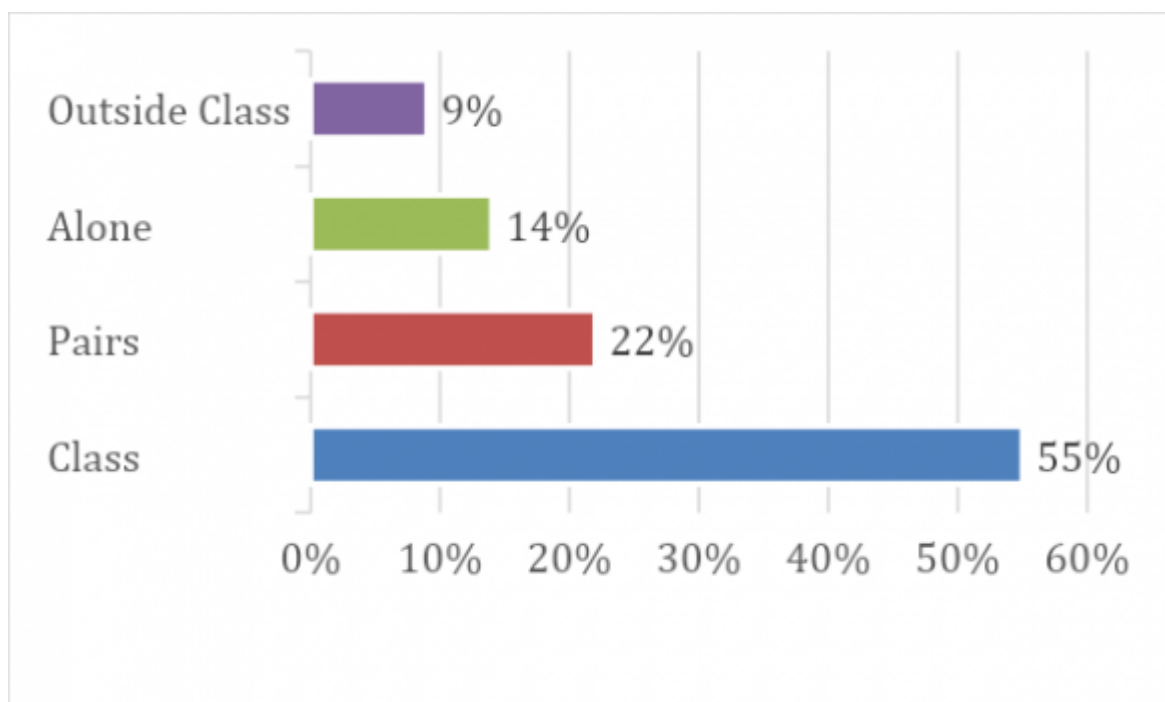
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Figure 9:

what
whose
how   number or amount
many

4.7 With preposition

If the Wh words -whom, which, and what -act as
the objects of the preposition in formal English,
we use Preposition + whom /what /which
ENGLISH
xvii.With whom did you go?
xviii. To which address did you send it ?

London CLASSES interrogative pronouns xix. On what do you depend ? WH-WORD Who what V. FINDINGS
Journal
of
Research
in
Human-
i-
ties
and
So-
cial
Sci-
ences

learning.

Which   for person and thing
Very surprisingly in Corpus 2, It is found that the
interrogative adverbs   when   to know " at what time

student has mentioned ten factors which are
Where identified as dissimilar factors by the first to know " at what place"
student.   to know " for what
why
Then, I have taken these two teachers into great
How consideration. In corpus one, the first student is to know " in what way"
interrogative actually from the communicative language
Which
adjectives

12

Figure 10:

Figure 11:

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