Investigating the Nexus between French and English Writing Skills among Moroccan EFL Learners: A Correlational Study

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Abstract- This empirical study investigates the potential association between writing proficiency in French and English among Moroccan undergraduate EFL learners. Employing a correlational design, the study examined the relationship between these writing skills through standardized tests and statistical analyses (Pearson's correlation, Kendall's tau-b, and regression). The results revealed no statistically significant correlation, suggesting that French writing proficiency does not have a significant explanatory power for English writing skills. These findings contribute to the understanding of cross-linguistic transfer in EFL writing, highlighting the need to consider factors beyond structural similarity between languages. While limitations include sample size and design, the study underscores the importance of cross-linguistic transfer in EFL pedagogy. Future research with more diverse samples and employing longitudinal or interventionist approaches can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how prior language learning shapes EFL writing development.

Keywords- Cross-linguistic transfer, EFL writing, Writing proficiency, Correlational design, Second language acquisition

I. INTRODUCTION

Effective writing skills are fundamental to success in foreign language acquisition. They empower learners to express themselves clearly, navigate diverse academic and social settings, and participate actively in the target language community. For students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), developing strong writing proficiency is particularly crucial. It equips them to excel in their academic pursuits, communicate effectively in future careers that increasingly require global competency, and engage confidently with the vast resources available in English. Understanding the factors that influence EFL writing development is vital for educators seeking to

optimize learning strategies. Research has identified various influences, including learners' prior language experience, exposure to authentic written materials, and pedagogical approaches employed in the classroom. One intriguing area of exploration lies in the potential interplay between previously acquired languages and the development of new ones. This study delves into this specific factor, investigating whether a student's existing linguistic knowledge in another language can influence their ability to write effectively in English.

The concept of cross-linguistic transfer posits that knowledge and skills from one language can be transferred to facilitate learning in another. This transfer can be positive, where similarities between languages enhance acquisition, or negative, where

differences create interference. In the context of EFL learners with a strong foundation in French, a commonly taught second language in Morocco, this study examines whether this prior linguistic experience translates to enhanced writing abilities in English.

This research investigates the following question: Is there a statistically significant correlation between writing proficiency in French and writing proficiency in English among undergraduate EFL students in Morocco? By exploring this relationship, the study aims to shed light on the potential impact of prior language experience on EFL writing development.

The significance of this study extends beyond the immediate context. A significant correlation between French and English writing proficiency would suggest that knowledge acquired in one language can facilitate the development of writing skills in another. This finding could have valuable implications for EFL pedagogy, informing the design of curriculum and teaching methods that leverage students' existing language knowledge to bolster their English writing skills. Conversely, a lack of correlation would suggest that these writing skills develop independently, prompting further investigation into other factors influencing EFL writing proficiency. Furthermore, the findings can contribute to a deeper understanding of cross-linguistic transfer and its potential role in second language acquisition. By exploring this relationship, this study seeks to illuminate the complex interplay between languages and contribute to the ongoing dialogue on optimizing EFL writing instruction.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Cross-linguistic Transfer in Second Language Acquisition

The concept of cross-linguistic transfer, where knowledge and skills from one language influence learning in another, has been a cornerstone of second language acquisition (SLA) research for decades (Ellis, 1985). This transfer can be positive, leveraging similarities between languages to accelerate acquisition. For example, studies by researchers like Jia (2019) demonstrate how learners whose native language shares similar writing systems with their target language (e.g., Arabic speakers learning Hebrew) exhibit faster vocabulary development due to cognates (words with shared origins).

However, transfer can also be negative, leading to interference when significant differences exist between languages. Schmidt (2000) posits that learners subconsciously apply previously learned grammatical rules to the new language, creating errors. For instance, research by Myles et al. (2004) found that Spanish speakers learning English often struggle with subject-verb agreement due to the different verb conjugation systems in their native language. Understanding these dynamics of positive and negative transfer is crucial, as they can significantly impact the success of EFL learners.

Current research in SLA continues to explore the complexities of cross-linguistic transfer. Researchers like Dewaele and Van der Auwera (2019) emphasize the role of individual learner factors, such as aptitude and language learning strategies, in influencing the effectiveness of transfer. Additionally, the rise of multilingualism has sparked interest in the potential for positive interactions between multiple languages, with researchers like Birdsong (2016) suggesting that a strong foundation in one language can facilitate learning in a subsequent language. These ongoing investigations can provide valuable insights for optimizing EFL pedagogy by harnessing the benefits of transfer while mitigating potential interference.

2. Theoretical Framework

Cummins' (1981, 2008) theory of Linguistic Interdependence (LI) proposes a fascinating interplay between first language (L1) and second language (L2) proficiency. He argues that development in one language can facilitate development in the other, particularly for skills related to cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). This theory holds significant relevance for the current study investigating the potential association between French and English writing proficiency among EFL learners.

LI differentiates between two types of language skills: Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and CALP. BICS, essential for everyday social interaction, develops rapidly with exposure. CALP, on the other hand, takes considerably longer to develop and allows individuals to engage with complex academic concepts and express themselves in more nuanced ways. According to Cummins (1984), as learners develop CALP in their L1, they establish a strong underlying foundation for CALP development in their L2. This suggests that strong French writing skills, reflecting well-developed CALP in French, could potentially contribute to the growth of CALP in English writing for the EFL learners in this study. Recent research by Akkari and Radhouane (2022) supports this notion, demonstrating positive transfer effects of strong L1 literacy skills on L2 academic writing development.

The current study's exploration of the correlation between French and English writing proficiency aligns with LI's core tenets. By examining this relationship, the study can offer valuable insights into the potential transfer of CALP skills from French to English. If a positive correlation is found, it would lend support to Cummins' theory, suggesting that strong L2 CALP can act as a springboard for L3 CALP development. Conversely, a lack of correlation would not necessarily negate LI, but might highlight the influence of other factors on L2 writing proficiency besides L2 CALP. These factors could include, as Garcia (2009) suggests, individual learner characteristics or instructional approaches that promote cross-linguistic connections. Additionally, Swain's (2004) work on the settlement hypothesis emphasizes the importance of sustained exposure and interaction in the L2 environment for effective transfer.

Regardless of the outcome, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay between languages in the context of EFL writing development. The findings can inform pedagogical practices by highlighting the potential benefits of leveraging L2 CALP to enhance L3 writing proficiency and the need for strategies that address additional factors influencing transfer effectiveness.

Figure 1: The Interdependence paradigm of L1 and L2 based on Cummins (Hamel and Francis, 2006)

Drawing on the work of Cummins (1984), research suggests that skills developed while learning a second language (L2) can be transferred to benefit the acquisition of a third language (L3), particularly in the realm of writing. This phenomenon highlights the interconnectedness of language learning, where foundational abilities honed in one language can serve as a springboard for proficiency in another. This transfer of knowledge and strategies becomes especially relevant for writing skills, which rely on broader cognitive processes like organization, critical thinking, and grammar application, which can be developed across multiple languages.So, Writing "… is thought to help students reinforce the grammatical structures, enhance vocabulary, and assist other skills such as reading, listening, and speaking" (Akki and Larouz, 2021, p,20).
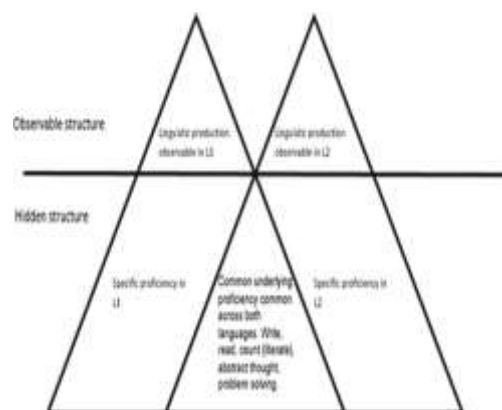

Figure 2: The model of a dual iceberg (linguistic interdependence) according to Cummins (adopted and adapted from: Akkari and Radhouane, 2022)

3. Potential benefits and Challenges of cross-Linguistic Transfer in EFL Writing

Cross-linguistic transfer in EFL writing presents a double-edged sword, offering both potential benefits and challenges for learners. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for optimizing EFL pedagogy. On the positive side, cross-linguistic transfer can be a powerful tool for leveraging existing knowledge to accelerate EFL writing development. Studies by Ferris (2016) highlight how transferable skills from L1 or L2 writing, such as the use of cohesive devices, can readily enhance the organization and coherence of EFL writing. Additionally, a strong foundation in another language can boost learners' confidence and metacognitive awareness (Larouz, 2012). As shown by research from MacIntyre et al. (2019), this translates to a more strategic approach to EFL writing, where learners can consciously draw upon their existing linguistic repertoire to navigate the complexities of English writing tasks. Furthermore, recent research by Birdsong (2021) suggests that the act of juggling multiple languages can enhance cognitive flexibility, potentially leading to faster adaptation and learning in EFL writing.

However, cross-linguistic transfer also presents potential challenges that need careful consideration. Negative transfer, where learners subconsciously apply patterns from their L1 or L2 that differ from English conventions, can lead to errors. Research by Myles et al. (2018) exemplifies this by demonstrating how learners accustomed to a different verb conjugation system in their native language might struggle with subject-verb agreement in EFL writing. Additionally, significant differences in writing systems or grammatical structures can create obstacles. As noted by Barger (2020), learners transitioning from languages with vastly different writing systems (e.g., Arabic to English) may require more time and effort to master the specific conventions of English orthography.

4. Studies exploring the influence of Prior Language learning on EFL Writing Development

The influence of prior language learning on EFL writing development is a complex and multifaceted area of research within Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Studies have consistently shown that learners' existing linguistic knowledge can impact their English writing skills, but the nature and extent of this impact vary depending on several factors (Larouz, 2012).

One key factor is the degree of similarity between the previously learned language (L2) and English. Research by Barger (2018) suggests that learners with a strong foundation in a language sharing structural features with English, like French or Spanish, might demonstrate advantages in specific areas. These learners may exhibit better sentence structure and word order in their EFL writing due to transferable syntactic patterns (Barnett, 2005). However, the benefits can be nuanced. For instance, research by Dewaele et al. (2018) highlights that even with structural similarities, significant differences in writing conventions (e.g., essay organization) can create initial challenges for EFL learners accustomed to a different writing style in their L2 (Akki and Larouz, 2020).

Beyond structural similarities, the influence of prior language learning extends to vocabulary development. Studies by Jia and MacWhinney (2010) demonstrate that learners with experience in a language that shares cognates with English might have a head start in building their English vocabulary. This advantage stems from the ability to transfer knowledge of shared word roots and morphology across languages. Conversely, learners with limited exposure to languages with cognates to English may require additional effort to develop their EFL lexicon (Milton & Meara, 2009).

Overall, the research paints a picture of a dynamic interplay between prior language learning and EFL writing development. While structural and lexical similarities can offer advantages, the specific nature of the L2 and individual learner factors play a crucial role in shaping the impact on writing skills. Understanding these complexities is essential for EFL educators seeking to optimize learning strategies and leverage the potential benefits of students' existing linguistic knowledge (Hamdanat, 2024; Yun et al, 2012).

In a nutshell, while cross-linguistic transfer offers valuable opportunities for EFL learners, it is a complex phenomenon with both advantages and disadvantages. By acknowledging these dynamics and tailoring instruction accordingly, educators can create a learning environment that maximizes the benefits of transfer while mitigating potential challenges. This can involve activities that promote conscious comparison between languages, targeted instruction on areas prone to interference, and strategies for adapting existing writing skills to the specific demands of English writing (Hamdanat, 2023).

III. METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

This study adopts a correlational research design, as detailed by Creswell (2014) and other prominent methodologists (e.g., Bryman, 2016; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2020). This design is particularly suited to explore the potential association between two existing variables – writing proficiency in French and English among undergraduate EFL students in Morocco. Unlike experimental designs, which manipulate variables to establish causal relationships, correlational studies focus on measuring the current characteristics of participants and analyzing the statistical relationship between those measurements. In this context, the study aims to identify any statistically significant correlation between the students' French and English writing skills. While a correlational design cannot definitively prove that French proficiency directly causes improvements in English writing, it offers valuable insights into the potential interplay between these languages in the context of EFL learning. This approach allows us to explore whether there exists a meaningful association between French writing ability and English writing proficiency, paving the way for further investigation into the underlying mechanisms and pedagogical implications.

2. Participants

This study employed a convenience sampling technique to recruit a sample of EFL S4 undergraduate students enrolled in a program where English language skills are a core component. The sample size consisted of 76 participants, with a gender distribution of approximately 30% male and 70% female. While detailed socio-economic information was not collected, the sample likely reflects a student population with a range of backgrounds.

3. Data Collection Instruments

Data collection for this study relied on standardized writing proficiency tests designed to assess the writing skills of EFL learners. Both tests were administered in their respective languages (French and English) and adhered to established frameworks for evaluating writing ability. The French writing test focused on measuring participants' ability to communicate effectively in writing on a specific topic, employing prompts that assess grammatical accuracy, vocabulary usage, and organization of ideas. Similarly, the English writing test aimed to evaluate participants' writing proficiency in English, focusing on aspects like sentence structure, coherence, and the appropriate use of English for academic purposes. By utilizing standardized tests, the study aimed to ensure consistency and facilitate reliable comparisons between participants' writing abilities in both languages.

4. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for this study followed a structured procedure. Participants first completed the French writing test, followed by the English writing test. Each test was allocated 60 minutes to ensure sufficient time for students to demonstrate their writing proficiency comprehensively. Prior to commencing the tests, the researcher provided a clear explanation of the study's purpose and emphasized that the assessments were solely for research and would not impact their academic standing in any way. This transparency aimed to minimize anxiety and encourage participants to perform to the best of their ability in both languages.

5. Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis for this study involved a multi-step process utilizing statistical software like SPSS

version 21. First, the scores obtained by participants on both the French and English writing proficiency tests were carefully entered into the program. SPSS then facilitated the application of Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient. This statistical test is specifically designed to measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two continuous variables, in this case, the students' scores on the French and English writing tests. Following the correlation analysis, an ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was employed to explore any potential differences in writing proficiency scores. Finally, a Durbin-Watson test was conducted to assess the presence of autocorrelation (serial dependence) in the residuals, ensuring the validity of the correlation analysis results. By employing these statistical procedures, the study aimed to identify any statistically significant correlation between French and English writing proficiency and potentially uncover any relevant influences of participant characteristics.

IV. RESULT

1. Descriptive Statistics

This section delves into the core objective of the study: exploring the potential correlation between undergraduate EFL students' writing proficiency in French and English. It aims to answer the following research question:

Research Question (RQ)

Is there a statistically significant correlation between students' writing proficiency in French and their writing skills in English?

The corresponding directional hypothesis posits:
Directional Hypothesis (DH)
There is a positive correlation between students' writing proficiency in French and their writing skills in English.

In simpler terms, this hypothesis predicts that higher French writing proficiency scores will be associated with higher English writing proficiency scores. To examine this relationship, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was calculated. This statistical test measures the

strength and direction of the linear association between two continuous variables, in this case, the scores obtained on the French and English writing proficiency tests. Additionally, a scatterplot was generated to visually represent the distribution of the data points and provide preliminary insights into the nature of the relationship.

The results of the correlation analysis was presented alongside their interpretation and discussion. Furthermore, regression analysis was employed to quantify the strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This analysis can provide insights into the predictive power of French writing proficiency on English writing skills.

Prior to interpreting the results, it is crucial to address the null hypothesis:

Null Hypothesis (NH)
There is no statistically significant correlation between students' writing proficiency in French and their writing skills in English.
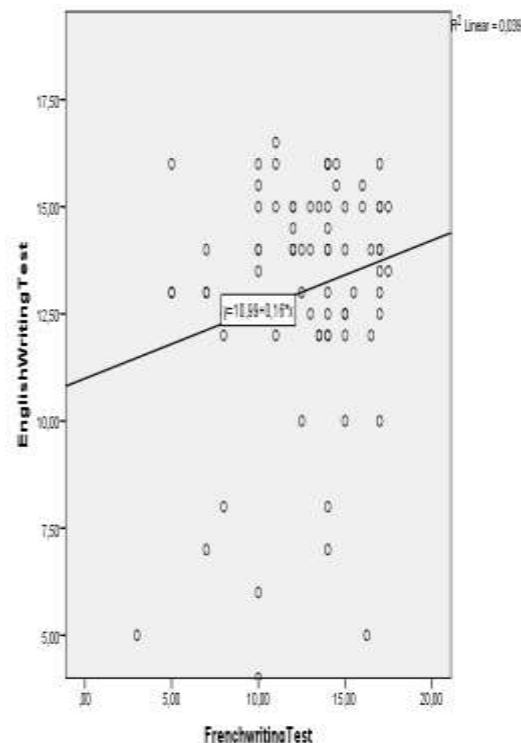

Figure 3: The Scatterplot of the Correlation between FWP and EWS Tests

The analysis included scrutinizing a scatterplot of the relationship between French and English writing scores to assess linearity and homoscedasticity (homogeneity of variance). This ensures that the assumptions underlying the chosen statistical tests are met for valid interpretation of the results.

The following figure depicts the scatterplot of the correlation between French writing performance (FWP) and English writing skills (EWS) test scores. By analyzing this data through the aforementioned statistical procedures, this section aims to shed light on the potential association between French and English writing proficiency among EFL learners, ultimately contributing to the understanding of cross-linguistic transfer in this context.

While the scatterplot exhibits a faint upward trend, suggesting a potential positive association between French and English writing proficiency, the significant dispersion of data points around the trendline indicates a weak relationship. This visual observation is further supported by the low R-squared value, implying that French writing scores explain only a negligible portion of the variance observed in English writing scores within this sample. Therefore, the scatterplot suggests that while some students with higher French writing proficiency might also have slightly higher English writing scores, this association is tenuous and other factors likely play a more prominent role in shaping English writing skills among these EFL learners.

Table 1: The correlation between the FW and EW tests

Correlations		French writing Test	English Writing Test
French writing Test	Pearson Correlation	1	,198
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,086
	N	76	76
English Writing Test	Pearson Correlation	,198	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,086	
	N	76	76

The correlation analysis revealed a statistically non-significant positive association between French and English writing proficiency (r = .198, p = .086). While the correlation coefficient indicates a weak positive trend, suggesting that students with higher French writing scores might also tend to have slightly higher English writing scores, this relationship does not reach the conventional threshold for statistical significance (p < .05). Therefore, we cannot reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no statistically significant correlation between French and English writing proficiency in this sample of EFL learners.

Table 2: Kendall's tau-b correlation between FW and EW tests

Correlations			French writing Test	English Writing Test
Kendall's tau_b	French writing Test	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,058
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,490
		N	76	76
	English Writing Test	Correlation Coefficient	,058	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,490	.
		N	76	76

The Kendall's tau-b analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of .058 (p = .490) between French and English writing proficiency. This value indicates a weak positive association, similar to the Pearson's correlation coefficient. However, the two-tailed significance level of .490 suggests that this association is not statistically significant at the conventional alpha level of .05.

In simpler terms, there is no evidence of a statistically robust relationship between French and English writing skills in this sample, based on Kendall's tau_b, which is a non-parametric test less sensitive to outliers compared to Pearson's correlation. This finding aligns with the results from the Pearson analysis, further supporting the conclusion that French and English writing proficiency are not significantly correlated in this group of EFL learners.

Table 3: Model Summary for FW and EW

Model Summary[b]					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,198[a]	,039	,026	2,75967	1,919
a. Predictors: (Constant), French writing Test					
b. Dependent Variable: English Writing Test					

The model summary for the regression analysis (Model 1) reveals several key points regarding the relationship between French writing proficiency (FrenchwritingTest) and English writing proficiency (EnglishWritingTest). The R-squared value of .039 indicates that the model explains only a very small proportion (around 3.9%) of the variance in English writing scores. This aligns with the weak correlation coefficients observed in the previous analyses. The adjusted R-squared value of .026 further accounts for the number of predictors in the model and provides a slightly more conservative estimate of the model's explanatory power. The standard error of the estimate (2.75967) reflects the average difference between predicted and actual English writing scores. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.919 suggests no significant evidence of autocorrelation in the residuals, which is a necessary assumption for valid regression analysis. In summary, the model indicates that French writing proficiency has a minimal impact on explaining the variation in English writing scores among these EFL learners. This finding aligns with the non-significant correlations observed earlier, suggesting that other factors likely play a more prominent role in influencing English writing development in this context.

Table 4: ANOVA for French writing and English writing

ANOVA[a]					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	23,019	1	23,019	3,023	,086[b]
Residual	563,570	74	7,616		
Total	586,589	75			
a. Dependent Variable: English WritingT est					
b. Predictors: (Constant), French writing Test					

The ANOVA table provides further insights into the relationship between French writing proficiency and English writing scores. The model effect, represented by the "Regression" row, shows a sum of squares of 23,019 with 1 degree of freedom (df). This indicates the total variance in English writing scores explained by the model, which includes French writing proficiency as the predictor. The mean square (variance explained per degree of freedom) for the model is also 23,019. The F-statistic (3.023) compares this explained variance to the unexplained variance (represented by the mean square of the residuals, 7,616). However, the significance level (p = .086) is not lower than the chosen alpha level (typically .05). This suggests that the model's explanatory power over the residual variance is not statistically significant. In simpler terms, while the model including French writing proficiency shows some explanatory effect on English writing scores, this effect is not statistically robust. This aligns with the previous findings from the correlation and regression analyses, suggesting a weak and non-significant relationship between French writing proficiency and English writing skills in this sample of EFL learners.

Table 5: Coefficients of French writing and English writing tests

Coefficients[a]					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	10,993	1,223		8,989	,000
French writing Test	,161	,093	,198	1,739	,086
a. Dependent Variable: English Writing Test					

The coefficients table provides details about the estimated effects of the predictor variable (French writing Test) and the constant term in the regression model predicting English writing proficiency (English Writing Test). The unstandardized coefficient (B) for the constant term is 10.993, indicating the predicted average score on the English writing test when French writing proficiency is zero (which likely would not occur in

practice). The standardized coefficient for French writing Test is .198, suggesting a weak positive association between French writing proficiency and English writing scores. However, the significance level (p = .086) associated with the standardized coefficient of Frenchwriting Test is not lower than the chosen alpha level (typically .05). This implies that the effect of French writing proficiency on English writing scores, although positive, is not statistically significant. In simpler terms, while students with higher French writing scores tend to have slightly higher English writing scores on average, this relationship is not strong enough to be considered statistically reliable in this sample. This aligns with the findings from the correlation and ANOVA analyses, suggesting that French writing proficiency does not have a significant explanatory power for English writing skills among these EFL learners.

Table 6: Residuals Statistics of French and English writing tests

Residuals Statistics[a]				
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	11,4758	13,8118	13,0461	,55401	76
Residual	-8,61044	4,20195	,00000	2,74122	76
Std. Predicted Value	-2,834	1,382	,000	1,000	76
Std. Residual	-3,120	1,523	,000	,993	76
a. Dependent Variable: English Writing Test				

The residuals statistics table offers a glimpse into the distribution of the errors between the predicted and actual English writing scores. The minimum residual value of -8.61 indicates the largest underestimation by the model, while the maximum residual of 4.20 represents the largest overestimation. The mean residual of zero suggests that on average, the model's predictions aligned with the actual English writing scores. The standard deviation of the residuals (2.74) reflects the spread of the errors around the predicted values. It is important to note that the presence of several residuals with relatively high standardized values

(above or below 2) might warrant further investigation. While these outliers don not necessarily invalidate the overall analysis, they could indicate potential issues with the model or the presence of influential cases that deserve closer examination.

2. Discussion

This study's findings, revealing no statistically significant correlation between French and English writing proficiency among EFL learners, offer an interesting contribution to the ongoing debate on cross-linguistic transfer. While some previous research, like Barger (2018), suggests potential benefits for learners with a strong foundation in languages with structural similarities to English, our results do not support this notion in the context of French and English writing. This discrepancy highlights the complexity of cross-linguistic transfer, where the influence of prior language learning depends on a multitude of factors beyond mere structural similarity.

One potential explanation for the lack of correlation could be the specific writing skills assessed. While both tests likely measured general writing proficiency, they might not have tapped into areas where transfer from French would be most evident. Studies by Jia and MacWhinney (2010) suggest transfer benefits in vocabulary development for languages with shared cognates. Future research could explore the impact of French on specific aspects of English writing, such as vocabulary usage or sentence structure, to provide a more nuanced understanding of transfer dynamics.

3. Limitations of the Study

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. The reliance on a convenience sample (as described previously) restricts the generalizability of the findings to the specific population studied. A larger, more representative sample across different educational contexts could offer a broader perspective on the relationship between French and English writing proficiency. Additionally, the study employed a correlational design, which cannot establish causality. While it suggests no significant association, it does not

definitively prove that French writing proficiency has no impact on English writing development. Future research could utilize longitudinal designs or explore causal relationships through interventions that manipulate exposure to French writing instruction.

4. Implications for EFL Pedagogy

Despite the lack of a statistically significant correlation in this specific context, the concept of cross-linguistic transfer remains crucial for EFL pedagogy. Educators should be mindful of the potential benefits and challenges that learners' prior language experiences can present. By understanding the various factors influencing transfer, teachers can design instruction that leverages existing linguistic knowledge while addressing potential areas of interference. For instance, activities that encourage conscious comparison between French and English writing conventions could promote positive transfer, as suggested by research from Ferris (2016). Furthermore, educators should consider incorporating strategies that build upon students' overall metalinguistic awareness, as highlighted by MacIntyre et al. (2019). This can empower learners to approach English writing tasks strategically and utilize their existing linguistic resources effectively, regardless of the specific language they learned beforehand.

V. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the potential relationship between undergraduate EFL learners' writing proficiency in French and English. Employing a correlational design and a convenience sample of EFL undergraduate students, the analysis revealed no statistically significant correlation between the two writing skills.

These findings contribute to the ongoing exploration of cross-linguistic transfer in EFL writing. While seemingly contradictory to studies suggesting benefits from structurally similar languages (Barger, 2018), they highlight the multifaceted nature of transfer, where factors beyond structural similarity likely play a role. The

limitations of the current study, including the sample size and correlational design, necessitate further research with more diverse samples and potentially using longitudinal or interventionist approaches.

Despite the lack of a statistically significant correlation in this specific context, understanding cross-linguistic transfer remains crucial for EFL pedagogy. Future research could explore the impact of transfer on specific aspects of writing, such as vocabulary or sentence structure (Jia & MacWhinney, 2010). Additionally, investigating the role of metalinguistic awareness in mediating transfer effects (MacIntyre et al., 2019) could provide valuable insights for educators. By acknowledging the complexities of cross-linguistic transfer and its potential influence on EFL writing development, researchers and educators can work together to design instruction that optimizes student learning and writing proficiency.

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