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## FALSE FRIENDS AND TRANSLATION: A CASE STUDY OF SECOND- YEAR ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS AT FLSL, UNIVERSITÉ YAMBO OUOLOGUEM DE BAMAKO

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**Abstract:** The present study investigates linguistic interference in translation, with a particular attention to false friends as a major difficulty faced by second-year undergraduate students of the English Department of the Faculty of Letters, Languages and Language Sciences (FLSL), at Université Yambo Ouologuem de Bamako (UYOB). The purpose of this study is to investigate the specific problems students are faced with in dealing with false friends in their pedagogical translation through their process of English language learning. To carry out the study, we used a quantitative method. We set up a list of twenty (20) false friends from French into English and from English into French, with a box-checking test. Forty-eight (48) students took part in the investigation. The results from this investigation showed that the target students experience obvious problems in translating false friends. Some of them were not even aware of the concept of false friends. For example, in table two (2), 75% of the respondents declared to be familiar with the term false friends in two languages. However, only 42% of the participants were able to define them and give some typical examples. Then, in the box-checking test, the majority of the students failed in selecting the correct answers. This confirms the hypothesis that false friends can be misleading for the students in the process of translation and language learning.

**Key words:** False friends, language learning process, linguistic interference, pedagogical translation, translation.

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**Résumé :** Cette étude porte sur l'interférence linguistique dans la traduction comme outil d'apprentissage des langues. Elle s'intéresse principalement aux faux amis comme difficultés de traduction chez les étudiants de licence, notamment ceux de deuxième année de la Faculté des Lettres, des Langues et des Sciences du Langage (FLSL) du Département d'Anglais, à l'Université Yambo OUOLOGUEM de Bamako. L'objectif de cette étude est d'examiner les problèmes rencontrés par les étudiants lorsqu'ils traduisent les faux amis dans leur traduction pédagogique à travers leur processus d'apprentissage de l'Anglais. Pour ce faire, nous avons établi une liste de vingt (20) faux amis : dix (10) du français vers l'anglais et dix (10) de l'anglais vers le français, avec des cases à cocher. Quarante-huit (48) étudiants ont participé à l'enquête.

Les résultats de cette enquête montrent que les étudiants de deuxième année rencontrent de sérieux problèmes à traduire les faux amis. Certains d'entre eux ne connaissaient même pas l'existence des faux amis. Par exemple, dans le tableau deux (2), 75 % d'entre eux déclarent connaître les faux amis dans deux langues. Cependant, seulement 42 % des participants étaient capables de les définir et d'en donner des exemples. Ensuite, lors du test, la majorité des étudiants ont raté les bons choix. Ceci confirme l'hypothèse selon laquelle les étudiants pourraient faire le mauvais choix de faux ami dans le processus de traduction et d'apprentissage des langues.

**Mots-clés** Faux amis, interférence linguistique, processus d'apprentissage de la langue traduction pédagogique, traduction.

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## Introduction

Learning a language in adulthood does not work like in childhood. Amaro et al. (2012). declared, in their book entitled *The third language acquisition in adulthood* that First language (L1) has a privileged role in both Second language (L2) and Third language (L3) learning. Their idea is that the adult already has some linguistic basis on which he/she focuses while learning other languages), and this can sometimes have positive effects as well as negative ones.

This paper deals with linguistic interference between two languages in translation as a language learning tool, namely, false friends in French and English. In linguistics, when one learns a second language (L2), his/her first language (L1) usually has some influences on the second one (L2). These influences can occur at the phonetic, semantic, and/or syntactic levels. As Christoph Gutknecht (2022) stated: “interference is the phenomenon that we experience when linguistic structures that we have already learnt interfere with our learning new structures and interference between two languages exists in all areas, for example, in pronunciation and spelling” (p.698).

Mali is a multilingual country. Almost all Malians, who went to school, can speak at least two languages. The first language they usually speak is their mother, which is acquired in the family; then, they learn and speak a second, a third or even a fourth language at school. Most often, French follows the learners' tongue at the first stage. Then, English is later<sup>1</sup> introduced in the process of schooling.

Linguistic interference sometimes causes irremediable problems in translation, at some level of linguistic performance. Linguistic problems mainly arise from differences of structure in the vocabulary and syntax of different languages. In translation, Nord (2005) distinguishes

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<sup>1</sup> English is introduced in the seventh grade of school education

two main types of difficulties: grammatical difficulties and lexical difficulties, and it is widely known that lexical difficulties are more challenging than grammatical ones. Some of the problems may be caused by the so-called —false friends, or by situations of one-to-many or one-to-zero equivalence. In the same perspective, Gill and Guzman (as cited in Baker, 2011), indicate that translation is a point of contact between people, and since it is rare that two people have the same access to power, the translator is in a privileged position: a mediator to make explicit the difference between cultures, expose injustices, or contribute to diversity in the world. So, translators must not be the cause of any problem between people. Their role must be just that of mediators. Therefore, the focus, here, is on “false friends” as a translation problem in the language learning process, because, sometimes, words in two languages may look the same but have very different meanings. The concept of false friends is a linguistic phenomenon, which must very often concern both academics and foreign-language translators. The very interference problem happens in the translation activities of L2 students. Therefore, the questions that guide this paper are the following: what are the different problems the students have with false friends in their translation activities? Why do they have problems with false-friends in translation? Are there any possible solutions to the problems they have in translating false friends?

The term “False Friends” was coined by Koessler and Derocquigry (1928) in their book entitled “*Les faux amis ou Les trahisons du vocabulaire anglais*”. In this book, they pointed out the fact that, in a single sentence, one can come across two, three, or even more false friends. In this perspective, false friends require a particular attention from the translator. This means that translators and learners must grant due consideration to the problem of false friends in translation.

Similarly, Vinay and Darbelnet (1972), in *Comparative stylistics*, tackled the same issue in the semantic values in which some words are considered equivalents, at first sight, but, in fact, they are different sometimes in many other aspects. The confusion is a translation error that comes from the fact that the translator did not detect the difference between two terms, which seem, at the first sight, interchangeable.

From a similar perspective, Munday (2009) states that correspondences of words and expressions between language systems often cause language learners problems, in particular, loanwords such as false friends. For him, when a word or expression of one language is used in another language, no one can control its changes in meaning.

Also, Granger and Swallow (1998) in the *Dictionnaire des faux Amis Français-anglais* explained that both languages, English and French, have in common a large body of words

which are similar in form but are partially or totally different in meaning. These words constitute a veritable minefield for any English or French speaker setting out to learn or use the other language.

We can state, based on the above-mentioned positions, that the issue of false friends is a substantial phenomenon for both language learners and translators. However, the issue is more crucial for translators because it can lead a whole community of readers in errors. Translation is considered to be “a light in the midst of darkness; so, if the translator is mistaken, the light cannot shine”.

From a divergent perspective, Newmark (1988) seems to be less worried about the problem. He argued that we must not be afraid of using a target language (TL) word, which looks the same or nearly the same as the Source Language (SL) word. “In general, there are more faithful friends than “faux amis” and we must not hesitate to use them”, according to him.

Among the opponents of the determining significance of false friends in languages’ learning is Ringbom (2007), as cited by Tycova (2012) who voices his opinion that “false friends easily assume an importance in learners’ and teachers’ minds that is out of proportion to their significance”, and that “the dangers of false friends ... should not be exaggerated” (p. 75). Ioana, (2007), shares the same view by advocating that false friends help fluency and self-confidence with speakers of poorer English, giving them a sense of ability to communicate (p. 975).

The critical views above-mentioned (Newmark, Ioana, Ringbom) make some sense, because in the real world, there are more true friends than false friends. Many of true friends are from closely related languages, particularly in our case, -French and English- but one must be careful about false friends because of the danger of their misuse that can occur in translation. In addition, Granger and Swallow (1988) argued that there cannot be little doubt that, for anyone in daily contact with two closely related languages, such as English and French, the problem of false friends constitutes a veritable minefield, particularly for a translator.

For all the reasons aforementioned, the analysis is based on the theory of inter language error, namely “overgeneralization” in language inferences. Beltran (2006) stated that false friends between two languages are especially problematic for language learners as they tend to overgeneralize and assume they know the meaning of these words, which are actually misleading. Selinker (1969), in turn, argued that one of the inter language error is caused by overgeneralization.

## **1. Methodology**

This study uses a quantitative approach. This choice is firstly due to the type of data collection tools, which are a questionnaire and a translation test; secondly, the collected data are analyzed using figures and statistics. As Kumar, R. (2011) asserted, “the choice of method depends upon how a piece of information has been collected and analyzed” (p.19).

Simple random sampling was used to give chance to every individual of licence2 (L2) to be part of the participants. However, some of the target students were not willing to participate. As a result, those who volunteered to take part to the study were selected. That is the reason why the number of participating students is reduced to (48), instead of 100 or more.

### **1.1. Research setting**

The present research took place at the Université Yambo OUOLOGUEM de Bamako, precisely, at the English Department of the Faculty of Letters, Languages and Languages sciences. To assure authenticity of the data collected and get reliable results from the analysis, the researcher moved toward the research population at their habitual place of work to administer the box-checking test.

### **1.2. Research participants**

The participants of this study are undergraduate students (second year students/ L2 student) of FLSL, Université Yambo OUOLOGUEM de Bamako, enrolled in the English department. A certain number of factors motivates the choice of this level. First, students of L2 have already studied translation as a language-learning tool in their previous class (1<sup>st</sup> year/ L1); therefore, they are supposed to have an idea about false friends. Second, in case they still have problems, the recommendation from the researcher may help bridge the gap before their graduation, since they still have one other academic year to complete.

### **1.3. Data collection procedure:**

In order to collect data, the researcher set up two sections of a questionnaire; the first is about students' biometrics and the second is about their knowledge of inter-lingual false friends, namely between French and English. The latter is mainly about checking the right equivalents of the source language words among different proposed words in the target language.

## **2. Data analysis and results:**

Data analysis and results yielded from the analysis are based on the examination of the questionnaire responses and the equivalent box checking that the researcher administered to the target students, those of L2. The raw data were analyzed quantitatively, because it concerns the statistics phase with figures. Excel software was used to generate figures and percentages. Last, but not least, the researcher made sense of the results obtained and discussed them.

Students' questionnaire:

### Section one:

**Table 1** students' biometrics

|               |               |        |     |
|---------------|---------------|--------|-----|
| Full name     | XXXX          | Number | %   |
| Gender        | a- Male       | 36     | 75% |
|               | b- Female     | 12     | 25% |
| Age           | From 18 to 25 |        |     |
| Year of study | L2            |        |     |

Table one (1) reflects the statistics on students' biometrics. The figures indicate that males outnumber female participants greatly. Thirty-six (36) male students representing seventy-five percent (75%) of participants and twelve (12) females, representing twenty-five percent (25%) of the students who took the survey and test. Their ages are ranged from eighteen (18) to twenty-five (25) years old. Some of them are very young.

### Section two; Question one

Do you know what false friends or les “faux amis” are in interlanguage translation?

**Table 2** students' acquaintance with false friends.

**a- Yes**

**b- No**

| suggestions | N° of occurrence | %   |
|-------------|------------------|-----|
| a- Yes      | 36               | 75% |
| b- No       | 12               | 25% |

**Table two (2)** shows that twenty-five percent (25%) of the participants are not familiar with false friends, while seventy-five percent (75%) of them know the concept of false friends in interlanguage translation.

**Question two:** if your answer is “yes”, please define “false friend” with one example in both languages.

For this question, thirty-six (36) students representing seventy-five percent (75%) of those who checked “yes”, only thirteen (15) student representing six percent (42%) could define false friends and give examples. The other eighty-nine percent (58%) were not able to give a definition let alone, give examples of false friends.

**Question three:** choose the English equivalent for each French word.

**Table3:** Equivalents from French into English

|          |                |                  |   |
|----------|----------------|------------------|---|
| SL words | TL suggestions | N° of occurrence | % |
|----------|----------------|------------------|---|

|               |                |    |     |
|---------------|----------------|----|-----|
| 1- current    | concurrent     | 26 | 54% |
|               | competing      | 10 | 21% |
|               | competitive    | 12 | 25% |
| 2- eventuel   | eventual       | 25 | 52% |
|               | possible       | 13 | 21% |
|               | eventually     | 10 | 21% |
| 3- Assister à | To assist      | 33 | 69% |
|               | to attend      | 11 | 23% |
|               | To help        | 04 | 08% |
| 4- évidemment | Of course      | 19 | 40% |
|               | evidently      | 24 | 50% |
|               | sure           | 05 | 10% |
| 5- agenda     | agenda         | 28 | 58% |
|               | diary          | 11 | 23% |
|               | organizer      | 09 | 19% |
| 6- apologie   | apology        | 28 | 58% |
|               | apologize      | 15 | 31% |
|               | praise         | 05 | 11% |
| 7- bail       | bail           | 34 | 71% |
|               | lease          | 13 | 27% |
|               | release        | 01 | 02% |
| 8- bras       | bra            | 11 | 23% |
|               | arm            | 33 | 69% |
|               | brass          | 04 | 08% |
| 9- caractère  | character      | 26 | 54% |
|               | behavior       | 21 | 44% |
|               | characteristic | 01 | 02% |
| 10- surnom    | surname        | 35 | 73% |
|               | nickname       | 07 | 15% |
|               | firstname      | 06 | 12% |

As it can be seen in the table above, regarding the equivalent for the word “concurrent” into English, fifty-four percent (54%) of the students made a wrong choice; they were misled

by the spelling resemblance between “concurrent” which means, “competing” in English and the English word “concurrent” which means “simultané” in French. At the same time, twenty-five percent (25%) of them chose “competitive” as equivalent. They, too, missed the point. Only twenty-one percent (21%) of them made a right choice, which is “competing”.

As for the word “eventual”, fifty-two percent (52%) of the students made a wrong choice by checking “eventual” as equivalent of “eventuel”, and twenty-one percent (21%) of those who chose “eventually” are in the same situation. Only twenty-seven (27%) of the students made the right choice.

From the verb “assister à” in the table, it can be noticed that more than half of the respondents, representing sixty-nine percent (67%) missed to give the right word; they selected “to assist” as equivalent for “assister à”. then, eight percent (08%) of them also did wrong by choosing “to help” as equivalent. Only twenty-three percent (23%) of them managed to get the right choice.

As for the previous word, the result obtained from the word “évidemment” demonstrated that more than half of the respondents, that is fifty percent (50%), missed the point by choosing “evidently” and 10% of them chose “sure”. Only Forty percent (40%) made the right choice. The word “évidemment” has as equivalent which is “of course or obviously”, whereas the English word “evidently” has the meaning of “apparemment”.

With the word “agenda”, more than half of the respondents, for example, fifty eight percent (58%) of them chose “agenda” as equivalent. Now, the French word “agenda” means “diary or organizer”, whereas “agenda” in English means “ordre du jour”. The respondents chose “agenda” because of the resemblance of the word in the two languages. Only twenty-three percent (23%) of the respondent chose diary and nineteen percent (19%) of them chose organizer.

Concerning the word “apologie”, it can be observed that fifty-eight percent (58%) of the responding students were deceived by the resemblance of the two words i.e. “apologie” and “apology”. The other thirty-one percent (31%) selected “apologize”, missing the correct choice. Only eleven percent (11%) of them made the right choice.

The word “bail” in the corresponding table reveals that more than half of the students. Seventy-one percent (71%) chose “bail” as equivalent to “bail”, which is totally wrong. Also, twenty-seven percent (27%) who checked “release” made a wrong choice as well. The right word is “lease” and only two percent (02%) picked it up. “Bail”, in French, means “lease” but “bail”, in English, means sum of money that can be translated by “caution” in French. Now, the

English word “release” means “liberation” in French. It can be deduced that most of the students fell into the pitfalls of similarity between “bail” and “bail”.

With the word “bra”, in table 3, only eight percent (08%) of the respondents picked “brass” and twenty-three percent (23%) checked “bra” both of which are not accurate choices. Sixty-nine percent (69%) of the respondents seem to be very familiar with the target word as they made the correct choice. “Bras”, in French, means “arm”, in English. However, “bra” in English, means “soutien-gorge”, in French and the English word “brass” means “cuivre”, in French. They have almost the same spelling but their meanings can lead to mistranslation.

Contrarily to the result obtained with the previous word (bra), with the word “character”, the wrong answers outnumbered the right ones, with respectively fifty-four percent (54%) of the respondents who ticked “character” and two percent (02%) of them who went for “characteristic” which are both wrong. Only forty-four percent (44%) of them ticked “behavior” which is the correct answer. It is important to underscore that the French word “caractère” can, in some contexts, have “character” as equivalent, but it is generally translated by the English word “behavior or nature”.

The word “surnom” reveals some misunderstanding among the respondents. In fact, seventy-three percent (73%) of them chose “surname” as equivalent to it, followed by twelve percent (12%) who chose “first name”. Only fifteen percent (15%) of them got the right choice; i.e. six (06) students out of forty-eight (48) respondents. The overwhelming majority of them made an inaccurate choice of corresponding word.

**Tableau 4** equivalent from English into French

| SL words     | TL suggestions | N° of occurrence | %   |
|--------------|----------------|------------------|-----|
| 1- figure    | figure         | 38               | 79% |
|              | nombre         | 06               | 13% |
|              | chiffre        | 04               | 08% |
| 2- current   | courant        | 23               | 48% |
|              | actuel         | 14               | 29% |
|              | récurrent      | 11               | 23% |
| 3- coin      | coin           | 23               | 48% |
|              | coincer        | 12               | 25% |
|              | jetons         | 13               | 27% |
| 4- character | caractère      | 25               | 52% |
|              | comportement   | 17               | 35% |

|               |              |    |     |
|---------------|--------------|----|-----|
|               | personnage   | 06 | 13% |
| 5- actually   | actuellement | 26 | 75% |
|               | En fait      | 10 | 21% |
|               | En réalité   | 02 | 04% |
| 6- to bless   | blessar      | 18 | 38% |
|               | benir        | 25 | 52% |
|               | bléser       | 05 | 10% |
| 7- confidence | confidence   | 23 | 48% |
|               | confiance    | 21 | 44% |
|               | confiant     | 04 | 08% |
| 8- lecture    | lecture      | 23 | 48% |
|               | conférence   | 17 | 35% |
|               | lecteur      | 08 | 17% |
| 9- to resume  | résumer      | 33 | 69% |
|               | reprendre    | 10 | 21% |
|               | résoudre     | 05 | 10% |
| 10- location  | location     | 27 | 56% |
|               | locateur     | 17 | 36% |
|               | endroit      | 04 | 08% |

As shown in the table above, seventy-nine percent (79%) of the students chose “figure” as equivalent to the English word “figure”, because of the words resemblance in spelling. In reality, the English word “figure” is generally translated by “chiffre” in French, even if, “figure” in English can, in some cases, also have “figure” as equivalent in French. Thirteen percent (13%) chose “nombre” as the equivalent to “figure”, also missing the correct choice. Only eight percent (8%) of the respondents made the right choice by selecting “chiffre”.

As for the English word “current”, forty-eight percent (48%) of the students chose “courant”, as equivalent to it, and the other twenty-three percent (23%) missed the point by choosing “recurrent” as equivalent. As a result, only twenty-nine percent (29%) of the respondents found the right equivalent by choosing “actuel”. The English word “current” means “present time”, whereas the French word “courant and recurrent” mean “which is habitual”.

Regarding the word “coin”, there are forty-eight percent (48%) of the respondent who fell into the pitfall of resemblance. The English word “coin” means a small round piece of metal

and the French word “coin” is an angle formed by two lines. Therefore, their meaning differs. Similarly, twenty-five percent (25%) did the same as foregoing forty-eight percent (48%) because they chose the verb “coincer” as equivalent to “coin”. Only twenty-seven (27%) of them managed to get the right answer.

Concerning the word “character”, fifty-two percent (52%) of the respondents were mistaken because of the resemblance between “character” in English and “caractère” in French. Some thirty-five percent (35%) of them misinterpreted the word by choosing “comportement”. In reality, the two words sometimes have the same meaning, in some contexts. Only few of the respondents, thirteen percent (13%) of them got the right choice.

For the word “actually”, seventy-five percent (75%) of the students confused the English word “actually” and “actuellement” in French. The word “actually” means “in fact, or really”, whereas “actuellement” has the meaning of “the present time, presently, or now). Therefore, “actually” should not be translated by “actuellement” in French. Only twenty-one percent (21%) took “en fait” and four percent (04%) chose “en réalité” as equivalent for “actually”. Therefore, they made the right choice.

With the English verb “to bless”, thirty-eight percent (38%) of the respondents chose “blesser” as equivalent for it. The two verbs are almost similar in term of graphic and phonetics but they are different in meaning. “To bless” means to ask for God’s help and protection for someone. But the verb “blesser” means to hit or strike by making a wound. The data show that ten percent (10%) of the respondents chose “bléser”. They are wrong too. Among the respondents, fifty-two percent (52%) rightly chose “benir”.

As far the English word “confidence” is concerned, the table indicates that forty-eight percent (48%) of the students chose “confidence” in French. This word stands for communication of something that must not be divulged or disclosed, but they took it as equivalent for the English word “confidence”, which expresses the quality of being certain of one’s abilities or of having trust in people, plans, or in the future. Forty-four percent (44%) of the respondents got the point by choosing “confiance” as equivalent to “confidence”. However, the other eight percent (08%) chose another class of the word, “confiant”, as equivalent.

Concerning the word “lecture” into French, forty-eight percent (48%) of the students gave “lecture”, as response or correspondent equivalent to the English word. The English word “lecture” corresponds to teaching to a group of people about a particular subject. This is different from “lecture” which is the action of reading, in French. Seventeen percent (17%) of the respondents chose the French word “lecteur”, that signifies a person who reads something, as equivalent. Only thirty-five percent (35%) of them selected “conference” as equivalent.

It can be noticed in table 4 that sixty-nine percent (69%) of the students chose the French verb “résumer”, that means “the restitution in few words of which have been said or written” as equivalent for “to resume” that means to restart something. Ten percent (10%) of them chose “résoudre”, which means to find a solution, as equivalent. Only twenty-one percent (21%) of them chose “reprendre”, which is the correct corresponding word.

In the table above, it appears that, about the French word “location”, fifty-six percent (56%) of the students checked the French word “location” that is the action of giving or taking something in lease, as equivalent, to the English word “location” which means a place where something happens or exists; the position of something. Thirty-six percent (36%) checked “locateur”, that is a person who rents, as its equivalent. Only eight percent (08%) gave “endroit” as equivalent of “location”.

### **3.Results and Discussion**

This paper is conducted under the case study method. As Cresswell (2009) asserted: “It is the appropriate method to study the phenomenon of a particular situation” (p.113). The following questions, which serve as sub-headings, were asked:

- What are the different problems the students have in translating false friends?

The analysis of the collected data revealed that most of the students who answered this question could deal with false friends; they have a real problem tackling them in translation. Only few of them were able to make a good choice of words, when checking the right equivalent in the target language. For example, the data analysis showed that even a word like “coin” causes a drastic problem to students because, in the test of choosing the right equivalent, 48% of them gave the French word “coin” as equivalent and 25% took the verb “coincer” as equivalents. These are both wrong choices. In summary, results from the tables revealed that wrong choices outnumber the right ones, except for the word “bras” from French to English that resulted in 69% of correct choices and “to bless” from English to French from which students managed to make more right choices than wrong ones.

- Why do the students have problems with the translation of false friends?

Firstly, the data show that students generally have problems with false friends in translation because of the resemblance of words in the languages. If, for instance, they come across a word like “actually”, as they already know a word, in the target language, which is approximately similar in graphic they generalize it. Therefore, in their mind “actuellement” should be its equivalent. As Beltran (2006) stated, “false friends between languages are especially problematic for language learner as they tend to overgeneralize and assume they know the meaning of these words, which are actually misleading.”

Secondly, the other cause is due to the respondents' limited level of linguistic competence in both languages, French and English. When we take the word "bras" in French and "to bless" in English as example, it can be deduced from the result that these are some of their habitual words. Therefore, they do not have problems dealing with habitual false friends.

- Are there any possible solutions to fix the problems students encounter in translating false friends?

Some possible solutions may be the introduction of an appropriate lexicographic study, namely false friends, with its pitfalls in L2 level language learning. The study of the different types of false friends in different language learning activities.

The analysis of the questionnaire for students revealed the following:

- 1- The majority of the students are males, and only 25% of them are females. According to the population census in Mali (census, 2009) the population of the country is made up of 50% females and 50% males. Despite the equal number between males and females, male students outnumber their female counterparts in the classrooms. This situation is firstly due to the low level of girl schooling in our country and secondly to early marriage of girls. However, the disparity in number between females and males does not have any impact on the results.

It is also important to point out that some students are very young, 18 to 25 years old. However, the fact that they are young must not have any impact on the way they deal with false friends.

- 2- The second question of section two revealed a surprising result, because 25% of the students confirmed that they are not familiar with false friends and among the 75% who stated they know false friends, a crushing number of them were not able to give a definition nor provide examples of false friends. Only 42% managed to provide a definition. That is perhaps due to the fact that they are never taught false friends up to that level of education.
- 3- In the same section two, twenty (20) false friends were given with different proposals to find the right equivalents. They were sub-divided into two groups: ten (10) words from French to English and the other ten (10) from English to French. But, all these twenty words didn't give reason to Newmark (1988) who said that learner should not be afraid of false friends because there are more true friends than false friends. The result confirmed that, even if there are more true friends, the small number of false friends hinder considerably the students' language learning. In twenty false friends, only two did not pose problem to the students of L2 year.

### **Recommendations:**

False friends are words in two languages or within the same language that are similar in form but different in meaning. This paper focused on false friends in two languages. It is important

to take the phenomenon seriously because it is a major concern in the process of language learning at FLSL. False friends have received worldwide lexicographic consideration. Because of insufficient knowledge of false friends, similarities between languages may sometimes create obstacles instead of advantages. Throughout the study, data and findings revealed that false friends pose problems to L2 students of the English department of FLSL.

In light of the difficulties students encounter in translating false friends, the English department authorities need to incorporate lexicological studies into the curriculum as a subject from the first year of university. Under the subject, students should be:

- Aware of the existence of false friends when dealing with language learning and translation.
- Equipped with documentation such as books and articles containing false friends.
- Given a selective list of some striking false friends.

## Conclusion

The analysis of the data collected and results obtained provide sufficient indicators that most of second year students do not even know the existence of false friends in two languages, let alone detecting them from one language to another. In the box-checking test, in which many words were proposed to choose from, with just one right equivalent among them, most of the students missed the right words. Several tables, with illustrations, provided many examples in which students mixed up the meanings of some words because of their resemblance. As an example, many students ticked the French word “lecture” as equivalent of the English word “lecture” because of their similarity in form. The phenomenon of false friends is an important lexical topic which second year English learners of the English Department of FLSL do not master; therefore, due attention should be granted to it.

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